

Controversies: Ecolab

- In October 2021, the [US EPA levied a USD 214,507 penalty](#) from Ecolabs over violations of hazardous waste and pesticide laws related to a 2019 fire.
- In August 2021, residents near the port of Wilmington, North Carolina [objected to Ecolab's proposal to fumigate](#) export-bound logs with methyl bromide and phosphine owing to the chemical's toxicity and ozone-depleting potential.
- In January 2021, Ecolab ranked [11 in Toxic 100 Air Polluters Index](#), with its Nalco facility in Fresno, Texas contributing to more than 96% of the company's air toxicity load.
- In February 2020, a [class action lawsuit was filed](#) against Ecolab in Minnesota, seeking to represent a nationwide class of current or former hospital housekeepers. Three plaintiffs alleged that they had sustained personal injuries from using the company's cleaning products. Several injuries from use of the products have been reported, including burning of the eyes, nose and throat, nasal problems, coughing, headaches, dizziness, nausea, nose bleeds, asthma-like symptoms, respiratory irritation, skin burns, rashes, and other reactions affecting pulmonary and respiratory functions. Ecolab was later [accused of hiding the health risks](#) of their disinfectants.
- In December 2019, a city worker and an Ecolab employee were offloading a tanker at a wastewater treatment plant in Martinsburg, West Virginia, when "a [dangerous chemical reaction](#)" occurred. The chemical reaction caused a blue haze and bleach-like fumes to settle in throughout the city, resulting in mass evacuation of the Martinsburg's downtown area and nearby neighbourhoods.
- In November 2018, the prosecution office of Liu He District, Jingsu Province, China brought charges alleging violation of environmental laws relating to waste disposal against the company's Nalco subsidiary. The incident was reported in the Ecolab Corporate Sustainability Report 2018.
- In January of 2014, [a fire and acid leak](#) were reported at the Ecolab plant east of Martinsburg, West Virginia. The fire and subsequent leak of glacial acetic acid from a 10,000-gallon above-ground tank prompted authorities to halt trains on a nearby rail line and evacuate nearby residents as a precaution.
- Between 2012 and 2021, [Ecolab and its subsidiaries paid more than 2 million USD in penalties for 15 environmental violations](#), according to the violation tracker project of Good Jobs First.