
**UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

**CURRENT REPORT
Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d)
of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934**

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): **June 30, 2020**

Commission file number	Registrant, State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation or Organization Address of Principal Executive Offices, Zip Code and Telephone Number	I.R.S. Employer Identification No.
1-31447	CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (a Texas corporation) 1111 Louisiana Houston Texas 77002 (713) 207-1111	74-0694415
1-3187	CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC (a Texas limited liability company) 1111 Louisiana Houston Texas 77002 (713) 207-1111	22-3865106
1-13265	CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp. (a Delaware corporation) 1111 Louisiana Houston Texas 77002 (713) 207-1111	76-0511406

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions (see General Instruction A.2. below):

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of each class	Trading Symbol(s)	Name of each exchange on which registered
Common Stock, \$0.01 par value	CNP	The New York Stock Exchange Chicago Stock Exchange, Inc.
Depository Shares for 1/20 of 7.00% Series B Mandatory Convertible Preferred Stock, \$0.01 par value	CNP/PB	The New York Stock Exchange
9.15% First Mortgage Bonds due 2021	n/a	The New York Stock Exchange
6.95% General Mortgage Bonds due 2033	n/a	The New York Stock Exchange
6.625% Senior Notes due 2037	n/a	The New York Stock Exchange

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is an emerging growth company as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act of 1933 (§230.405) or Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (§240.12b-2).

Emerging Growth Company

If an emerging growth company, indicate by check mark if the registrant has elected not to use the extended transition period for complying with any new or revised financial accounting standards provided pursuant to Section 13(a) of the Exchange Act.

Item 5.02. Departure of Directors or Certain Officers; Election of Directors; Appointment of Certain Officers; Compensatory Arrangements of Certain Officers.

On June 30, 2020, David J. Lesar, a current member of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (the “Company”), was appointed by the Board as permanent President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company, effective July 1, 2020. Mr. Lesar will continue to serve as a member of the Board. John W. Somerhalder II, another member of the Board, had been serving as Interim President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company since February 19, 2020 until a permanent President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company was identified and appointed. On June 30, 2020, Mr. Somerhalder provided notice of his intent to resign from his interim executive officer and director positions with the Company and its affiliates and has ceased service in such capacity effective June 30, 2020. He also departed from the Company as a director, effective as of the same date. His resignation as an interim executive officer and as a director was not the result of any disagreement he had with the Company on any matter relating to the Company’s operations, policies and practices, including any matters concerning the Company’s controls or any financial or accounting-related matters or disclosures.

David J. Lesar, age 67, joined the Company as a member of the Board on May 6, 2020. He served as interim CEO of Health Care Service Corporation, the largest privately-held health insurer in the United States, from July 2019 through June 1, 2020, having joined that company’s board of directors in 2018. He was the Chairman of the Board and CEO of Halliburton Company from 2000 to 2017 and Executive Chairman of the Board from June 2017 until December 2018. Mr. Lesar joined Halliburton in 1993 and served in a variety of other roles, including executive vice president of Finance and Administration for Halliburton Energy Services, a Halliburton business unit, CFO of Halliburton from 1995 through May 1997, President and Chief Operating Officer from June 1997 through August 2000 and continued as President until August 2014. He has also served on the board of directors of several companies, most recently Agrium, Inc. as well as Lyondell Chemical Company, Southern Company, Cordant Technologies, and Mirant Corp. A Certified Public Accountant, Mr. Lesar was previously a partner at Arthur Andersen. He received both his B.S. and MBA from the University of Wisconsin.

In connection with his appointment, pursuant to an offer letter dated July 1, 2020, Mr. Lesar will receive a base salary of \$1,350,000 per year. He will also receive a sign-on equity award consisting of restricted stock units valued at \$1,000,000, which will vest ratably upon his continued employment on the first, second and third anniversaries of the grant date. In connection with facilitating Mr. Lesar’s relocation to the Company’s headquarters in Houston, Texas where Mr. Lesar does not currently have a residence, Mr. Lesar will receive benefits in connection with the purchase of his residence in Dallas, Texas by the Company for an agreed upon \$1,217,000 and other relocation assistance subject to the Company’s relocation policy. Mr. Lesar will be eligible to participate in the Company’s compensation and benefits plans and programs for similarly situated executives, including the Company’s change in control plan and incentive plans. The incentive plans include the Company’s Short-Term Incentive Plan (“STI”) and the Long-Term Incentive Plan (“LTI”). His initial target STI award level will be 125% of base salary (prorated for the period of time during the fiscal year in which he serves as President and Chief Executive Officer, relative to the entire year) and his target LTI award level will be 520% of base salary, which he was granted effective July 1, 2020.

On June 30, 2020, at the recommendation of the Board’s Governance Committee, the Board also appointed Earl M. Cummings to the Board effective July 1, 2020, with an initial term to expire on the date of the Company’s annual meeting of shareholders in 2021 and until his successor is elected and qualified. Mr. Cummings is expected to stand for election as director at the Company’s annual meeting of shareholders in 2021.

Since 2012, Mr. Cummings has served as Managing Partner of MCM Houston Properties, LLC, a real estate fund that invests in single family residential properties in Houston, Texas. In his role as Managing Partner, he is responsible for overall capital raising, investment, acquisition, and business strategies of the fund and its assets. Mr. Cummings also serves as Chief Executive Officer of The BTS Team, which began as an information technology and staffing firm providing solutions and services across various regions and evolved into a company that also invested financial resources in various industries to create value for shareholders and other stakeholders, and he previously served as its Chief Information Officer and Chairman of its board. He also served as Chief Executive Officer of BestAssets, Inc., a private company providing real estate portfolio management and related services. Active across communities and in non-profit board service, Mr. Cummings has served on the boards of the University of Houston Board of Visitors, C-STEM Robotics (where he was founding Chairman of the Executive Board for C-STEM), Yellowstone Academy and has also served on the advisory boards for KIPP Academy and Texas Southern University School of Business. Mr. Cummings holds a BBA of Management Information Systems from the University of Houston and an MBA from Pepperdine University.

There are no arrangements or understandings between Mr. Cummings and any other person pursuant to which he was selected as a director, and the Company is not aware of any transaction in which he has an interest requiring disclosure

under Item 404(a) of Regulation S-K. Committee appointments for Mr. Cummings will be determined at a later date. Mr. Cummings will be compensated for his service on the Board under the Company's standard arrangements for non-employee directors described in its proxy statement for the 2020 annual meeting of stockholders (which arrangements may be updated from time to time) and received an initial stock award approved by the Board under the CenterPoint Energy, Inc. Stock Plan for Outside Directors, as amended, valued at \$125,000, which represents a prorated amount of the annual stock award valued at \$150,000 received by each of the Company's non-employee directors serving on the Board as of early May 2020, which awards were previously disclosed on Current Reports on Form 8-K and/or related Section 16 filings.

As previously disclosed in connection with Mr. Somerhalder's appointment as Interim President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company, the Company agreed to provide certain compensation to Mr. Somerhalder, including, in the discretion of the Compensation Committee of the Board (the "Compensation Committee"), an annual cash bonus amount of up to \$1,000,000 (pro-rated for actual time served) in respect of the period during which Mr. Somerhalder serves as Interim President and Chief Executive Officer of the Company. Pursuant to these terms and effective as of the date of Mr. Somerhalder's resignation, the Compensation Committee approved the payment of a cash bonus of \$364,384 to Mr. Somerhalder.

A copy of the press release announcing the above is attached as Exhibit 99.1 to this Current Report on Form 8-K and incorporated herein by reference.

On July 1, 2020, the Compensation Committee approved new forms of award agreements under the LTI for performance awards and restricted stock unit awards granted to Mr. Lesar, as well as a new form of award agreement for restricted stock units (retention, service-based vesting) to be used for Mr. Lesar's sign-on grant and for grants to such other employees as the Compensation Committee may determine in the future. Among other things, the newly approved forms of award agreements for Mr. Lesar's performance awards and restricted stock unit awards provide that Mr. Lesar will be a "retirement eligible" participant, and therefore eligible for pro-rata vesting upon retirement, subject to achievement of the relevant performance metrics in the case of performance awards, after three years of service. Also under these award agreements, the award will fully vest, subject, in the case of performance awards, to the achievement of the relevant performance metrics, if Mr. Lesar satisfies the requirements for enhanced retirement, which are set forth in the agreements. The newly approved form of award agreement for restricted stock units for retention, service-based vesting amended the applicable vesting schedule to provide flexibility for multi-year vesting arrangements.

The description of the offer letter and forms of award agreements, as amended, is qualified in its entirety by reference to the full text of the offer letter and the forms of performance award agreement for the chief executive officer, restricted stock unit award agreement for the chief executive officer and restricted stock unit award agreement (retention, service-based vesting), as applicable, which are included as Exhibits 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4, respectively, hereto and incorporated by reference herein.

Item 9.01. Financial Statements and Exhibits.

(d) Exhibits.

EXHIBIT NUMBER	EXHIBIT DESCRIPTION
10.1	Offer Letter dated July 1, 2020
10.2	Form of Performance Award Agreement for the Chief Executive Officer
10.3	Form of Restricted Stock Unit Award Agreement for the Chief Executive Officer
10.4	Form of Restricted Stock Unit Award Agreement (Retention, Service-Based Vesting)
99.1	Press Release issued by the Company on June 30, 2020
104	Cover Page Interactive Data File - the cover page XBRL tags are embedded within the Inline XBRL document

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.

Date: July 2, 2020

By: /s/ Jason M. Ryan

Jason M. Ryan

Senior Vice President and General Counsel

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

CENTERPOINT ENERGY HOUSTON ELECTRIC, LLC

Date: July 2, 2020

By: /s/ Jason M. Ryan

Jason M. Ryan

Senior Vice President and General Counsel

SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

CENTERPOINT ENERGY RESOURCES CORP.

Date: July 2, 2020

By: /s/ Jason M. Ryan

Jason M. Ryan

Senior Vice President and General Counsel



1111 Louisiana Street
Houston, Texas, 77002

July 1, 2020

Mr. David J. Lesar

Dear Dave:

I am pleased to extend to you an offer of employment with CenterPoint Energy (the "Company"), as President & CEO, effective July 1, 2020. Your offer includes the following:

Salary:

\$112,500 per month (\$1,350,000 per year)

Incentive Compensation:

Short-Term Incentive (STI) plan participation - You will be eligible for participation in the 2020 STI plan. Your target award level is 125% of your 2020 plan year eligible earnings calculated from your hire date. Annual plan year award funding is based upon the achievement of a combination of corporate goals, approved by the Compensation Committee of the Board of Directors (Committee). Your actual payout, if any, is based on achievement of corporate goals as well as your individual performance.

Long-Term Incentive (LTI) plan participation - You will be eligible for participation in the CenterPoint Energy Long-Term Incentive Plan ("LTIP"). This incentive may be granted in a combination of CenterPoint Energy performance share units, restricted stock units, stock options, or other authorized form. On July 1, 2020, you have been granted a 2020-2022 LTIP award with a target incentive level of 520% of your annual base salary, subject to three-year cliff vesting. For your information, your 2020 award is made up of 30% time-based restricted stock units (RSUs), 40% performance-based RSUs based on total shareholder return versus peer companies and 30% performance-based RSUs based on achieving a cumulative net income goal. Your performance-

based awards will vest on December 31, 2022 and your time-based award will vest on July 1, 2023.

Executive Benefits:

You are eligible for several executive benefits including the Change In Control Plan. A summary of these benefits is included for your information.

Other Benefits:

Participation in CenterPoint Energy's industry competitive benefits package. A summary is included.

Vacation:

Four (4) weeks of vacation each calendar year until such time as your service qualifies you for additional vacation under the vacation policy.

Relocation Assistance:

To facilitate and expedite your relocation to the Company's headquarters in Houston, Texas, the Company will purchase your residence in Dallas, Texas for \$1,217,000 for anticipated resale by the Company. In addition, you will be provided relocation assistance subject to the Company's relocation policy, at no cost to you. If you accept the Company's reimbursement for relocation expenses, you will be required to repay 100% of the relocation expenses if you voluntarily resign within the first year after the effective date of your employment and 50% within two years.

Signing Incentive:

On July 1, 2020, you have been granted a one-time, time-based RSU award with a total value of \$1,000,000 of CenterPoint Energy stock, subject to ratable vesting over a three-year period. 1/3rd will vest upon your continued employment through the first anniversary of your hire date, 1/3rd will vest upon continued employment through the second anniversary of your hire date, and the remaining 1/3rd will vest upon your continued employment through the third anniversary of your hire date. Any unvested shares will be forfeited should you terminate employment prior to the applicable vesting date. Your award will be subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable award agreement.

Start Date:

July 1, 2020.

Conditions:

The Immigration Reform & Control Act of 1990 requires that all employers verify that persons hired by their firms are authorized to be employed in the United States. Documents verifying this eligibility will need to be provided upon reporting to work.

Where provisions in this letter refer to CenterPoint Energy's compensation or benefits plans or to policies of CenterPoint Energy, the applicable plan document or policy statement will govern administration of the plan or application of the policy in all cases.

This letter neither constitutes nor may be construed as an employment contract between the Company and you for any period of time. Employment with CenterPoint Energy is an at-will employment relationship governed by applicable federal and state laws.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

To indicate your acceptance of this employment offer, please sign the original offer letter and return to me. I look forward to working with you and I believe that you will be a great addition to our team and contribute to achieving our vision of leading the nation in delivering energy, service and value.

Sincerely,

/s/ Milton Carroll

Executive Chairman of the Board

/s/ David J. Lesar

David J. Lesar

July 2, 2020

Date

CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.
2009 LONG TERM INCENTIVE PLAN
PERFORMANCE AWARD AGREEMENT
FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
JANUARY 1, 20XX – DECEMBER 31, 20XX PERFORMANCE CYCLE

Pursuant to this Performance Award Agreement (the “Award Agreement”), **CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.** (the “Company”) hereby grants to <first_name> <last_name>, an employee of the Company, this Performance Award (the “Award”) covering the target number of shares, <shares_awarded>, of Common Stock (the “Target Shares”) pursuant to the **CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC. 2009 LONG TERM INCENTIVE PLAN** (the “Plan”). The number of Target Shares shall be subject to adjustment as provided in Section 14 of the Plan, conditioned upon the Company’s achievement of the Performance Goals over the course of the 20XX – 20XX Performance Cycle, and subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. **Relationship to the Plan.** The Award is subject to all of the terms, conditions and provisions of the Plan in effect on the date hereof and administrative interpretations thereunder, if any, adopted by the Committee. To the extent that any provision of this Award Agreement conflicts with the express terms of the Plan, it is hereby acknowledged and agreed that the terms of the Plan shall control and, if necessary, the applicable provisions of this Award Agreement shall be hereby deemed amended so as to carry out the purpose and intent of the Plan. References to the Participant herein also include the heirs or other legal representatives of the Participant.

2. **Definitions.** Except as defined herein, capitalized terms shall have the same meanings ascribed to them under the Plan. For purposes of this Award Agreement:

“**Achievement Percentage**” means the percentage of achievement determined by the Committee after the end of the Performance Cycle in accordance with Section 4 that reflects the extent to which the Company achieved the Performance Goals during the Performance Cycle.

“**Cause**” means the Participant’s (a) gross negligence in the performance of his or her duties, (b) intentional and continued failure to perform his or her duties, (c) intentional engagement in conduct which is materially injurious to the Company or its Subsidiaries (monetarily or otherwise) or (d) conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude. For this purpose, an act or failure to act on the part of the Participant will be deemed “intentional” only if done or omitted to be done by the Participant not in good faith and without reasonable belief that his or her action or omission was in the best interest of the Company, and no act or failure to act on the part of the Participant will be deemed “intentional” if it was due primarily to an error in judgment or negligence.

“**Change in Control Closing Date**” means the date a Change in Control is consummated during the Performance Cycle.

“**Change in Control Payment Date**” means the following:

(a) If the Change in Control is a Section 409A Change in Control, then the Change in Control Payment Date shall be not later than the 70th day after the Change in Control Closing Date; and

(b) If the Change in Control is a Non-Section 409A Change in Control, then the Change in Control Payment Date shall be a date following the last day of the Performance Cycle but no later than March 15th of the calendar year following the calendar year in which occurs the last day of the Performance Cycle; provided, however, in the case of the Participant's death or Separation from Service after the Change in Control but prior to such date, all shares not previously paid shall be paid not later than the 70th day after the Participant's Separation from Service date except as otherwise provided in Section 7(c).

“Covered Termination” means a Separation from Service that occurs within two years after the date upon which a Change in Control occurs and that does not result from any of the following:

- (a) death;
- (b) Disability;
- (c) involuntary termination for Cause; or
- (d) resignation by the Participant, unless such resignation is for Good Reason.

“Disability” means that the Participant is eligible for and in receipt of benefits under the Company's long-term disability plan.

“Employment” means employment with the Company or any of its Subsidiaries.

“Good Reason” means any one or more of the following events:

(a) a failure to maintain the Participant in the position, or a substantially equivalent position, with the Company and/or a Subsidiary, as the case may be, which the Participant held immediately prior to the Change in Control;

(b) a significant adverse change in the authorities, powers, functions, responsibilities, duties, or reporting structure which the Participant held immediately prior to the Change in Control;

(c) a significant reduction in the Participant's annual base salary as in effect immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

(d) a significant reduction in the Participant's qualified retirement benefits, nonqualified benefits and welfare benefits provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs; provided, however, that a contemporaneous diminution of or reduction in qualified retirement benefits and/or welfare benefits which is of general application and which uniformly

and contemporaneously reduces or diminishes the benefits of all covered employees shall be ignored and not be considered a reduction in remuneration for purposes of this paragraph (d);

(e) a significant reduction in the Participant's overall compensation opportunities (as contrasted with overall compensation actually paid or awarded) under a short-term incentive plan, a long-term incentive plan or other equity plan (or in such substitute or alternative plans) from that provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

(f) a change in the location of the Participant's principal place of employment with the Company by more than 50 miles from the location where the Participant was principally employed immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs; or

(g) a failure by the Company to provide directors and officers liability insurance covering the Participant comparable to that provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

provided, however, that no later than 30 days after learning of the action (or inaction) described herein as the basis for a termination of employment for Good Reason, the Participant shall advise the Company in writing that the action (or inaction) constitutes grounds for a termination of his or her Employment for Good Reason, in which event the Company shall have 30 days (the "Cure Period") to correct such action (or inaction). If such action (or inaction) is not corrected prior to the end of the Cure Period, then the Participant may terminate his or her Employment with the Company for Good Reason within the 30-day period following the end of the Cure Period by giving written notice to the Company. If such action (or inaction) is corrected before the end of the Cure Period, then the Participant shall not be entitled to terminate his or her Employment for Good Reason as a result of such action (or inaction).

"Non-Section 409A Change in Control" means a Change in Control that is not a Section 409A Change in Control.

"Performance Cycle" means the period beginning on January 1, 20XX and ending on December 31, 20XX.

"Performance Goal" means the standards established by the Committee for the Performance Cycle to determine in whole or in part the number of Vested Shares pursuant to Section 4, which are specified in a separate document provided with this Award Agreement and made a part hereof for all purposes.

"Retirement" means a Separation from Service with at least three years of Employment; *provided, however*, that such Separation from Service is not by the Company for Cause or due to Disability.

"Sale of a Subsidiary" means, with respect to the Subsidiary for which the Participant is performing services at the time of the applicable event, the occurrence of any of the following events:

(a) A change in the ownership of such Subsidiary, as determined in accordance with Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-3(i)(5)(v) or

(b) A change in the ownership of a substantial portion of such Subsidiary's assets, as determined in accordance with Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-3(i)(5)(vii).

If the Subsidiary is not a corporation, the above referenced Treasury Regulations may be applied by analogy in accordance with guidance issued under Section 409A.

"Section 409A" means Code Section 409A and the Treasury regulations and guidance issued thereunder.

"Section 409A Change in Control" means a Change in Control that satisfies the requirements of a change in control for purposes of Code Section 409A(a)(2)(A)(v) and the Treasury regulations and guidance issued thereunder.

"Separation from Service" means a separation from service with the Company or any of its Subsidiaries within the meaning of Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-1(h) (or any successor regulation).

"Target Shares" means the actual number of shares originally granted to the Participant as specified in this Award Agreement.

"Vested Shares" means the shares of Common Stock actually distributable to the Participant following the Participant's satisfaction of the vesting provisions of Section 5 and, if applicable, the determination by the Committee of the extent to which the Company has achieved the Performance Goals for the Performance Cycle pursuant to Section 4.

3. Establishment of Award Account. The grant of Target Shares pursuant to this Award Agreement shall be implemented by a credit to a bookkeeping account maintained by the Company evidencing the Participant's unfunded and unsecured right to receive shares of Common Stock of the Company, which right shall be subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in the Plan and to the further terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in this Award Agreement. Except as otherwise provided in this Award Agreement, the Target Shares of Common Stock credited to the Participant's bookkeeping account may not be sold, assigned, transferred, pledged or otherwise encumbered until the Participant has been registered as a holder of shares of Common Stock on the records of the Company as provided in Section 6 or 7 of this Award Agreement.

4. Award Opportunity.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in Section 5(b)(ii), Section 5(b)(iii) or Section 6, the Participant's Vested Shares shall be the product of the number of Target Shares and the Achievement Percentage that is based upon the Committee's determination of whether and to what extent the Performance Goals have been achieved during the Performance Cycle.

(b) No later than 60 days after the close of the Performance Cycle, the Committee shall determine the extent to which each Performance Goal has been achieved. If the Company has performed at or above the threshold level of achievement for a Performance Goal, the Achievement Percentage shall be between X% and X%. In no event shall the

Achievement Percentage exceed X%. Upon completing its determination of the level at which the Performance Goals have been achieved, the Committee shall notify the Participant, in the form and manner as determined by the Committee, of the number of Vested Shares that will be issued to the Participant pursuant to Section 5.

5. Vesting of Shares.

(a) Unless earlier forfeited in accordance with Section 5(b)(i) or unless earlier vested in accordance with Section 5(b)(ii), Section 6(b), Section 6(c) or Section 6(d), the Participant's right to receive shares pursuant to this Award Agreement, if any, shall vest on the last day of the Performance Cycle (with the number of shares, if any, based on the Committee's determination that each Performance Goal has been met (as provided in Section 4)). As soon as administratively practicable, but in no event later than 70 days, after the close of the Performance Cycle, the Committee shall notify the Participant as required by Section 4 of the level at which the Performance Goals established for the Performance Cycle have been achieved.

(b) If the Participant's Separation from Service date occurs prior to the close of the Performance Cycle and the occurrence of a vesting event described in Section 6(b), 6(c), or 6(d) (in connection with a Change in Control or a Sale of a Subsidiary), then the applicable of the following clauses shall apply with respect to the Target Shares subject to this Award Agreement:

(i) Forfeiture of Entire Award. If the Participant's Employment is terminated, such that the Participant has a Separation from Service, by the Company or any of its Subsidiaries or by the Participant for any reason other than due to death, Disability or Retirement, then the Participant's right to receive any Target Shares shall be forfeited in its entirety as of the date of such Separation from Service.

(ii) Death or Disability. If the Participant's Employment is terminated due to death or Disability, the Participant's right to receive the Target Shares shall vest on the date of such Separation from Service. The Participant's right to receive any additional shares pursuant to this Award Agreement shall be forfeited at such time.

(iii) Retirement. If the Participant's Employment is terminated due to Retirement, the Participant's right to receive shares pursuant to this Award Agreement, if any, shall vest on the date the Committee determines that each Performance Goal has been met (as provided in Section 4) in a pro-rata amount determined by multiplying (1) the number of shares awarded to the Participant based upon the Committee's determination of achievement of Performance Goals as provided in Section 4, by (2) a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of days elapsed in the Performance Cycle as of the date of the Participant's Separation from Service, and the denominator of which is the total number of days in the Performance Cycle.

(iv) Enhanced Retirement. If the Participant's Employment is terminated due to Retirement and all of the following requirements are satisfied, then in lieu of

the rights and benefits set forth in Section 5(b)(iii), on the date the Committee determines that each Performance Goal has been met (as provided in Section 4), the Participant shall vest in the right to receive the total number of Vested Shares awarded to the Participant based upon the Committee's determination of achievement of Performance Goals as provided in Section 4:

- (1) the Participant's Retirement occurs on or after the first anniversary of the beginning of the Performance Cycle;
- (2) the Participant provides to the Company a transition plan;
- (3) the Participant provides reasonable advance written notice (as determined by the Committee) of the Participant's Retirement to the Chief Human Resources Officer; and
- (4) the Committee approves providing the benefits set forth in this Section 5(b)(iv) above, whose approval must occur prior to the Participant's Separation from Service and is at the sole discretion of the Committee.

(c) In accordance with the provisions of this Section 5, the Vested Shares shall be distributed as provided in Section 7 hereof.

6. Change in Control.

(a) Assumption or Substitution. In the event of a Change in Control, the surviving, continuing, successor, or purchasing corporation or other business entity or parent thereof, as the case may be (the "Acquiror"), may, without the Participant's consent, either assume or continue the Company's rights and obligations under this Award Agreement or provide a substantially equivalent award in substitution for the shares subject to this Award.

(b) Vesting Upon a Change in Control. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary and without regard to the Performance Goals, if (i) there is a Change in Control during the Performance Cycle and prior to the Participant's Separation from Service due to death or Disability and (ii) the Acquiror does not assume or continue this Award or provide a substantially equivalent award in substitution for this Award pursuant to Section 6(a), then upon the Change in Control Closing Date, the Participant's right to receive the Target Shares shall vest. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the Change in Control occurs after the Participant has had a Separation from Service due to Retirement, unless the requirements set forth in Section 5(b)(iv)(1), (2), (3), and (4) are satisfied, the Target Shares such Participant shall receive under this Section 6(b) shall be pro-rated based on the number of days that elapsed in the Performance Cycle as of the date of the Participant's Separation from Service over the total number of days in the Performance Cycle.

(c) Vesting Upon a Covered Termination. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary and without regard to the Performance Goals, if the Participant experiences a Covered Termination during the Performance Cycle, then, upon the date of the Covered Termination, the Participant's right to receive the Target Shares shall vest.

(d) Vesting Upon the Sale of a Subsidiary. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary and without regard to the Performance Goals, if (i) a Sale of a Subsidiary with respect to the Participant occurs during the Performance Cycle and (ii) the Participant's employment with the Company and all Subsidiaries (other than any entity that ceases to be a Subsidiary as a result of the Sale of a Subsidiary) ceases upon and in connection with such Sale of a Subsidiary, then upon such Sale of a Subsidiary, the Participant's right to receive the Target Shares shall vest in the proportion of the number of days elapsed in the Performance Cycle as of the date of the Sale of a Subsidiary by the total number of days in the Performance Cycle. The Participant's right to receive any additional shares pursuant to this Award Agreement shall be forfeited at such time.

(e) Distributions Upon a Change in Control or Sale of a Subsidiary. If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 6(b), 6(c), or 6(d) hereof, then this Award shall be settled by the distribution to the Participant of:

(1) shares of Common Stock equal to the Target Shares (or such pro-rated amount as set forth in Section 6(b) or 6(d), if applicable); *plus*

(2) Dividend Equivalents on such shares of Common Stock in the form of shares of Common Stock (rounded up to the nearest whole share) for the period commencing at the beginning of the Performance Cycle and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution.

In lieu of the foregoing distribution in shares, the Committee, in its sole discretion, may direct that such distribution be made to the Participant in a lump cash payment equal to:

(1) the product of (i) the Fair Market Value per share of Common Stock on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution and (ii) the Target Shares (or such pro-rated amount as set forth in Section 6(b) or 6(d), if applicable); *plus*

(2) Dividend Equivalents on such shares of Common Stock for the period commencing at the beginning of the Performance Cycle and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution.

Such distribution, whether in the form of shares of Common Stock or, if directed by the Committee, in cash, shall satisfy the rights of the Participant and the obligations of the Company under this Award Agreement in full.

(f) Timing of Distribution.

(1) *No Assumption or Substitution.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 6(b), distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 6(e) on the Change in Control Payment Date.

(2) *Covered Termination.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 6(c) on account of a Covered Termination, distributions shall be

made in accordance with Section 6(e) not later than the 70th day after the Participant's Separation from Service date except as otherwise provided in Section 7(c).

(3) *Sale of a Subsidiary.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 6(d), distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 6(e) not later than the 70th day after the date the Sale of a Subsidiary is consummated.

7. Distribution of Vested Shares.

(a) If the Participant's right to receive shares pursuant to this Award Agreement has vested pursuant to Section 5(a) or Section 5(b)(iii) or (iv), a number of shares of Common Stock equal to the number of Vested Shares shall be distributed no later than March 15th of the calendar year following the calendar year in which occurs the last day of the Performance Cycle.

(b) If the Participant's right to receive shares pursuant to this Award Agreement has vested pursuant to Section 5(b)(ii), a number of shares of Common Stock equal to the number of Vested Shares shall be distributed not later than the 70th day after the Participant's Separation from Service date except as otherwise provided in Section 7(c).

(c) With respect to any benefits payable hereunder upon the Participant's Separation from Service (other than a Separation from Service due to the Participant's death), if as of the Participant's Separation from Service date, the Participant is a "specified employee" (within the meaning of Section 409A(a)(2)(B)), then such benefits shall not be distributed until the date that is the earlier of (x) the second business day following the end of the six-month period commencing on the Participant's Separation from Service date or (y) the Participant's date of death, if death occurs during such six-month period.

(d) The Company shall have the right to withhold applicable taxes from any such distribution of Vested Shares or from other compensation payable to the Participant at the time of such vesting and distribution pursuant to Section 11 of the Plan (but subject to compliance with the requirements of Section 409A, if applicable).

(e) Upon distribution of the Vested Shares pursuant to this Section 7, the Participant shall also be entitled to receive Dividend Equivalents for the Vested Shares for the period after the commencement of the Performance Cycle but prior to the date the Vested Shares are delivered to the Participant (in accordance with the requirements of Section 409A, to the extent applicable).

8. Confidentiality. The Participant agrees that the terms of this Award Agreement are confidential and that any disclosure to anyone for any purpose whatsoever (save and except disclosure to financial institutions as part of a financial statement, financial, tax and legal advisors, or as required by law) by the Participant or his or her agents, representatives, heirs, children, spouse, employees or spokespersons shall be a breach of this Award Agreement and the Company may elect to revoke the grant made hereunder, seek damages, plus interest and reasonable attorneys' fees, and take any other lawful actions to enforce this Award Agreement.

9. Participant Obligations.

(a) Confidentiality. The Participant acknowledges that in the course of his or her employment with the Company, the Company agrees to provide to the Participant Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business and has previously provided the Participant other such Confidential Information. In return for this and other consideration, provided under this Award Agreement, the Participant agrees that he or she will not, while employed by the Company and thereafter, disclose or make available to any other person or entity, or use for his own personal gain, any Confidential Information, except for such disclosures as required in the performance of his or her duties hereunder or as may otherwise be required by law or legal process (in which case the Participant shall notify the Company of such legal or judicial proceeding by a non-governmental party as soon as practicable following his receipt of notice of such a proceeding, and permit the Company to seek to protect its interests and information). Nothing in this Award Agreement, however, limits or precludes Participant from making a good faith voluntary report, charge, complaint, or claim to or providing truthful testimony and documents as required by law or under oath pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or request by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission or any other federal, state, or local government agency or commission ("Government Agencies"). Participant further understands that this Award Agreement does not limit Participant's ability to communicate with any Government Agencies or otherwise participate in any investigation or proceeding that may be conducted by any Government Agency, including providing documents or other information to the Government Agency, without notice to the Company. For purposes of this Award Agreement, "**Confidential Information**" shall mean any and all information, data and knowledge that has been created, discovered, developed or otherwise become known to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures or in which property rights have been assigned or otherwise conveyed to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures, which information, data or knowledge has commercial value in the business in which the Company is engaged, except such information, data or knowledge as is or becomes known to the public without violation of the terms of this Award Agreement. By way of illustration, but not limitation, Confidential Information includes business trade secrets, secrets concerning the Company's plans and strategies, nonpublic information concerning material market opportunities, technical trade secrets, processes, formulas, know-how, improvements, discoveries, developments, designs, inventions, techniques, marketing plans, manuals, records of research, reports, memoranda, computer software, strategies, forecasts, new products, unpublished financial information, projections, licenses, prices, costs, and employee, customer and supplier lists or parts thereof.

(b) Return of Property. The Participant agrees that at the time of his or her Separation from Service, he or she will deliver to the Company (and will not keep in his or her possession, recreate or deliver to anyone else) all Confidential Information as well as all other devices, records, data, notes, reports, proposals, lists, correspondence, specifications, drawings, blueprints, sketches, materials, equipment, customer or client lists or information, or any other documents or property (including all reproductions of the aforementioned items) belonging to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures, regardless of whether such items were prepared by the Participant.

(c) Non-Solicitation and Non-Competition.

(1) *Non-Solicitation.* For consideration provided under this Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information (as defined in Section 9(a)) regarding the Company and the Company's business, the Participant agrees that, while employed by the Company and for one year following his or her Separation from Service, he or she shall not, without the prior written consent of the Company, directly or indirectly, (i) hire or induce, entice or solicit (or attempt to induce, entice or solicit) any employee of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures to leave the employment of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures or (ii) solicit or attempt to solicit the business of any customer or acquisition prospect of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures with whom the Participant had any actual contact while employed at the Company.

(2) *Non-Competition.* For consideration provided under this Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business, the Participant agrees that while employed by the Company and for one year following a Separation from Service he or she will not, without the prior written consent of the Company, acting alone or in conjunction with others, either directly or indirectly, engage in any business that is in competition with the Company or accept employment with or render services to such a business as an officer, agent, employee, independent contractor or consultant, or otherwise engage in activities that are in competition with the Company.

(3) *Restricted Area.* The restrictions contained in this Section 9(c) are limited to a 50-mile radius around any geographical area in which the Company engages (or has definite plans to engage) in operations or the marketing of its products or services at the time of the Participant's Separation from Service.

(d) Restrictions Reasonable. The Participant acknowledges that the restrictive covenants under this Section 9, for which the Participant received valuable consideration from the Company as provided in this Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business are ancillary to otherwise enforceable provisions of this Award Agreement that the consideration provided by the Company gives rise to the Company's interest in restraining the Participant from competing and that the restrictive covenants are designed to enforce the Participant's consideration or return promises under this Award Agreement. Additionally, the Participant acknowledges that these restrictive covenants contain limitations as to time, geographical area, and scope of activity to be restrained that are reasonable and do not impose a greater restraint than is necessary to protect the goodwill or other legitimate business interests of the Company, including, but not limited to, the Company's need to protect its Confidential Information.

(e) Violations. If the Participant violates any provision of this Section 9, the Participant shall not be entitled to receive any amounts that would otherwise be payable to the Participant with respect to this Award, and such amounts shall be forfeited. If the Participant violates any provision of this Section 9 after amounts under this Award have

been paid or if the Company learns of the violation after amounts under this Award have been paid, the Participant shall repay to the Company the Common Shares (or the equivalent value thereof determined as of the date of the Company's demand) or the cash received, as the case may be, within thirty (30) days of receiving a demand from the Company for the repayment of the Award. Further, the Company shall be entitled to an award of attorneys' fees incurred with securing any relief hereunder and/or pursuant to a breach or threatened breach of this Section 9.

10. Notices. For purposes of this Award Agreement, notices to the Company shall be deemed to have been duly given upon receipt of written notice by the Corporate Secretary of CenterPoint Energy, Inc., 1111 Louisiana, Houston, Texas 77002, or to such other address as the Company may furnish to the Participant.

Notices to the Participant shall be deemed effectively delivered or given upon personal, electronic, or postal delivery of written notice to the Participant, the place of Employment of the Participant, the address on record for the Participant at the human resources department of the Company, or such other address as the Participant hereafter designates by written notice to the Company.

11. Shareholder Rights. The Participant shall have no rights of a shareholder with respect to the Target Shares, unless and until the Participant is registered as the holder of shares of Common Stock.

12. Successors and Assigns. This Award Agreement shall bind and inure to the benefit of and be enforceable by the Participant, the Company and their respective permitted successors and assigns except as expressly prohibited herein and in the Plan. Notwithstanding anything herein or in the Plan to the contrary, the Target Shares are transferable by the Participant to Immediate Family Members, Immediate Family Member trusts, and Immediate Family Member partnerships pursuant to Section 13 of the Plan.

13. No Employment Guaranteed. Nothing in this Award Agreement shall give the Participant any rights to (or impose any obligations for) continued Employment by the Company or any Subsidiary or any successor thereto, nor shall it give such entities any rights (or impose any obligations) with respect to continued performance of duties by the Participant.

14. Waiver. Failure of either party to demand strict compliance with any of the terms or conditions hereof shall not be deemed a waiver of such term or condition, nor shall any waiver by either party of any right hereunder at any one time or more times be deemed a waiver of such right at any other time or times. No term or condition hereof shall be deemed to have been waived except by written instrument.

15. Compliance with Section 409A. It is the intent of the Company and the Participant that the provisions of the Plan and this Award Agreement comply with Section 409A and will be interpreted and administered consistent therewith. Accordingly, (i) no adjustment to the Award pursuant to Section 14 of the Plan and (ii) no substitutions of the benefits under this Award Agreement, in each case, shall be made in a manner that results in noncompliance with the requirements of Section 409A, to the extent applicable.

16. Compliance with Recoupment Policy. Any amounts payable, paid, or distributed under this Award Agreement are subject to the recoupment policy of the Company as in effect from time to time.

17. Modification of Award Agreement. Any modification of this Award Agreement shall be binding only if evidenced in writing and signed by an authorized representative of the Company.

CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.
2009 LONG TERM INCENTIVE PLAN
FORM OF RESTRICTED STOCK UNIT AWARD AGREEMENT
FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Pursuant to this Restricted Stock Unit Award Agreement (“Award Agreement”), **CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.** (the “Company”) hereby grants to <first_name> <last_name>, an employee of the Company, on <award_date> (the “Award Date”), a restricted stock unit award of <shares_awarded> units of Common Stock of the Company (the “RSU Award”) pursuant to the **CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC. 2009 LONG TERM INCENTIVE PLAN** (the “Plan”), subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions described in the Plan and as follows:

1. **Relationship to the Plan; Definitions.** This RSU Award is subject to all of the terms, conditions and provisions of the Plan in effect on the date hereof and administrative interpretations thereunder, if any, adopted by the Committee. Except as defined herein, capitalized terms shall have the same meanings ascribed to them under the Plan. To the extent that any provision of this Award Agreement conflicts with the express terms of the Plan, it is hereby acknowledged and agreed that the terms of the Plan shall control and, if necessary, the applicable provisions of this Award Agreement shall be hereby deemed amended so as to carry out the purpose and intent of the Plan. References to the Participant herein also include the heirs or other legal representatives of the Participant. For purposes of this Award Agreement:

“**Award Date**” means the date this RSU Award is granted to the Participant as specified in this Award Agreement.

“**Cause**” means the Participant's (a) gross negligence in the performance of his or her duties, (b) intentional and continued failure to perform his or her duties, (c) intentional engagement in conduct which is materially injurious to the Company or its Subsidiaries (monetarily or otherwise) or (d) conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude. For this purpose, an act or failure to act on the part of the Participant will be deemed “intentional” only if done or omitted to be done by the Participant not in good faith and without reasonable belief that his or her action or omission was in the best interest of the Company, and no act or failure to act on the part of the Participant will be deemed “intentional” if it was due primarily to an error in judgment or negligence.

“**Change in Control Closing Date**” means the date a Change in Control is consummated.

“**Change in Control Payment Date**” means the following:

(a) If the Change in Control is a Section 409A Change in Control, then the Change in Control Payment Date shall be not later than the 70th day after the Change in Control Closing Date; and

(b) If the Change in Control is a Non-Section 409A Change in Control, then the Change in Control Payment Date shall be the Vesting Date(s) on which the units are paid under Section 3 hereof for the number of units indicated in Section 3 assuming continuous Employment by the Participant as of such Vesting Date(s); provided, however, in the case of the Participant's death or Separation from Service prior to the Vesting Date(s), all shares not previously paid shall be paid not later than the 70th day after the Participant's Termination Date except as otherwise provided in Section 7.

“Covered Termination” means a Separation from Service that occurs within two years after the date upon which a Change in Control occurs and that does not result from any of the following:

- (a) death;
- (b) Disability;
- (c) involuntary termination for Cause; or
- (d) resignation by the Participant, unless such resignation is for Good Reason.

“Disability” means that the Participant is both eligible for and in receipt of benefits under the Company's long-term disability plan.

“Employment” means employment with the Company or any of its Subsidiaries.

“Good Reason” means any one or more of the following events:

(a) a failure to maintain the Participant in the position, or a substantially equivalent position, with the Company and/or a Subsidiary, as the case may be, which the Participant held immediately prior to the Change in Control;

(b) a significant adverse change in the authorities, powers, functions, responsibilities, duties, or reporting structure which the Participant held immediately prior to the Change in Control;

(c) a significant reduction in the Participant's annual base salary as in effect immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

(d) a significant reduction in the Participant's qualified retirement benefits, nonqualified benefits and welfare benefits provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs; provided, however, that a contemporaneous diminution of or reduction in qualified retirement

benefits and/or welfare benefits which is of general application and which uniformly and contemporaneously reduces or diminishes the benefits of all covered employees shall be ignored and not be considered a reduction in remuneration for purposes of this paragraph (d);

(e) a significant reduction in the Participant's overall compensation opportunities (as contrasted with overall compensation actually paid or awarded) under a short-term incentive plan, a long-term incentive plan or other equity plan (or in such substitute or alternative plans) from that provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

(f) a change in the location of the Participant's principal place of employment with the Company by more than 50 miles from the location where the Participant was principally employed immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs; or

(g) a failure by the Company to provide directors and officers liability insurance covering the Participant comparable to that provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

provided, however, that no later than 30 days after learning of the action (or inaction) described herein as the basis for a termination of employment for Good Reason, the Participant shall advise the Company in writing that the action (or inaction) constitutes grounds for a termination of his or her Employment for Good Reason, in which event the Company shall have 30 days (the "Cure Period") to correct such action (or inaction). If such action (or inaction) is not corrected prior to the end of the Cure Period, then the Participant may terminate his or her Employment with the Company for Good Reason within the 30-day period following the end of the Cure Period by giving written notice to the Company. If such action (or inaction) is corrected before the end of the Cure Period, then the Participant shall not be entitled to terminate his or her Employment for Good Reason as a result of such action (or inaction).

"Non-Section 409A Change in Control" means a Change in Control that is not a Section 409A Change in Control.

"Retirement" means a Separation from Service with at least three years of Employment; *provided, however*, that such Separation from Service is not by the Company for Cause or due to Disability.

"Sale of a Subsidiary" means, with respect to the Subsidiary for which the Participant is performing services at the time of the applicable event, the occurrence of any of the following events:

(a) A change in the ownership of such Subsidiary, as determined in accordance with Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-3(i)(5)(v) or

(b) A change in the ownership of a substantial portion of such Subsidiary's assets, as determined in accordance with Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-3(i)(5)(vii).

If the Subsidiary is not a corporation, the above referenced Treasury Regulations may be applied by analogy in accordance with guidance issued under Section 409A.

"Section 409A" means Code Section 409A and the Treasury regulations and guidance issued thereunder.

"Section 409A Change in Control" means a Change in Control that satisfies the requirements of a change in control for purposes of Code Section 409A(a)(2)(A)(v) and the Treasury regulations and guidance issued thereunder.

"Separation from Service" means a separation from service with the Company or any of its Subsidiaries within the meaning of Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-1(h) (or any successor regulation).

"Termination Date" means the date of the Participant's Separation from Service.

"Vesting Date" means one or more vesting dates as specified in Section 3.

2. Establishment of RSU Award Account. The grant of units of Common Stock of the Company pursuant to this Award Agreement shall be implemented by a credit to a bookkeeping account maintained by the Company evidencing the accrual in favor of the Participant of the unfunded and unsecured right to receive a corresponding number of shares of Common Stock, which right shall be subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in the Plan and to the further terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in this Award Agreement. Except as otherwise provided in Section 12 of this Award Agreement, the units of Common Stock credited to the Participant's bookkeeping account may not be sold, assigned, transferred, pledged or otherwise encumbered until the Participant has been registered as the holder of shares of Common Stock on the records of the Company, as provided in Sections 4, 5 6, or 7 of this Award Agreement.

3. Vesting of RSU Award. Unless earlier (a) vested or forfeited pursuant to this Section 3 or Section 4 below or (b) vested in connection with a Change in Control pursuant to Section 5 below, the Participant's right to receive shares of Common Stock under this Award Agreement shall vest with respect to the number of units and on the Vesting Date(s) as shown in the following schedule:

<vesting_schedule>

Except as provided in Sections 4 and 5 below, the Participant must be in continuous Employment during the period beginning on the Award Date and ending on the Vesting Date(s) in order for the units (as indicated above) of the RSU Award to vest on such Vesting Date(s); otherwise, all unvested units shall be forfeited as of the Participant's Termination Date.

4. Effect of Separation from Service; Timing of Distribution.

(a) Death or Disability. Notwithstanding Section 3 above, if the Participant's Termination Date occurs prior to (i) the final Vesting Date and (ii) the occurrence of a vesting event described in Section 5(b), 5(c), or 5(d) (in connection with a Change in Control or a Sale of a Subsidiary), and is due to the Participant's death or Separation from Service due to Disability, then the Participant shall vest in the right to receive the total number of unvested units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement.

(b) Retirement. Notwithstanding Section 3 above, if the Participant's Termination Date occurs prior to (i) the final Vesting Date and (ii) the occurrence of a vesting event described in Section 5(b), 5(c), or 5(d) (in connection with a Change in Control or a Sale of a Subsidiary), and is due to the Participant's Separation from Service due to Retirement, then the Participant shall vest in the right to receive a number of the shares of Common Stock (rounded up to the nearest whole share) with respect to the unvested portion of this RSU Award determined by multiplying (A) the total number of units of Common Stock covered by this RSU Award by (B) a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of days that have elapsed from the Award Date to the Participant's Termination Date, and the denominator of which is the total number of days from the Award Date until the final Vesting Date.

(c) Enhanced Retirement. If the Participant is otherwise entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(b) hereof due to the Participant's Retirement and all of the following requirements are satisfied, then in lieu of the benefits set forth in Section 4(b), the Participant shall vest, upon Retirement, in the right to receive the total number of unvested units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement:

(1) the Participant's Termination Date occurs on or after the January 1 immediately following the Award Date;

(2) the Participant provides to the Company a transition plan;

(3) the Participant provides reasonable advance written notice (as determined by the Committee) of the Participant's Retirement to the Chief Human Resources Officer; and

(4) the Committee approves providing the benefits set forth in this Section 4(c) above, whose approval must occur prior to the Participant's Termination Date and is at the sole discretion of the Committee.

(d) Timing of Distribution.

(1) *Death or Disability*. If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(a) hereof due to the Participant's death or Separation from Service due to Disability, then the number of shares of Common Stock determined in accordance with the applicable provision of this Section 4 shall be distributed not later than the

70th day after the Participant's Termination Date except as otherwise provided in Section 7.

(2) *Retirement.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(b) or Section 4(c) hereof due to the Participant's Separation from Service due to Retirement, then the number of shares of Common Stock determined in accordance with Section 4(b) or Section 4(c), as applicable, shall be distributed on or within 70 days after the Vesting Date(s) upon which such units would be paid under Section 3 hereof assuming continuous Employment by the Participant as of such Vesting Date(s) or if a Change in Control that is a Section 409A Change in Control occurs earlier, on or within 70 days after the Change in Control Closing Date.

(e) Dividend Equivalents. Upon the date of distribution of shares of Common Stock under this Section 4, the Participant shall also be entitled to receive Dividend Equivalents for the period from the Award Date to the date such vested shares of Common Stock are distributed to the Participant (in accordance with the requirements of Section 409A, to the extent applicable).

5. Change in Control.

(a) Assumption or Substitution. In the event of a Change in Control, the surviving, continuing, successor, or purchasing corporation or other business entity or parent thereof, as the case may be (the "Acquiror"), may, without the Participant's consent, either assume or continue the Company's rights and obligations under this Award Agreement or provide a substantially equivalent award in substitution for the units subject to this RSU Award.

(b) Vesting Upon a Change in Control. Notwithstanding any provision of this Award Agreement to the contrary, if (i) there is a Change in Control and the Change in Control Closing Date occurs during the Participant's Employment and prior to the final Vesting Date and any vesting event under Section 4 above and (ii) the Acquiror does not assume or continue this RSU Award or provide a substantially equivalent award in substitution for this RSU Award pursuant to Section 5(a), then, upon the Change in Control Closing Date, the Participant's right to receive the unvested units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement shall be fully vested.

(c) Vesting Upon a Covered Termination. Notwithstanding any provision of this Award Agreement to the contrary, if the Participant experiences a Covered Termination prior to the final Vesting Date, then, upon the date of the Covered Termination, the Participant's right to receive any unvested units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement shall be fully vested.

(d) Vesting Upon the Sale of a Subsidiary. Notwithstanding any provision of this Award Agreement to the contrary, if (i) there is a Sale of a Subsidiary with respect to the Participant prior to the final Vesting Date and (ii) the Participant's employment with the Company and all Subsidiaries (other than any entity that ceases to be a Subsidiary as a result

of the Sale of a Subsidiary) ceases upon and in connection with such Sale of a Subsidiary, then upon such Sale of a Subsidiary, the Participant shall vest in the right to receive a number of the shares of Common Stock (rounded up to the nearest whole share) with respect to the unvested portion of this RSU Award determined by multiplying (A) the total number of units of Common Stock covered by this RSU Award by (B) a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of days that have elapsed from the Award Date to the date the Sale of a Subsidiary is consummated, and the denominator of which is the total number of days from the Award Date until the final Vesting Date. The Participant's right to receive any additional shares pursuant to this Award Agreement shall be forfeited at such time.

(e) Distributions Upon a Change in Control or Sale of a Subsidiary. If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 5(b), 5(c), or 5(d) hereof, then this RSU Award shall be settled by one or more distributions to the Participant of:

(1) The number of units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement not previously vested or forfeited pursuant to Sections 3 or 4 above (or such pro-rated amount as set forth in Section 5(d), if applicable), *plus*

(2) Dividend Equivalents on such units of Common Stock in the form of shares of Common Stock (rounded up to the nearest whole share) for the period commencing on the Award Date and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution.

In lieu of the foregoing distribution in shares, the Committee, in its sole discretion, may direct that such distribution be made to the Participant in one or more cash payments equal to:

(1) The product of (i) the Fair Market Value per share of Common Stock on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution and (ii) the number of units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement not previously vested or forfeited pursuant to Sections 3 or 4 above (or such pro-rated amount as set forth in Section 5(d), if applicable), *plus*

(2) Dividend Equivalents on such units of Common Stock for the period commencing on the Award Date and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution.

Such distribution under this Section 5, whether in the form of shares of Common Stock or, if directed by the Committee, in cash, shall satisfy the rights of the Participant and the obligations of the Company under this Award Agreement in full.

(f) Timing of Distribution.

(1) *No Assumption or Substitution.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 5(b), distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 5(e) on the Change in Control Payment Date.

(2) *Covered Termination.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 5(c) on account of a Covered Termination, distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 5(e) not later than the 70th day after the Participant's Termination Date except as otherwise provided in Section 7.

(3) *Sale of a Subsidiary.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 5(d), distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 5(e) not later than the 70th day after the date the Sale of a Subsidiary is consummated.

6. Payment of RSU Award Under Section 3. Upon the vesting of the Participant's right to receive a number of the shares of Common Stock pursuant to Section 3 under this Award Agreement, such shares of Common Stock will be distributed not later than the 70th day after the applicable Vesting Date. Moreover, upon the date of distribution of shares of Common Stock, the Participant shall also be entitled to receive Dividend Equivalents for the period commencing on the Award Date and ending on the date such vested shares of Common Stock are distributed to the Participant (in accordance with the requirements of Section 409A, to the extent applicable).

7. Delay of Distribution to Certain Participants. With respect to any benefits payable hereunder upon the Participant's Separation from Service (other than a Separation from Service due to the Participant's death), if as of the Participant's Termination Date, the Participant is a "specified employee" (within the meaning of Section 409A(a)(2)(B)), then such benefits shall not be distributed until the date that is the earlier of (x) the second business day following the end of the six-month period commencing on the Participant's Termination Date or (y) the Participant's date of death, if death occurs during such six-month period.

8. Confidentiality. The Participant agrees that the terms of this Award Agreement are confidential and that any disclosure to anyone for any purpose whatsoever (save and except disclosure to financial institutions as part of a financial statement, financial, tax and legal advisors, or as required by law) by the Participant or his or her agents, representatives, heirs, children, spouse, employees or spokespersons shall be a breach of this Award Agreement and the Company may elect to revoke the grant made hereunder, seek damages, plus interest and reasonable attorneys' fees, and take any other lawful actions to enforce this Award Agreement.

9. Participant Obligations.

(a) Confidentiality. The Participant acknowledges that in the course of his or her employment with the Company, the Company agrees to provide to the Participant Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business and has previously provided the Participant other such Confidential Information. In return for this and other consideration, provided under this Award Agreement, the Participant agrees that he or she will not, while employed by the Company and thereafter, disclose or make available to any other person or entity, or use for his own personal gain, any Confidential Information, except for such disclosures as required in the performance of his or her duties hereunder or as may otherwise be required by law or legal process (in which case the Participant shall notify the Company of such legal or judicial proceeding by a non-governmental party as soon as practicable following his receipt of notice of such a proceeding, and permit the

Company to seek to protect its interests and information). Nothing in this Award Agreement, however, limits or precludes Participant from making a good faith voluntary report, charge, complaint, or claim to or providing truthful testimony and documents as required by law or under oath pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or request by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission or any other federal, state, or local government agency or commission ("Government Agencies"). Participant further understands that this Award Agreement does not limit Participant's ability to communicate with any Government Agencies or otherwise participate in any investigation or proceeding that may be conducted by any Government Agency, including providing documents or other information to the Government Agency, without notice to the Company. For purposes of this Award Agreement, "**Confidential Information**" shall mean any and all information, data and knowledge that has been created, discovered, developed or otherwise become known to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures or in which property rights have been assigned or otherwise conveyed to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures, which information, data or knowledge has commercial value in the business in which the Company is engaged, except such information, data or knowledge as is or becomes known to the public without violation of the terms of this Award Agreement. By way of illustration, but not limitation, Confidential Information includes business trade secrets, secrets concerning the Company's plans and strategies, nonpublic information concerning material market opportunities, technical trade secrets, processes, formulas, know-how, improvements, discoveries, developments, designs, inventions, techniques, marketing plans, manuals, records of research, reports, memoranda, computer software, strategies, forecasts, new products, unpublished financial information, projections, licenses, prices, costs, and employee, customer and supplier lists or parts thereof.

(b) Return of Property. The Participant agrees that at the time of his or her Separation from Service, he or she will deliver to the Company (and will not keep in his or her possession, recreate or deliver to anyone else) all Confidential Information as well as all other devices, records, data, notes, reports, proposals, lists, correspondence, specifications, drawings, blueprints, sketches, materials, equipment, customer or client lists or information, or any other documents or property (including all reproductions of the aforementioned items) belonging to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures, regardless of whether such items were prepared by the Participant.

(c) Non-Solicitation and Non-Competition.

(1) *Non-Solicitation*. For consideration provided under this Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information (as defined in Section 9(a)) regarding the Company and the Company's business, the Participant agrees that, while employed by the Company and for one year following his or her Separation from Service, he or she shall not, without the prior written consent of the Company, directly or indirectly, (i) hire or induce, entice or solicit (or attempt to induce, entice or solicit) any employee of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures to leave the employment of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures or (ii) solicit or

attempt to solicit the business of any customer or acquisition prospect of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures with whom the Participant had any actual contact while employed at the Company.

(2) *Non-Competition.* For consideration provided under this Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business, the Participant agrees that while employed by the Company and for one year following a Separation from Service he or she will not, without the prior written consent of the Company, acting alone or in conjunction with others, either directly or indirectly, engage in any business that is in competition with the Company or accept employment with or render services to such a business as an officer, agent, employee, independent contractor or consultant, or otherwise engage in activities that are in competition with the Company.

(3) *Restricted Area.* The restrictions contained in this Section 9(c) are limited to a 50-mile radius around any geographical area in which the Company engages (or has definite plans to engage) in operations or the marketing of its products or services at the time of the Participant's Separation from Service.

(d) Restrictions Reasonable. The Participant acknowledges that the restrictive covenants under this Section 9, for which the Participant received valuable consideration from the Company as provided in this Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business are ancillary to otherwise enforceable provisions of this Award Agreement that the consideration provided by the Company gives rise to the Company's interest in restraining the Participant from competing and that the restrictive covenants are designed to enforce the Participant's consideration or return promises under this Award Agreement. Additionally, the Participant acknowledges that these restrictive covenants contain limitations as to time, geographical area, and scope of activity to be restrained that are reasonable and do not impose a greater restraint than is necessary to protect the goodwill or other legitimate business interests of the Company, including, but not limited to, the Company's need to protect its Confidential Information.

(e) Violations. If the Participant violates any provision of this Section 9, the Participant shall not be entitled to receive any amounts that would otherwise be payable to the Participant with respect to this RSU Award, and such amounts shall be forfeited. If the Participant violates any provision of this Section 9 after amounts under this RSU Award have been paid or if the Company learns of the violation after amounts under this RSU Award have been paid, the Participant shall repay to the Company the Common Shares (or the equivalent value thereof determined as of the date of the Company's demand) or the cash received, as the case may be, within thirty (30) days of receiving a demand from the Company for the repayment of the award. Further, the Company shall be entitled to an award of attorneys' fees incurred with securing any relief hereunder and/or pursuant to a breach or threatened breach of this Section 9.

10. Notices. For purposes of this Award Agreement, notices to the Company shall be deemed to have been duly given upon receipt of written notice by the Corporate Secretary of CenterPoint Energy, Inc., 1111 Louisiana, Houston, Texas 77002, or to such other address as the Company may furnish to the Participant.

Notices to the Participant shall be deemed effectively delivered or given upon personal, electronic, or postal delivery of written notice to the Participant, the place of Employment of the Participant, the address on record for the Participant at the human resources department of the Company, or such other address as the Participant hereafter designates by written notice to the Company.

11. Shareholder Rights. The Participant shall have no rights of a shareholder with respect to the units of Common Stock subject to this Award Agreement, unless and until the Participant is registered as the holder of such shares of Common Stock.

12. Successors and Assigns. This Award Agreement shall bind and inure to the benefit of and be enforceable by the Participant, the Company and their respective permitted successors and assigns except as expressly prohibited herein and in the Plan. Notwithstanding anything herein or in the Plan to the contrary, the units of Common Stock are transferable by the Participant to Immediate Family Members, Immediate Family Member trusts, and Immediate Family Member partnerships pursuant to Section 13 of the Plan.

13. No Employment Guaranteed. Nothing in this Award Agreement shall give the Participant any rights to (or impose any obligations for) continued Employment by the Company or any Subsidiary, or any successor thereto, nor shall it give such entities any rights (or impose any obligations) with respect to continued performance of duties by the Participant.

14. Waiver. Failure of either party to demand strict compliance with any of the terms or conditions hereof shall not be deemed a waiver of such term or condition, nor shall any waiver by either party of any right hereunder at any one time or more times be deemed a waiver of such right at any other time or times. No term or condition hereof shall be deemed to have been waived except by written instrument.

15. Compliance with Section 409A. It is the intent of the Company and the Participant that the provisions of the Plan and this Award Agreement comply with Section 409A and will be interpreted and administered consistent therewith. Accordingly, (i) no adjustment to the RSU Award pursuant to Section 14 of the Plan and (ii) no substitutions of the benefits under this Award Agreement, in each case, shall be made in a manner that results in noncompliance with the requirements of Section 409A, to the extent applicable.

16. Withholding. The Company shall have the right to withhold applicable taxes from any distribution of the Common Stock (including, but not limited to, Dividend Equivalents) or from other cash compensation payable to the Participant at the time of such vesting and delivery pursuant to Section 11 of the Plan (but subject to compliance with the requirements of Section 409A, if applicable).

17. Modification of Award Agreement. Any modification of this Award Agreement is subject to Section 13 hereof and shall be binding only if evidenced in writing and signed by an authorized representative of the Company.

CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.
2009 LONG TERM INCENTIVE PLAN

RESTRICTED STOCK UNIT AWARD AGREEMENT

Pursuant to this Restricted Stock Unit Award Agreement (this "RSU Award Agreement"), **CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.** (the "Company") hereby grants to [Name] (the "Participant"), effective on [Date] (the "Grant Date"), a restricted stock unit award of [Number] units of Common Stock of the Company (the "RSU Award"), pursuant to the **CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC. 2009 LONG TERM INCENTIVE PLAN** (the "Plan"), with such number of units being subject to adjustment as provided in Section 14 of the Plan, and further subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions described in the Plan and as follows:

1. **Relationship to the Plan; Definitions.** This RSU Award is subject to all of the terms, conditions and provisions of the Plan and administrative interpretations thereunder, if any, which have been adopted by the Committee and are in effect on the date hereof. Except as defined herein, capitalized terms shall have the same meanings ascribed to them under the Plan. To the extent that any provision of this RSU Award Agreement conflicts with the express terms of the Plan, it is hereby acknowledged and agreed that the terms of the Plan shall control and, if necessary, the applicable provisions of this RSU Award Agreement shall be hereby deemed amended so as to carry out the purpose and intent of the Plan. References to the Participant herein also include the heirs or other legal representatives of the Participant.

2. **Establishment of RSU Award Account.** The grant of units of Common Stock of the Company pursuant to this RSU Award Agreement shall be implemented by a credit to a bookkeeping account maintained by the Company evidencing the accrual in favor of the Participant of the unfunded and unsecured right to receive a corresponding number of shares of Common Stock, which right shall be subject to the terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in the Plan and to the further terms, conditions and restrictions set forth in this RSU Award Agreement. Except as otherwise provided in Section 10 of this RSU Award Agreement, the units of Common Stock credited to the Participant's bookkeeping account may not be sold, assigned, transferred, pledged or otherwise encumbered until the Participant has been registered as the holder of such shares of Common Stock on the records of the Company as provided in Section 4 or 5 of this RSU Award Agreement.

3. **Vesting of RSU Award.** Unless Participant receives a distribution pursuant to Section 4 below, the Participant's right to receive shares of Common Stock under this RSU Award shall vest as follows:

<vesting_schedule>

The Participant must be in continuous employment with the Company or any of its Subsidiaries ("Employment") from the Grant Date through and as of the applicable vesting date for the

Common Stock to vest; otherwise, all such unvested shares as of the date the Participant's Employment terminates for any reason shall be forfeited as of such termination date.

4. **Change in Control.**

(a) Assumption or Substitution. In the event of a Change in Control, the surviving, continuing, successor, or purchasing corporation or other business entity or parent thereof, as the case may be (the "Acquiror"), may, without the Participant's consent, either assume or continue the Company's rights and obligations under this RSU Award Agreement or provide a substantially equivalent award in substitution for the units subject to this RSU Award.

(b) Vesting Upon a Change in Control. Notwithstanding any provision of this RSU Award Agreement to the contrary, upon the occurrence of a Change in Control of the Company, if (i) the Participant's Employment has not terminated prior to such date and (ii) the Acquiror does not assume or continue this RSU Award or provide a substantially equivalent award in substitution for this RSU Award pursuant to Section 4(a), the Participant's right to receive the unvested shares of Common Stock subject to this RSU Award Agreement shall be fully vested.

(c) Vesting Upon a Covered Termination. Notwithstanding any provision of this RSU Award Agreement to the contrary, if the Participant experiences a Covered Termination prior to the final vesting date, then, upon the date of the Covered Termination, the Participant's right to receive any unvested units of Common Stock subject to this RSU Award Agreement shall be fully vested.

(d) Vesting Upon the Sale of a Subsidiary. Notwithstanding any provision of this RSU Award Agreement to the contrary, if (i) there is a Sale of a Subsidiary with respect to the Participant prior to the final vesting date and (ii) the Participant's employment with the Company and all Subsidiaries (other than any entity that ceases to be a Subsidiary as a result of the Sale of a Subsidiary) ceases upon and in connection with such Sale of a Subsidiary, then upon such Sale of a Subsidiary, the Participant shall vest in the right to receive a number of the shares of Common Stock (rounded up to the nearest whole share) with respect to the unvested portion of this RSU Award determined by multiplying (A) the total number of units of Common Stock covered by this RSU Award by (B) a fraction, the numerator of which is the number of days that have elapsed from the Award Date to the date the Sale of a Subsidiary is consummated, and the denominator of which is the total number of days from the Award Date until the final Vesting Date. The Participant's right to receive any additional shares pursuant to this Award Agreement shall be forfeited at such time.

(e) Distributions Upon a Change in Control or Sale of a Subsidiary. If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(b), 4(c), or 4(d) hereof, then this RSU Award shall be settled by a distribution to the Participant of:

(1) the number of shares of Common Stock subject to this RSU Award Agreement not previously vested pursuant to Section 3 above (or such pro-rated amount as set forth in Section 4(d), if applicable), *plus*

(2) Dividend Equivalents on such shares of Common Stock in the form of shares of Common Stock (rounded up to the nearest whole share) for the period commencing on the Grant Date and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution.

In lieu of the foregoing distribution in shares, the Committee, in its sole discretion, may direct that such distribution be made to the Participant in a lump sum cash payment equal to:

(1) the product of (x) the Fair Market Value per share of Common Stock on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution and (y) the number of shares of Common Stock subject to this RSU Award Agreement not previously vested pursuant to Section 3 above (or such pro-rated amount as set forth in Section 4(d), if applicable), *plus*

(2) Dividend Equivalents on such shares of Common Stock for the period commencing on the Grant Date and ending on the date immediately preceding the date of the distribution;

The distribution under this Section 4, whether in the form of shares of Common Stock or, if directed by the Committee, in cash, shall satisfy the rights of the Participant and the obligations of the Company under this RSU Award Agreement in full.

(f) Timing of Distribution.

(1) *No Assumption or Substitution.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(b), distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 4(e) on the Change in Control Payment Date.

(2) *Covered Termination.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(c) on account of a Covered Termination, distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 4(e) not later than the 70th day after the Participant's Covered Termination except as otherwise provided in Paragraph (4) below.

(3) *Sale of a Subsidiary.* If the Participant is entitled to a benefit pursuant to Section 4(d), distributions shall be made in accordance with Section 4(e) not later than the 70th day after the date the Sale of a Subsidiary is consummated.

(4) *Delay of Distribution to Certain Participants.* With respect to any benefits payable hereunder upon the Participant's Separation from Service

(including a Covered Termination), if as of the Participant's Separation from Service, the Participant is a "specified employee" (within the meaning of Section 409A(a)(2)(B)), then such benefits shall not be distributed until the date that is the earlier of (x) the second business day following the end of the six-month period commencing on the date of the Participant's Separation from Service or (y) the Participant's date of death, if death occurs during such six-month period.

(g) Definitions. For purposes of this Section 4:

"Change in Control Payment Date" means the following:

(i) If the Change in Control is a Section 409A Change in Control, then the Change in Control Payment Date shall be not later than the 70th day after the date the Change in Control is consummated; and

(ii) If the Change in Control is a Non-Section 409A Change in Control, then the Change in Control Payment Date shall be the vesting date(s) on which the units are paid under Section 3 hereof for the number of units indicated in Section 3 assuming continuous Employment by the Participant as of such vesting date(s); provided, however, in the case of the Participant's death or Separation from Service prior to the vesting date(s), all shares not previously paid shall be paid not later than the 70th day after the date of the Participant's Separation from Service except as otherwise provided in Section 4(f)(4).

"Covered Termination" means a Separation from Service that occurs within two years after the date upon which a Change in Control occurs and that does not result from any of the following:

- (i) death;
- (ii) Disability;
- (iii) involuntary termination for Cause; or
- (iv) resignation by the Participant, unless such resignation is for Good Reason.

"Disability" for this purpose means that the Participant is both eligible for and in receipt of benefits under the Company's long-term disability plan. "Cause" means the Participant's (i) gross negligence in the performance of his or her duties, (ii) intentional and continued failure to perform his or her duties, (iii) intentional engagement in conduct which is materially injurious to the Company or its Subsidiaries (monetarily or otherwise) or (iv) conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude. For this purpose, an act or failure to act on the part of the Participant will be deemed "intentional" only if done or omitted to be done by the Participant not in good faith and without reasonable belief that his or her action or omission was in the best interest of the Company,

and no act or failure to act on the part of the Participant will be deemed “intentional” if it was due primarily to an error in judgment or negligence.

“**Good Reason**” means any one or more of the following events:

(i) a failure to maintain the Participant in the position, or a substantially equivalent position, with the Company and/or a Subsidiary, as the case may be, which the Participant held immediately prior to the Change in Control;

(ii) a significant adverse change in the authorities, powers, functions, responsibilities, duties, or reporting structure which the Participant held immediately prior to the Change in Control;

(iii) a significant reduction in the Participant’s annual base salary as in effect immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

(iv) a significant reduction in the Participant’s qualified retirement benefits, nonqualified benefits and welfare benefits provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs; provided, however, that a contemporaneous diminution of or reduction in qualified retirement benefits and/or welfare benefits which is of general application and which uniformly and contemporaneously reduces or diminishes the benefits of all covered employees shall be ignored and not be considered a reduction in remuneration for purposes of this paragraph (iv);

(v) a significant reduction in the Participant’s overall compensation opportunities (as contrasted with overall compensation actually paid or awarded) under a short-term incentive plan, a long-term incentive plan or other equity plan (or in such substitute or alternative plans) from that provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

(vi) a change in the location of the Participant’s principal place of employment with the Company by more than 50 miles from the location where the Participant was principally employed immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs; or

(vii) a failure by the Company to provide directors and officers liability insurance covering the Participant comparable to that provided to the Participant immediately prior to the date on which a Change in Control occurs;

provided, however, that no later than 30 days after learning of the action (or inaction) described herein as the basis for a termination of employment for Good Reason, the Participant shall advise the Company in writing that the action (or inaction) constitutes grounds for a termination of his or her Employment for Good Reason, in which event the Company shall have 30 days (the “Cure Period”) to correct such action (or inaction).

If such action (or inaction) is not corrected prior to the end of the Cure Period, then the Participant may terminate his or her Employment with the Company for Good Reason within the 30-day period following the end of the Cure Period by giving written notice to the Company. If such action (or inaction) is corrected before the end of the Cure Period, then the Participant shall not be entitled to terminate his or her Employment for Good Reason as a result of such action (or inaction).

“Non-Section 409A Change in Control” means a Change in Control that is not a Section 409A Change in Control.

“Sale of a Subsidiary” means, with respect to the Subsidiary for which the Participant is performing services at the time of the applicable event, the occurrence of any of the following events:

(a) A change in the ownership of such Subsidiary, as determined in accordance with Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-3(i)(5)(v) or

(b) A change in the ownership of a substantial portion of such Subsidiary’s assets, as determined in accordance with Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-3(i)(5)(vii).

If the Subsidiary is not a corporation, the above referenced Treasury Regulations may be applied by analogy in accordance with guidance issued under Section 409A.

“Section 409A” means Code Section 409A and the Treasury regulations and guidance issued thereunder.

“Section 409A Change in Control” means a Change in Control that satisfies the requirements of a change in control for purposes of Code Section 409A(a)(2)(A)(v) and the Treasury regulations and guidance issued thereunder.

“Separation from Service” means a separation from service with the Company or any of its Subsidiaries within the meaning of Treasury Regulation § 1.409A-1(h) (or any successor regulation).

5. **Payment of Award Under Section 3.** Upon the vesting of the Participant's right to receive the shares of Common Stock pursuant to Section 3 of this RSU Award Agreement, a number of shares of Common Stock equal to the number of vested units of Common Stock under this RSU Award Agreement shall be distributed not later than 70 days after the applicable vesting dates. Moreover, upon the date of distribution of shares of Common Stock in settlement of such units, the Participant shall also be entitled to receive Dividend Equivalents on such shares of Common Stock for the period from the Grant Date to the date such shares of Common Stock are distributed to the Participant (in accordance with the requirements of Section 409A of the Code, to the extent applicable).

6. **Confidentiality.** The Participant agrees that the terms of this RSU Award Agreement are confidential and that any disclosure to anyone for any purpose whatsoever (save

and except disclosure to financial institutions as part of a financial statement, financial, tax and legal advisors, or as required by law) by the Participant or his or her agents, representatives, heirs, children, spouse, employees or spokespersons shall be a breach of this RSU Award Agreement and the Company may elect to revoke the grant made hereunder, seek damages, plus interest and reasonable attorneys' fees, and take any other lawful actions to enforce this RSU Award Agreement.

7. Participant Obligations.

(a) **Confidentiality.** The Participant acknowledges that in the course of his or her employment with the Company, the Company agrees to provide to the Participant Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business and has previously provided the Participant other such Confidential Information. In return for this and other consideration, provided under this RSU Award Agreement, the Participant agrees that he or she will not, while employed by the Company and thereafter, disclose or make available to any other person or entity, or use for his own personal gain, any Confidential Information, except for such disclosures as required in the performance of his or her duties hereunder or as may otherwise be required by law or legal process (in which case the Participant shall notify the Company of such legal or judicial proceeding by a non-governmental party as soon as practicable following his receipt of notice of such a proceeding, and permit the Company to seek to protect its interests and information). Nothing in this RSU Award Agreement, however, limits or precludes Participant from making a good faith voluntary report, charge, complaint, or claim to or providing truthful testimony and documents as required by law or under oath pursuant to a subpoena, court order, or request by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission or any other federal, state, or local government agency or commission ("Government Agencies"). Participant further understands that this RSU Award Agreement does not limit Participant's ability to communicate with any Government Agencies or otherwise participate in any investigation or proceeding that may be conducted by any Government Agency, including providing documents or other information to the Government Agency, without notice to the Company. For purposes of this RSU Award Agreement, "**Confidential Information**" shall mean any and all information, data and knowledge that has been created, discovered, developed or otherwise become known to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures or in which property rights have been assigned or otherwise conveyed to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures, which information, data or knowledge has commercial value in the business in which the Company is engaged, except such information, data or knowledge as is or becomes known to the public without violation of the terms of this RSU Award Agreement. By way of illustration, but not limitation, Confidential Information includes business trade secrets, secrets concerning the Company's plans and strategies, nonpublic information concerning material market opportunities, technical trade secrets, processes, formulas, know-how, improvements, discoveries, developments, designs, inventions, techniques, marketing plans, manuals, records of research, reports, memoranda, computer software, strategies, forecasts, new products, unpublished financial information,

projections, licenses, prices, costs, and employee, customer and supplier lists or parts thereof.

(b) Return of Property. The Participant agrees that at the time of his or her Separation from Service, he or she will deliver to the Company (and will not keep in his or her possession, recreate or deliver to anyone else) all Confidential Information as well as all other devices, records, data, notes, reports, proposals, lists, correspondence, specifications, drawings, blueprints, sketches, materials, equipment, customer or client lists or information, or any other documents or property (including all reproductions of the aforementioned items) belonging to the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures, regardless of whether such items were prepared by the Participant.

(c) Non-Solicitation and Non-Competition.

(1) *Non-Solicitation.* For consideration provided under this RSU Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information (as defined in Section 7(a)) regarding the Company and the Company's business, the Participant agrees that, while employed by the Company and for one year following his or her Separation from Service, he or she shall not, without the prior written consent of the Company, directly or indirectly, (i) hire or induce, entice or solicit (or attempt to induce, entice or solicit) any employee of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures to leave the employment of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures or (ii) solicit or attempt to solicit the business of any customer or acquisition prospect of the Company or any of its affiliates or ventures with whom the Participant had any actual contact while employed at the Company.

(2) *Non-Competition.* For consideration provided under this RSU Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business, the Participant agrees that while employed by the Company and for one year following a Separation from Service he or she will not, without the prior written consent of the Company, acting alone or in conjunction with others, either directly or indirectly, engage in any business that is in competition with the Company or accept employment with or render services to such a business as an officer, agent, employee, independent contractor or consultant, or otherwise engage in activities that are in competition with the Company.

(3) *Restricted Area.* The restrictions contained in this Section 7(c) are limited to a 50-mile radius around any geographical area in which the Company engages (or has definite plans to engage) in operations or the marketing of its products or services at the time of the Participant's Separation from Service.

(d) Restrictions Reasonable. The Participant acknowledges that the restrictive covenants under this Section 7, for which the Participant received valuable

consideration from the Company as provided in this RSU Award Agreement, including, but not limited to the Company's agreement to provide the Participant with Confidential Information regarding the Company and the Company's business are ancillary to otherwise enforceable provisions of this RSU Award Agreement that the consideration provided by the Company gives rise to the Company's interest in restraining the Participant from competing and that the restrictive covenants are designed to enforce the Participant's consideration or return promises under this RSU Award Agreement. Additionally, the Participant acknowledges that these restrictive covenants contain limitations as to time, geographical area, and scope of activity to be restrained that are reasonable and do not impose a greater restraint than is necessary to protect the goodwill or other legitimate business interests of the Company, including, but not limited to, the Company's need to protect its Confidential Information.

(e) **Violations.** If the Participant violates any provision of this Section 7, the Participant shall not be entitled to receive any amounts that would otherwise be payable to the Participant with respect to this RSU Award, and such amounts shall be forfeited. If the Participant violates any provision of this Section 7 after amounts under this RSU Award have been paid or if the Company learns of the violation after amounts under this RSU Award have been paid, the Participant shall repay to the Company the Common Shares (or the equivalent value thereof determined as of the date of the Company's demand) or the cash received, as the case may be, within thirty (30) days of receiving a demand from the Company for the repayment of the award. Further, the Company shall be entitled to an award of attorneys' fees incurred with securing any relief hereunder and/or pursuant to a breach or threatened breach of this Section 7.

8. **Notices.** For purposes of this RSU Award Agreement, notices to the Company shall be deemed to have been duly given upon receipt of written notice by the Corporate Secretary of CenterPoint Energy, Inc., 1111 Louisiana, Houston, Texas 77002, or to such other address as the Company may furnish to the Participant.

Notices to the Participant shall be deemed effectively delivered or given upon personal, electronic, or postal delivery of written notice to the Participant, the place of Employment of the Participant, the address on record for the Participant at the human resources department of the Company, or such other address as the Participant hereafter designates by written notice to the Company.

9. **Shareholder Rights.** The Participant shall have no rights of a shareholder with respect to the shares of Common Stock granted pursuant to this RSU Award, unless and until the Participant is registered as the holder of such shares of Common Stock.

10. **Successors and Assigns.** This RSU Award Agreement shall bind and inure to the benefit of and be enforceable by the Participant, the Company and their respective permitted successors and assigns except as expressly prohibited herein and in the Plan. Notwithstanding anything herein or in the Plan to the contrary, the shares of Common Stock are transferable by the Participant to Immediate Family Members, Immediate Family Member trusts, and Immediate Family Member partnerships pursuant to Section 13 of the Plan.

11. **No Employment Guaranteed.** Nothing in this RSU Award Agreement shall give the Participant any rights to (or impose any obligations for) continued Employment by the Company or any Subsidiary, or any successor thereto, nor shall it give such entities any rights (or impose any obligations) with respect to continued performance of duties by the Participant.

12. **Waiver.** Failure of either party to demand strict compliance with any of the terms or conditions hereof shall not be deemed a waiver of such term or condition, nor shall any waiver by either party of any right hereunder at any one time or more times be deemed a waiver of such right at any other time or times. No term or condition hereof shall be deemed to have been waived except by written instrument.

13. **Section 409A.** It is the intent of the Company and the Participant that the provisions of the Plan and this Award Agreement comply with Section 409A of the Code and will be interpreted and administered consistent therewith. Accordingly, (i) no adjustment to the RSU Award pursuant to Section 14 of the Plan and (ii) no substitutions of the benefits under this Award Agreement, in each case, shall be made in a manner that results in noncompliance with the requirements of Section 409A of the Code, to the extent applicable.

14. **Withholding.** The Company shall have the right to withhold applicable taxes from any distribution of the Common Stock (including, but not limited to, Dividend Equivalents) or from other cash compensation payable to the Participant at the time of such vesting and delivery pursuant to Section 11 of the Plan (but subject to compliance with the requirements of Section 409A of the Code, if applicable).

15. **Modification of RSU Award Agreement.** Any modification of this RSU Award Agreement is subject to Section 13 hereof and shall be binding only if evidenced in writing.



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For Immediate Release

CenterPoint Energy Names David J. Lesar President and CEO *Earl M. Cummings Appointed as New Director*

HOUSTON, June 30, 2020 -- CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (NYSE: CNP) today announced that its Board of Directors has appointed David J. Lesar as President and Chief Executive Officer, effective July 1, 2020. He succeeds John W. Somerhalder II, who has served as interim president and chief executive officer of CenterPoint Energy since February 2020 and a director since 2016.

Milton Carroll, Executive Chairman, said, "The Board determined in February that it was the right time for CenterPoint Energy to name an experienced executive leader with a fresh strategic perspective, proven achievement in shareholder and stakeholder value creation and a track record of delivering results to lead the company through its next phase of growth. After a thorough search process that included external candidates, we are delighted to have found that leader in Dave Lesar and welcome him as our next president and CEO.

"Over the past three decades, Dave has built an enviable track record of vision, strategy implementation, execution capability, financial sophistication and operational experience. During his 17 years leading Halliburton, he was the architect of how that company ultimately led the industry in growth, margins and returns. He will work with the Board and the entire CenterPoint Energy team to evaluate, refine and advance our strategy, and then position us to execute on our robust capital plans and seize attractive growth opportunities. He will help us ensure that CenterPoint Energy achieves our potential and promise, building on the company's impressive service territories and strong regulatory position," Mr. Carroll concluded.

Mr. Lesar said, "We are committed to unlocking the power and potential within this company and its premium regulated utilities and to maintaining our earnings growth rate. We have a dedicated team with the right skills to position us to create attractive value, building on a base of strong utility assets. Our utility-focused strategy, combined with our newly strengthened financial position, enables us to focus on how best to optimize and drive return on our assets. We need to ensure that the financial community, our employees and other key stakeholders can

clearly see and understand our strategy. With respect to current – and potential – investors, my number one near-term goal is to achieve greater shareholder confidence by setting, communicating and working tirelessly to achieve our financial and business goals. Throughout my career, I have worked to maximize sustainable shareholder value and build strong relationships with the constituencies that are central to the success and sustainability of the companies I have led. I am honored by the trust the Board has placed in me, and excited to immediately start in this new role, working alongside our dedicated and talented team members who make a tremendous difference for customers every day.”

“CenterPoint Energy is a backbone, supporting economic vitality in the state of Texas and the other states it serves. We will continue to strive to meet the energy delivery needs of our customers and communities safely and reliably. We will also build on our proven ability to innovate and utilize the vast creativity of our people to drive value for all of the stakeholders who rely, trust and invest in us,” continued Mr. Lesar.

Mr. Lesar stated, “I am dedicated to accelerating the company’s environmental commitments and leadership in emissions reduction, infrastructure modernization and delivering sustainable and cleaner energy. CenterPoint Energy is also steadfast about building on our long history of investing in the communities in which we operate. I am devoted to having our employees—including our leadership—and our suppliers reflect those diverse communities, and inclusion is an important part of my vision for how CenterPoint Energy will lead.”

Mr. Carroll added, “On behalf of the Board of Directors and CenterPoint Energy’s employees, I would also like to thank John for serving as interim CEO during a time of significant change and transition for our company and the country and for his prior service as a director. We have all valued and benefited from John’s substantial contributions, leadership and support and wish him well.”

CenterPoint Energy also announced that Earl M. Cummings has been appointed to serve as a new independent member of the company’s Board of Directors. He fills the vacancy created by Mr. Somerhalder’s departure from the Board as of June 30, 2020. With Mr. Cummings’ appointment, the Board comprises directors with independence, relevant skills, expertise and a valuable diversity reflective of the company and customers, constituencies and communities served.

Mr. Carroll said, “We are delighted to have Earl join the Board as a new outside director. His experience, leadership and commitment to creating value for all our stakeholders will further strengthen our Board’s oversight and contributions to CenterPoint Energy.”

New director Earl Cummings added, “I am pleased to be joining the distinguished board of such an important and outstanding company. I look forward to working with CenterPoint Energy, our new CEO and my fellow directors to capitalize on the opportunities ahead and uphold our commitments to service, safety, inclusion and performance.”

Mr. Lesar, who recently joined the CenterPoint Energy Board, has chaired the Board’s Business Review and Evaluation Committee since its formation in early May 2020. CenterPoint Energy

intends to host an investor day by early 2021 to update stakeholders on the company's vision and plans.

About David J. Lesar

Dave Lesar joined CenterPoint Energy as a director in May 2020. He served as interim CEO of Health Care Service Corporation, the largest privately-held health insurer in the U.S, from July 2019 through June 1, 2020, having joined the company's board of directors in 2018. He was the Chairman of the Board and CEO of Halliburton Company from 2000 to 2017 and Executive Chairman of the Board from June 2017 until December 2018. Mr. Lesar joined Halliburton in 1993 and served in a variety of other roles, including executive vice president of Finance and Administration for Halliburton Energy Services, a Halliburton business unit, CFO of Halliburton from 1995 through May 1997, President and Chief Operating Officer from May 1997 through August 2000. He has also served on the board of directors of several companies, most recently Agrium, Inc. as well as Lyondell Chemical Co., Southern Co., Cordant Technologies, and Mirant. A Certified Public Accountant, Mr. Lesar was previously a partner at Arthur Andersen. He received both his B.S. and MBA from the University of Wisconsin.

About Earl Cummings

Since 2012, Mr. Cummings has served as Managing Partner of MCM Houston Properties, LLC, a real estate fund that invests in single family residential properties in Houston, Texas. In his role as Managing Partner, he is responsible for overall capital raising, investment, acquisition, and business strategies of the fund and its assets. Mr. Cummings also serves as Chief Executive Officer of The BTS Team, which began as an information technology and staffing firm providing solutions and services across various regions and evolved into a company that also invested financial resources in various industries to create value for shareholders and other stakeholders, and he previously served as its Chief Information Officer and Chairman of its board. He also served as Chief Executive Officer of BestAssets, Inc., a private company providing real estate portfolio management and related services. Active across communities and in non-profit board service, Mr. Cummings has served on the boards of the University of Houston Board of Visitors, C-STEM Robotics (where he was founding Chairman of the Executive Board for C-STEM), Yellowstone Academy and has also served on the advisory boards for KIPP Academy and Texas Southern University School of Business. Mr. Cummings holds a BBA of Management Information Systems from the University of Houston and an MBA from Pepperdine University.

About CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

As the only investor owned electric and gas utility based in Texas, CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (NYSE: CNP) is an energy delivery company with electric transmission & distribution, power generation and natural gas distribution operations that serve more than 7 million metered customers in Arkansas, Indiana, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Ohio, Oklahoma and Texas. As of March 31, 2020, the company owns approximately \$33 billion in assets and also owns 53.7 percent of the common units representing limited partner interests in Enable Midstream Partners, LP, a publicly traded master limited partnership that owns, operates and develops strategically located natural gas and crude oil infrastructure assets. With approximately 9,600 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 150 years. For more information, visit CenterPointEnergy.com.

This news release includes forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. When used in this news release, the words “anticipate,” “believe,” “continue,” “could,” “estimate,” “expect,” “forecast,” “goal,” “intend,” “may,” “objective,” “plan,” “potential,” “predict,” “projection,” “should,” “target,” “will,” “can” or other similar words are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements are based upon assumptions of management which are believed to be reasonable at the time made and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. Actual events and results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. Any statements in this news release regarding the company’s prospects or potential or the intentions of management or the board, capital investment plans, future financial and business goals, earnings growth rates or financial condition, growth or business opportunities, stakeholder (including shareholder) value creation, environmental and sustainability commitments including emissions reductions, social goals including relating to diversity, activities of the board’s business review and evaluation committee, future investor days hosted by the Company, inclusion, strategic initiatives, future financial performance and results of operations, , and any other statements that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements. Each forward-looking statement contained in this news release speaks only as of the date of this release. Important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated by the provided forward-looking information include risks and uncertainties relating to: (1) the impact of COVID-19; (2) financial market conditions; (3) general economic conditions; (4) the timing and impact of future regulatory and legislative decisions; (5) effects of competition; (6) weather variations; (7) changes in business plans; and (8) other factors discussed in CenterPoint Energy’s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2019, CenterPoint Energy’s Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2020 and other reports CenterPoint Energy or its subsidiaries may file from time to time with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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