PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab's new floor cleaner attacks grease, not tile, to help reduce slips and falls

ST. PAUL, Minn., January 29, 2004 - Ecolab Inc.'s innovative WASH 'N WALK™ no-rinse floor cleaner attacks the grease that causes slippery floors without "etching" or damaging quarry tile and grout.

Because grease buildup historically has been difficult to remove from kitchen quarry tile, instead of attacking this root cause of slippery floors, many cleaning providers have resorted to offering products that etch floors. To increase friction, etching temporarily roughens the surface by essentially scrubbing a layer of the floor off. WASH 'N WALK™ offers a daily cleaning solution that removes grease buildup without these damaging effects, says Mike Hickey, Ecolab's vice president of Global/Corporate Accounts.

"Increasing employee safety by reducing slips and falls is always top-of-mind for our customers and for Ecolab," Mike says. "With WASH 'N WALK, customers finally have a solution that combats the main cause of slippery floors in busy, high-traffic areas such as restaurant kitchens. And by eliminating the rinse step - a key to the WASH 'N WALK program - our customers reap significant water and labor savings."

The key to the patent-pending, breakthrough technology is that it uses enzymes along with traditional cleaning agents to break down all types of kitchen soils, says Maarten Potjer, Ecolab's product line manager for WASH 'N WALK.

"It's a completely different approach to attacking tough grease and soil for the restaurant and foodservice industry," Potjer explains. "In order to remove packed-in grease between tiles and in tile pores, we created a biodegradable formula that doesn't need to be rinsed off the floor, allowing the enzymes to continue working after application."

And because WASH 'N WALK increases friction by removing greasy deposits, it helps reduce employer liability and workers' compensation claims.

"We measure friction before and after implementing WASH 'N WALK using a slip meter, which imitates the natural action of a foot walking on the floor," Potjer says. "Test results at customers sites have been nothing short of outstanding. Customers notice the improved traction, while the dramatic change in floor appearance proves to them that WASH 'N WALK is cleaning their floors like never before."

WASH 'N WALK's dilutable concentrate is available in convenient 2.5-gallon containers.

The Institutional Division of Ecolab Inc. provides a full line of products, programs and services for the foodservice and hospitality industries, including warewashing, on-premise laundry, housekeeping, water filtration and conditioning, specialty kitchen and laundry products, and pool and spa management. For more information about WASH 'N WALK, contact Ecolab Inc. at 1-800-35-CLEAN.

With 2002 sales of $3.4 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, maintenance and repair products and services 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 www.ecolab.com.

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