



CenterPoint Energy Electric Unit Files Rate Package in Response to PUC's Rate Review Order

Filing Supports a 3.7 Percent Increase to Retail Providers

HOUSTON, April 14, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- In response to an order from the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC), CenterPoint Energy, Inc.'s (NYSE: CNP) electric transmission and distribution subsidiary, CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC (CEHE), today filed cost data and other information that supports a rate increase of \$50 million or 3.7 percent to the retail electric providers (REPs) that sell electricity to end-use customers in the Houston area. The filing also supports a \$43.1 million increase for CEHE's wholesale transmission customers, which include other utilities throughout the state. Last December, the PUC asked to review CEHE's rates and directed the company to file the necessary information by April 15, 2006.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20020930/CNPLOGO>)

"All along we felt that our current rates were fair and reasonable, and we were not seeking an increase," said Joe McGoldrick, senior vice president of finance and regulatory affairs for CenterPoint Energy's regulated operations. "While our filing shows that an increase in rates is justified, we remain hopeful that we can continue to work with interested parties and the PUC staff to resolve the issues in ways that will benefit everyone and avoid costly and lengthy litigation over small changes in rates."

CEHE is responsible for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission and distribution lines and the facilities needed to provide reliable electric service. The rates subject to PUC review represent less than 20 percent of the monthly bill for a residential customer using 1,000 kWh per month. Any changes to CEHE's delivery rate by the PUC, whether increased or decreased, would be included in the billing to the REPs. The REPs would then determine whether any changes are passed on to the end-use customers.

In preparing today's filing, CEHE used a 2005 test year adjusted for updated cost data where appropriate. The data reflects the \$700 million that the company has invested during the last few years for new structures, power lines, and related equipment to continue to operate a reliable network. It also includes the increase in franchise fees that CEHE is paying the City of Houston under the recently adopted franchise ordinance which allows the company to provide its electric delivery services within the City during the next thirty years. In addition, recognizing the catastrophic damage to the facilities of other electric utilities caused by hurricanes in 2004 and 2005, CEHE is proposing a modest increase to its storm reserve. Finally, CEHE is seeking to maintain its allowed return on equity and the debt/equity capital structure on its books at year end 2005 in order to attract investment capital on reasonable terms.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a domestic energy delivery company that includes electric transmission & distribution, natural gas distribution and sales, and interstate pipeline and gathering operations. The company serves more than five million metered customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas. Assets total approximately \$17 billion. With about 9,000 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 130 years. For more information, visit the Web site at <http://www.CenterPointEnergy.com> .

This news release includes forward-looking statements. Actual events and results may differ materially from those projected. You can generally identify forward-looking statements by the words "believe," "will," "expect" or other similar words. Factors that could affect actual results include the timing and impact of future regulatory and legislative decisions, effects of competition, weather variations, changes in CenterPoint Energy's business plans, financial market conditions and other factors discussed in the Annual Reports on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2005, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission by CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC.

SOURCE CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

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