PRESS RELEASES

Jan 2, 2002

Ecolab Announces New Food Safety Services Business

ST. PAUL, Minn., Jan 2, 2001 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Ecolab announced it has purchased Audits International, a Chicago, Illinois-based premier provider of food safety audits and food retail quality evaluations. Audits International is a leading provider of national food safety services with annual sales of approximately $3 million. Terms of the transaction were not announced.

Audits International has been providing food safety services to the foodservice industry since 1982. Utilizing audit procedures designed to identify food safety procedures that comply with local, state and federal food safety codes, Audits International provides quality assurance to restaurants, hotels, supermarkets, hospitality and other foodservice establishments through over 150 company-trained field auditors located throughout the country. Audits International's food safety evaluations are custom designed to evaluate and improve performance at the individual property. It will form a new Ecolab service business and operate within the Industrial and Services Sector as a separate business. This business is designed to provide our customers with food safety services including program design, on-site training and certification, audits and reporting.

"As part of the continued pursuit of our Circle the Customer, Circle the Globe strategy, food safety services is a natural extension of our service offering", said Ecolab's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Allan L. Schuman. "Food safety is one of the top issues facing our customers today, and Audits International is designed to provide scientific food safety services with our technology-based and certified service team. We are now in an even better position to partner with our food service customers on the behavioral and training aspects of food safety."

With global sales exceeding $3 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and pest elimination products and services for the hospitality, institutional and industrial markets. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at www.ecolab.com and by telephone at 1-800-FACT-ECL.

Back to Press Releases