PRESS RELEASES

Dec 15, 2003

Ecolab Responds to Henkel's Dial Announcement

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 15, 2003--Ecolab responded to Henkel's announcement regarding its possible acquisition of Dial Corp.

"We have a standstill agreement with Henkel which ensures an orderly process in the event of any disposition by Henkel of our shares, including our right of first refusal," said Allan Schuman, Ecolab's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. "We are well prepared to work with Henkel on any such transaction if Henkel determines to sell any Ecolab shares. Such a transaction might entail the repurchase by Ecolab and/or a public sale or private placement. We have viable financial options available to protect all of our shareholders."

With 2002 sales of $3.4 billion, Ecolab is a 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 under the symbol ECL. Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at http://www.ecolab.com.

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SOURCE: Ecolab Inc.

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