

PRESS RELEASES

Nov 12, 2010

Ecolab to Extend U.S. Healthcare Business

Ecolab to Acquire O.R. Solutions in Cash Deal

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Ecolab Inc. announced it has agreed to purchase the assets of O.R. Solutions, Inc., a privately-held company based in Chantilly, VA. O.R. Solutions is a leading developer and marketer of surgical fluid warming and cooling systems in the United States. O.R. Solutions' systems are designed to enhance patient safety and improve surgical outcomes by maintaining the proper temperature of fluids used during surgery; each procedure requires custom fit sterile draping. Numerous studies have shown that using warm fluids during surgery is effective in helping prevent infections. Cooling systems are used to maintain tissue health during cardiac procedures and transplants.

Annual sales of the business to be acquired are approximately \$55 million, with more than 85% of O.R. Solutions' sales from custom fit sterile drapes. The purchase price is approximately \$260 million for O.R. Solutions, and the acquisition is expected to be accretive to Ecolab's 2011 earnings. Completion of the transaction is expected to occur upon receipt of regulatory clearance and satisfaction of other customary closing conditions. No other details were announced.

Douglas M. Baker, Jr., Ecolab's Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, commented on the announcement, saying, "We believe this will be a terrific complement to our global Healthcare business. O.R. Solutions has enjoyed strong growth and has significant upside potential in both the U.S. and international markets. The acquisition will strengthen our position in infection prevention, build on our surgical barrier platform, and expand our solutions for the operating room. It will also bring a strong sales and service team, adding depth and expertise to our business.

"We believe this transaction will bring exciting growth potential for our combined operations and additional opportunities for both companies' employees. We look forward to completing the transaction and continuing to expand our business and portfolio of infection prevention solutions."

With sales of \$6 billion and more than 26,000 associates, Ecolab Inc. (NYSE: ECL) is the global leader in cleaning, sanitizing, food safety and infection prevention products and services. Ecolab delivers comprehensive programs and services to foodservice, food and beverage processing, healthcare, and hospitality markets in more than 160 countries. More news and information is available at www.ecolab.com.

This news release contains various "Forward-Looking Statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These include statements concerning the transaction's potential impact on our earnings per share in 2011, future growth and potential receipt of regulatory clearance. These statements, which represent Ecolab's expectations or beliefs concerning various future events, are based on current expectations that involve a number of risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those of such Forward-Looking Statements. We caution that undue reliance should not be placed on Forward-Looking Statements, which speak only as of the date made.

Risks and uncertainties that may affect operating results and business performance are set forth under Item 1A of our most recent Form 10-K and include the vitality of the markets we serve; the impact of worldwide economic factors such as the worldwide economy, credit markets, interest rates and foreign currency risk; fluctuations in raw material and delivered product costs; our ability to develop competitive advantages through innovation; restraints on pricing flexibility due to contractual obligations; pressure on operations from consolidation of customers, vendors or competitors; the ability to acquire complementary businesses and to effectively integrate such businesses; the impact of investments to develop business systems or to optimize our business structure; the costs and effects of complying with laws and regulations relating to the environment and to the manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and use of our products; changes in laws, regulations or accounting standards; public health epidemics; the occurrence of litigation or claims, acts of war, terrorism, severe weather or natural or man-made disasters; the loss or insolvency of a major customer, supplier or distributor; our ability to attract and retain high caliber management talent; and other uncertainties or risks reported from time to time in our reports to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Except as may be required under applicable law, we undertake no duty to update our Forward-Looking Statements.

(ECL-A)

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