PRESS RELEASES

May 21, 2003

Ecolab Expert Testifies about SARS Response

WASHINGTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 21, 2003--Ecolab Vice President of Food Safety and Public Health Bruce Cords testified today before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations chaired by Sen. Norm Coleman (R-MN). He spoke at a hearing on "SARS: How effective is the state and local response."

Testifying about how the federal government communicates with and supports the state and local levels were Julie L. Gerberding, MD, MPH, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Michael T. Osterholm, PhD, MPH, Professor, Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota.

Dr. Cords and Vickie Grunseth, Chairperson of the Metropolitan Airports Commission of Minnesota testified on the effects SARS has had on the private sector, including both the health industry and airline industry. Cords, who is responsible for Ecolab food safety and public health technology strategies discussed the company's response and challenges related to the global SARS crises.

"Among other things, Ecolab's expertise is in the practical application of disinfection and cleaning technology to help manage and respond to exposures in the workplace and in a wide variety of community environments." Cords said, adding that Ecolab customers include healthcare facilities, schools, lodging, restaurants, food-processing facilities, military installations and public transportation.

"Our customers, worldwide, depend on Ecolab to provide advice, products and systems to address problems with infectious diseases such as SARS. As the outbreak of SARS was peaking, in March and April, many international hotel chains asked for help to make sure that they had the latest training and information to deal with the SARS virus," Cords said.

Dr. Cords said that his group has been closely monitoring the situation via the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in order to respond appropriately to demands from customers.

Cords observed that although the U.S. EPA has not yet approved any commercial product claims against the SARS virus, demand continues to grow for products to help stop the spread of the disease. Ecolab, he said, has advised customers to follow the general recommendations provided by the CDC, specifically:

1. Aggressive handwashing and the use of an alcohol gel hand sanitizer containing 60% - 95% denatured ethanol or isopropanol.

2. Disinfection of environmental surfaces such as faucets, handrails, restrooms, elevators and other surfaces touched by multiple individuals, with an EPA-registered Hospital Disinfectant.

"We have provided our customers with this information through direct contact with our district managers and technical support staff and have also made the information available on our public website, www.ecolab.com," Cords said.

"I want to emphasize that simply identifying products does not provide the user with the "how to" guidance they need," he said, adding that Ecolab provides training and information on cleaning and disinfection procedures whenever there is a concern that a hotel room might have been occupied by a SARS infected person, including instructions to wear disposable gloves while cleaning or handling laundry, then discarding the gloves and re-washing hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after glove removal.

Cords pointed out that during the recent Foot and Mouth disease and Anthrax threats, Ecolab worked closely with EPA to expedite product approvals. "Likewise," he said, "we look forward to EPA working to expedite approvals for products effective against SARS so that these products are available should the virus reappear in the United States. Thus, based upon the latest scientific information, and working with appropriate government authorities, Ecolab will continue to provide our global customers with information on products and best practices to prevent the spread of this disease."

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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