



CenterPoint Energy Reports First Quarter 2006 Earnings

HOUSTON, May 4, 2006 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (NYSE: CNP) today reported net income of \$88 million, or \$0.28 per diluted share, for the first quarter of 2006 compared to \$67 million, or \$0.20 per diluted share for the same period of 2005.

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

"The mild weather that we experienced in the first quarter, along with higher natural gas prices, had a negative impact on our electric and natural gas distribution businesses. However, I am pleased that the contributions of our other businesses, primarily driven by the solid performance of our pipelines and field services and competitive natural gas segments, and a significant reduction in interest expense, enabled us to report improved first quarter financial results," said David M. McClanahan, president and chief executive officer of CenterPoint Energy.

OPERATING INCOME BY SEGMENT DETAILED

Electric Transmission & Distribution

The electric transmission & distribution segment generated operating income of \$110 million in the first quarter of 2006, consisting of \$78 million for the regulated electric transmission & distribution utility (TDU) and \$32 million for the transition bond companies, which is an amount sufficient to pay interest on the transition bonds. Operating income for the first quarter of 2005 totaled \$80 million, consisting of \$71 million for the TDU and \$9 million for the transition bond company.

Revenues increased in the first quarter of 2006 primarily as a result of the competition transition charge (CTC) implemented in September 2005. Revenue increases from the addition of nearly 67,000 metered customers since March 2005, were more than offset by milder weather and decreased usage. Excluding the impact of the transition bond company, operating expenses remained essentially unchanged. Increases in transmission costs, franchise fees and costs associated with staff reductions were offset by gains realized from the sale of land.

Natural Gas Distribution

The natural gas distribution segment reported operating income of \$103 million for the first quarter of 2006, compared to \$123 million for the same period of 2005. Revenue increases from the implementation of rate increases along with the addition of nearly 42,000 customers since March 2005 were more than offset by the effects of record warm weather in most of our service territories and decreased usage resulting from higher natural gas prices. Operating expenses increased largely due to higher bad debt expense, also associated with higher natural gas prices, and costs associated with staff reductions.

Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services

The competitive natural gas sales and services segment reported operating income of \$25 million for the first quarter of 2006, compared to \$16 million for the same period of 2005. The increase was primarily attributable to higher natural gas sales to utilities and favorable basis differentials across the pipeline capacity that the company controls, partially offset by a write-down of inventory to the lower of cost or market.

Pipelines and Field Services

The pipelines and field services segment reported operating income of \$73 million for the first quarter of 2006 compared to \$64 million for the same period of 2005. This segment's businesses continue to benefit from favorable dynamics in the markets for natural gas gathering and transportation services along the Gulf Coast and Mid-Continent regions where they operate. Within this segment, the pipeline business achieved higher operating income (\$49 million vs. \$48 million) resulting from increased demand for transportation resulting from basis differentials across the system and higher demand for ancillary services. The field services business achieved higher operating income (\$24 million vs. \$16 million) driven by increased throughput, greater demand for ancillary services and higher commodity prices. In addition, this business recorded equity income of \$2 million in the first quarter of 2006 (\$1 million for the same period in 2005) from its 50 percent interest in a jointly-owned gas processing plant. These amounts are included in Other -- net under the Other Income (Expense) caption.

Other Operations

The company's other operations reported an operating loss of \$5 million for the first quarter of 2006 compared to a loss of \$7 million for the same period of 2005.

OTHER FIRST QUARTER 2006 EVENTS

In March, the company closed on three improved bank credit facilities, totaling \$2.05 billion, which increased capacity, reduced interest costs, extended maturities and improved terms. The company:

- * replaced the \$1 billion parent company revolving credit facility with a \$1.2 billion five-year revolving credit facility with a first drawn interest rate of LIBOR plus 60 basis points;
- * replaced the \$400 million revolving credit facility at CenterPoint Energy Resources, Corp., the company's natural gas distribution, competitive natural gas sales and services and pipelines and field services subsidiary, with a \$550 million, five-year revolving credit facility with a first drawn interest rate of LIBOR plus 45 basis points; and
- * replaced the \$200 million revolving credit facility at CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC, the company's electric transmission and distribution subsidiary, with a \$300 million, five-year revolving credit facility with a first drawn interest rate of LIBOR plus 45 basis points.

DIVIDEND DECLARATION

On April 28, 2006, CenterPoint Energy's board of directors declared a regular quarterly cash dividend of \$0.15 per share of common stock payable on June 9, 2006, to shareholders of record as of the close of business on May 16, 2006.

OUTLOOK FOR 2006

CenterPoint Energy continues to expect diluted earnings per share for 2006 to be in the range of \$0.90 to \$1.00. This guidance excludes any impacts related to the company's Zero-Premium Exchangeable Subordinated Notes (ZENS) and associated federal income tax consequences due to the uncertainties associated with the resolution of the ongoing dispute with the Internal Revenue Service. This guidance takes into consideration various economic and operational assumptions related to the business segments in which it operates. In particular, the company has made certain assumptions regarding the impact to earnings of various regulatory proceedings but cannot predict the ultimate outcome of any of those proceedings. In providing this guidance, the company has not projected the impact of any potential changes in accounting standards, any impact from acquisitions or divestitures, or the outcomes of pending legal proceedings related to the TDU's true up appeal and the remand of its 2001 unbundled cost of service order.

WEBCAST OF EARNINGS CONFERENCE CALL

CenterPoint Energy's management will host an earnings conference call on Thursday, May 4, 2006, at 10:30 a.m. Central time or 11:30 a.m. Eastern time. Interested parties may listen to a live, audio broadcast of the conference call at <http://www.CenterPointEnergy.com/investors/events> . A replay of the call can be accessed approximately two hours after the completion of the call, and will be archived on the Web site for at least one year.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a domestic energy delivery company that includes electric transmission & distribution, natural gas distribution, competitive natural gas sales and services, and pipeline and field services operations. The company serves more than five million metered customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas. Assets total approximately \$16 billion. With about 9,000 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 130 years. For more information, visit the Web site at <http://www.CenterPointEnergy.com> .

This news release includes forward-looking statements. Actual events and results may differ materially from those projected. The statements in this news release regarding future financial performance and results of operations and other statements that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements. Factors that could affect actual results include the timing and outcome of appeals from the true-up proceedings, the timing and impact of future regulatory, legislative and IRS decisions, effects of competition, weather variations, changes in CenterPoint Energy's or its subsidiaries' business plans, financial market conditions, the timing and extent of changes in commodity prices, particularly natural gas, the impact of unplanned facility outages, and other factors discussed in CenterPoint Energy's and its subsidiaries' Form 10-Ks for the period ended December

31, 2005, and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
 Statements of Consolidated Income
 (Millions of Dollars)
 (Unaudited)

	Quarter Ended March 31,	
	2005	2006
Revenues:		
Electric Transmission & Distribution	\$345	\$385
Natural Gas Distribution	1,329	1,480
Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services	925	1,163
Pipelines and Field Services	121	125
Other Operations	7	4
Eliminations	(132)	(80)
Total	2,595	3,077
Expenses:		
Natural gas	1,781	2,193
Operation and maintenance	313	331
Depreciation and amortization	130	140
Taxes other than income taxes	95	107
Total	2,319	2,771
Operating Income	276	306
Other Income (Expense):		
Loss on Time Warner investment	(41)	(14)
Gain on indexed debt securities	39	10
Interest and other finance charges	(173)	(115)
Interest on transition bonds	(9)	(33)
Return on true-up balance	34	---
Other - net	4	6
Total	(146)	(146)
Income from Continuing Operations		
Before Income Taxes	130	160
Income Tax Expense	(63)	(72)
Income from Continuing Operations	67	88
Discontinued Operations:		
Income from Texas Genco, net of tax	14	---
Loss on Disposal of Texas Genco, net of tax	(14)	---
Total	---	---
Net Income	\$67	\$88

Reference is made to the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements contained in the Annual Report on Form 10-K of CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
 Selected Data From Statements of Consolidated Income
 (Millions of Dollars, Except Share and Per Share Amounts)
 (Unaudited)

Quarter Ended

	March 31,	
	----- 2005 -----	2006 -----
Basic Earnings Per Common Share:		
Income from Continuing Operations	\$0.22	\$0.28
Income from Discontinued Operations	---	---
Net Income	\$0.22	\$0.28
Diluted Earnings Per Common Share:		
Income from Continuing Operations	\$0.20	\$0.28
Income from Discontinued Operations	---	---
Net Income	\$0.20	\$0.28
Dividends Declared per Common Share	\$0.20	\$0.15
Weighted Average Common Shares Outstanding (000):		
- Basic	308,470	310,846
- Diluted	360,623	318,593

Operating Income (Loss) by Segment

Electric Transmission & Distribution:		
Transmission & Distribution Operations	\$71	\$78
Transition Bond Companies	9	32
Total Electric Transmission & Distribution	80	110
Natural Gas Distribution	123	103
Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services	16	25
Pipelines and Field Services	64	73
Other Operations	(7)	(5)
Total	\$276	\$306

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CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
Results of Operations by Segment
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

	Electric Transmission & Distribution		

	Quarter Ended		
	March 31,		
	-----	-----	-----
	2005	2006	% Diff
	-----	-----	Fav/(Unfav)
	-----	-----	-----
Results of Operations:			
Revenues:			
Electric transmission and distribution utility	\$323	\$331	2%
Transition bond companies	22	54	145%
Total	345	385	12%
Expenses:			
Operation and maintenance	138	134	3%
Depreciation and amortization	64	63	2%

Taxes other than income taxes	50	56	(12%)
Transition bond companies	13	22	(69%)
Total	265	275	(4%)
Operating Income - Electric transmission and distribution utility	71	78	10%
Operating Income - Transition bond companies	9	32	256%
Total Segment Operating Income	\$80	\$110	38%

Electric Transmission & Distribution
Operating Data: Quarter Ended
March 31,

Actual MWH Delivered	2005	2006	
Residential	4,141,664	3,986,390	(4%)
Total	15,826,314	15,986,880	1%

Weather (average for service area):

Percentage of normal:

Cooling degree days	126%	137%	11%
Heating degree days	77%	63%	(14%)

Average number of metered customers:

Residential	1,661,320	1,717,836	3%
Total	1,887,020	1,950,829	3%

Natural Gas Distribution

Quarter Ended
March 31,

	2005	2006	% Diff Fav/(Unfav)
Results of Operations:			
Revenues	\$1,329	\$1,480	11%
Expenses:			
Natural gas	997	1,146	(15%)
Operation and maintenance	135	150	(11%)
Depreciation and amortization	37	38	(3%)
Taxes other than income taxes	37	43	(16%)
Total	1,206	1,377	(14%)
Operating Income	\$123	\$103	(16%)

Natural Gas Distribution Operating Data:

Throughput data in BCF

Residential	77	67	(13%)
Commercial and Industrial	77	72	(6%)
Total Throughput	154	139	(10%)

Weather (average for service area)

Percentage of normal:

Heating degree days	91%	84%	(7%)
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Average number of customers:

Residential	2,851,514	2,889,013	1%
Commercial and Industrial	248,826	253,519	2%
Total	3,100,340	3,142,532	1%

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CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
Results of Operations by Segment
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services			

Quarter Ended			
March 31,			
-----		-----	
2005	2006	% Diff	
-----		-----	
		Fav/(Unfav)	

Results of Operations:			
Revenues	\$925	\$1,163	26%
Expenses:			
Natural gas	902	1,129	(25%)
Operation and maintenance	5	8	(60%)
Depreciation and amortization	1	---	---
Taxes other than income taxes	1	1	---
Total	909	1,138	(25%)
Operating Income	\$16	\$25	56%
Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services Operating Data:			
Throughput data in BCF			
Wholesale - third parties	82	89	9%
Wholesale - affiliates	14	11	(21%)
Retail	47	48	2%
Pipeline	19	10	(47%)
Total Throughput	162	158	(2%)
Average number of customers:			
Wholesale	136	145	7%
Retail	6,224	6,517	5%
Pipeline	153	147	(4%)
Total	6,513	6,809	5%

Pipelines and Field Services			

Quarter Ended			
March 31,			
-----		-----	
2005	2006	% Diff	
-----		-----	
		Fav/(Unfav)	

Results of Operations:			
Revenues	\$121	\$125	3%
Expenses:			
Natural gas	7	(4)	157%
Operation and maintenance	34	39	(15%)
Depreciation and amortization	11	12	(9%)
Taxes other than income taxes	5	5	---
Total	57	52	9%
Operating Income	\$64	\$73	14%

Pipelines and Field Services Operating Data:

Throughput data in BCF

Natural Gas Sales	1	---	---
Transportation	271	274	1%
Gathering	83	88	6%
Elimination	(1)	---	---
Total Throughput	354	362	2%

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CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
Results of Operations by Segment
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

	Other Operations		
	Quarter Ended March 31,		% Diff Fav/(Unfav)
	2005	2006	
Results of Operations:			
Revenues	\$7	\$4	(43%)
Expenses	14	9	36%
Operating Loss	\$(7)	\$(5)	29%

Capital Expenditures by Segment
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

	Quarter Ended March 31,	
	2005	2006
Capital Expenditures by Segment		
Electric Transmission & Distribution	\$55	\$79
Natural Gas Distribution	40	40
Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services	---	6
Pipelines and Field Services	22	30
Other Operations	5	10
Total	\$122	\$165

Interest Expense Detail
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

	Quarter Ended March 31,	
	2005	2006

Interest Expense Detail

Amortization of Deferred Financing Cost	\$20	\$14
Capitalization of Interest Cost	(1)	(1)
Transition Bond Interest Expense	9	32
Other Interest Expense	154	103
Total Interest Expense	\$182	\$148

Reference is made to the Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements contained in the Annual Report on Form 10-K of CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
Condensed Consolidated Balance Sheets
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

	December 31, 2005	March 31, 2006
	-----	-----
ASSETS		
Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$74	\$113
Other current assets	2,817	2,075
Total current assets	2,891	2,188
Property, Plant and Equipment, net	8,492	8,571
Other Assets:		
Goodwill	1,709	1,709
Regulatory assets	2,955	2,934
Other non-current assets	1,069	1,014
Total other assets	5,733	5,657
Total Assets	\$17,116	\$16,416
LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Current Liabilities:		
Current portion of transition bond long-term debt	\$73	\$126
Current portion of other long-term debt	266	519
Other current liabilities	2,675	2,020
Total current liabilities	3,014	2,665
Other Liabilities:		
Accumulated deferred income taxes, net and investment tax credit	2,520	2,484
Regulatory liabilities	728	785
Other non-current liabilities	990	906
Total other liabilities	4,238	4,175
Long-term Debt:		
Transition bond	2,407	2,335
Other	6,161	5,896
Total long-term debt	8,568	8,231
Shareholders' Equity	1,296	1,345
Total Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	\$17,116	\$16,416

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CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries
Condensed Statements of Consolidated Cash Flows
(Millions of Dollars)
(Unaudited)

	Three Months Ended March 31,	
	2005	2006
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:		
Net income	\$67	\$88
Discontinued operations, net of tax	---	---
Income from continuing operations	67	88
Adjustments to reconcile income from continuing operations to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	150	154
Deferred income taxes and investment tax credit	48	4
Changes in net regulatory assets and liabilities	(86)	23
Changes in other assets and liabilities	(363)	23
Other, net	4	23
Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities of Continuing Operations	(180)	315
Net Cash Used in Operating Activities of Discontinued Operations	(22)	---
Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities	(202)	315
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities	(118)	(201)
Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Financing Activities	460	(75)
Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	140	39
Cash and Cash Equivalents at Beginning of Year	165	74
Cash and Cash Equivalents at End of Year	\$305	\$113

SOURCE CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

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