# PRESS RELEASES

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## Ecolab Ready as a Key Player in Industry's Battle Against SARS Outbreak

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--April 9, 2003--Looking to the global leader in cleaning and sanitizing products and systems, hotel, motel, airline and healthcare customers are asking Ecolab Inc. to help them develop procedures and train personnel to help control the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), according to Allan L. Schuman, Ecolab's Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer.

"Many of the early inquiries were from Ecolab customers in Asia. However, recent confirmed cases of SARS in the United States and Canada have led to a number of requests from North American customers for help in maintaining the highest level of hygiene practices," Schuman said.

"While definitive answers have yet to be found, Ecolab stands ready to fully support its customers with one of the industry's broadest and deepest lines of hand and surface sanitizers and disinfectants, as well as the people and technological resources to provide our customers with the necessary resources to deal with this outbreak," he said. "Our Institutional, Kay and Professional Products businesses are already shipping products around the world to meet customer demand."

Schuman also noted that recent news reports, although not yet confirmed, suggest that cockroaches may contribute to spread of the disease. He said, "While the world waits for proof, Ecolab's Pest Elimination stands ready to ratchet up our services and expertise in getting rid of cockroaches as well as other pests."

In responding to requests from the hospitality and health care industries, Ecolab is relying on information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta said Dr. Bruce Cords, Ecolab's Vice President, Food Safety & Public Health. He said that according to the CDC, the best evidence to date had been that the virus is a new strain related to previously known Coronaviruses which cause disease in man and animals. In general, SARS begins with a fever greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius). Other symptoms may include headache, an overall feeling of discomfort, and body aches. Some people also experience mild respiratory symptoms. After two to seven days, SARS patients may develop a dry cough and have trouble breathing.

The CDC states that SARS appears to be spread primarily via aerosol from the cough or sneeze of an infected individual which is subsequently inhaled by an uninfected individual in close proximity. An infected person may continue to shed the virus for a significant (10-14 days) time period after acute respiratory symptoms and fever are gone. The virus may also persist on environmental surfaces for several hours before becoming inactive. The fatality rate from this virus is estimated at about 4%.

Cords said that the CDC recommends frequent, aggressive handwashing and the use of alcohol-based hand rubs if contact with a SARS infected individual is suspected. The agency also recommends the use of disinfectants registered with the EPA as Hospital Disinfectants for use on surfaces where contamination with SARS is suspected. Ecolab is providing its customers with products which meet the criteria specified by CDC, most notably, Endure 300--an alcohol-based antimicrobial waterless hand rinse, and Digisan Foam Hand Sanitizer.

With sales of $3.4 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, maintenance and repair products for the hospitality, foodservice, 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.

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