J. Erik Fyrwald is President of Ecolab Inc. Prior to the merger of Ecolab and Nalco in December 2011, Mr. Fyrwald was Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Nalco from 2008 to 2011. He joined Nalco following a 27-year career at DuPont. From 2003 to 2008 Mr. Fyrwald served as Group Vice President of the Agriculture and Nutrition division of DuPont. Mr. Fyrwald attended the University of Delaware, where he received a B.S. degree in chemical engineering in 1981. He also completed the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School. Mr. Fyrwald serves as a Director of Eli Lilly and Company, the Society of Chemical Industry, the American Chemistry Council, the Chicago Public Education Fund and is a Trustee of the Field Museum of Chicago.

“Water—The Next Oil?”

We hear about oil in some form or another every day, making the role it plays in our world well understood and the value easily justified. Water, like oil, is a natural resource that much of world’s population just expects to be available. However, access to abundant clean water is a critical issue in many parts of the world.

In 1995, 41% of the world’s population lived in water-stressed regions and by 2025, nearly half of the world’s population (3.5 billion people) are expected to live under water stress. A startling five million lives are lost each year to water-related diseases.

As countries develop, industrial water use issues become increasingly challenging; particularly in regions that are already water-stressed and do not have enough clean water to meet the domestic, agricultural and industrial needs. Governments place controls on industrial water use and water release to protect the supply of clean water and ensure availability for domestic and agricultural uses.

Industry will play a key role in our water future, as it typically has substantial opportunities to reduce water use and improve the quality of released water - at the same time saving money on water, energy, maintenance and other costs. Nalco provides value to our customers by providing a systematic approach to industrial water resource management, saving resources - both economic and natural.

Water use and cleanliness issues are critical to both human health and economic growth. Simply by adopting best practices and best available technology, industry can drive substantial reductions in water usage and water release quality. If industry does not operate responsibly in these areas, governments will step in to control industrial water use and discharge. Sustainable development efforts in industry must focus on driving environmental improvements while simultaneously pursuing economic gains. Technologies offered by Nalco and others can improve the financial performance of our customers, while contributing to their environmental and societal gains.