

Surf's in \$30 million campaign introduces soap

United Press International

DALLAS — Backed by a massive advertising campaign and the most extensive free sampling effort in history, Lever Bros. is introducing a new laundry detergent to compete with Tide, the popular product of Procter & Gamble Co.

The marketing of Surf, the new detergent, was tested in Houston for six months and now is spreading outward to cover all of Texas and Oklahoma.

Moving in deliberate steps, Lever Bros. soon will have the product available throughout the nation.

As it enters the battlefield against Tide, the advertising campaign for Surf will outspend all other laundry detergents by a wide margin, Lever Bros. said.

Concentrating on local television, Surf will be the No. 1 detergent advertised on prime time and on daytime network programming, Lever Bros. said. Surf also will be heavily promoted in women's magazines and in local newspapers.

"On a national basis, we will spend up around \$30 million a year for Surf," said William Gentner, group product manager for Surf. "We will have the highest percentage of sampling any product has ever done. To my knowledge, nobody else has ever come close to it."

When the sampling campaign is complete, 80 percent of the households in the United States will receive a small sample package of Surf in the mail, he said.

During its Houston test, Surf captured 13 percent of the detergent market, Lever Bros. said. Long-entrenched Tide — the leading seller in the detergent field — had about 21 percent of the market.

Sales of American laundry detergents now total about \$2.8 billion a year, and the dollar figure has increased more than 50 percent in the last five years, Lever Bros. said.

Lever Bros., an offshoot of a business started in 1895, is owned by Unilever, a British-Dutch company that has more than 500 subsidiaries and annual sales of more than \$25 billion.

But for many years, Lever Bros. seemed sluggish in comparison to its chief competitor, Procter & Gamble. This sleepy image changed radically in 1980.

Since then, Lever Bros. has launched several successful new products, such as Shield deodorant soap, Sunlight dishwashing liquid, Sunlight automatic dishwasher detergent and Snuggle fabric softener. The company hopes to add Surf detergent to its line of successful products.

Gentner was asked why Lever Bros. chose to introduce Surf, a new product, rather than upgrading its present laundry detergent, Rinso.

"We have in Surf a very unique concept," he replied. "It removes both dirt and odors. We felt the concept was so strong that we didn't want to recycle an existing product."

The target market also is different, he said. Rinso, originally introduced in 1919 as the first granulated laundry soap, is a mid- to low-price product. Lever Bros. positioned Surf as a premium brand, competing with Tide and Cheer.

Advertising for Surf will concentrate heavily on its ability to remove odors.

"The problem of removing odors has been growing in importance, basically with the rise in use of synthetic fabrics," Gentner said.

Lever Bros. said it found that existing laundry detergents no longer remove all unpleasant odors from clothes because the weave and finish of synthetic fabrics tended to trap odors more than cloth made of natural fibers.

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Rainfall level up in coast

United Press International

CORPUS CHRISTI — For the first time in months, significant amounts of rain have fallen on the Lake Corpus Christi watershed — raising its level 17 feet during the past three days, the National Weather Service reported Wednesday.

The city itself has received more than 3.5 inches of rain during the past three days.

However, thundershowers south of San Antonio have sent water down the Frio, Nueces and Atascosa rivers that feed Lake Corpus Christi.

The lake, which is the major source of water for Corpus Christi and a dozen smaller towns in the Coastal Bend, dipped to a low of 36 percent full last month.

By Wednesday, a weather bureau spokesman said, the level of Lake Corpus Christi had raised from 8,253 feet above sea level on Monday to 8,270 feet.

He said the major inflow to the lake was from the Frio River, which increased its level from 1.65 feet on Monday to 3.76 feet on Tuesday and 6.57 feet on Wednesday.

Hispanics oppose immigration bill

United Press International

EL PASO — Representatives of Hispanic organizations in El Paso vowed Wednesday to oppose the Simpson-Mazzoli immigration reform bill until the measure is dead.

John Garcia, district director of the League of United Latin American Citizens, told a news conference the bill has little chance of getting out of a House-Senate conference committee this year, but Hispanics fear that Congress may attempt to resurrect the bill at a lame-duck session after the November general election.

Hispanics object to the employer sanctions provision of the bill, he said.

"Employment opportunities for Hispanics are not that good now," Garcia said. "If an employer fears he may be subjecting himself to inspections by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services, he will not be inclined to hire anyone who looks Hispanic."

Garcia called the proposed two-tier amnesty program passed by the House and Senate "a farce, and (it) would serve no more than to expose countless undocumented immigrants to deportation."

Hispanic officials also objected to a proposed national identification card.

"The national identification card proposition is another extension of that anti-Mexican, anti-immigrant hysteria so aptly being drummed up by certain reactionary forces in our nation to scapegoat Hispanic Americans and all Latin Americans as the leading cause for our economic woes in the United States," Garcia said.

U.S. Sen. John Tower, R-Texas, has promised to lead a filibuster against the bill if it comes up this year, Garcia said, but U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, favors the bill.

"We will remember those legislators who forsake us, the Hispanic American community, on this issue of immigration," Garcia said.

The Federation for American Immigration Reform, proponents of Simpson-Mazzoli, quoted President Reagan in the organization's September newsletter as saying he will sign an immigration bill that limits federal amnesty costs to \$4 billion.

"Many Congressional observers expect a final vote to be delayed until after a lame-duck session of Congress expected to follow the November general election," the newsletter read.

Mexican-American Democrats and the Border Farmworkers Union also participated in the news conference.

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