

CenterPoint Energy Reports Fourth Quarter and Full Year 2009 Earnings

HOUSTON, Feb 26, 2010 /PRNewswire via COMTEX News Network/ -- CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (NYSE: CNP) today reported net income of \$105 million, or \$0.27 per diluted share, for the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to \$87 million, or \$0.25 per diluted share, for the same period of 2008. Operating income for the fourth quarter of 2009 was \$299 million compared to \$303 million for the same period of 2008.

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

For the year ended December 31, 2009, net income was \$372 million, or \$1.01 per diluted share, compared to \$446 million, or \$1.30 per diluted share, for the same period of 2008. Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$1.1 billion compared to \$1.3 billion for the same period of 2008.

"Our company performed well in 2009 in the face of a weak economy and challenging energy markets," said David M. McClanahan, president and chief executive officer of CenterPoint Energy. "Our regulated electric and natural gas utilities turned in solid operating and financial performances. The company's interstate pipelines and field services businesses expanded their systems and increased throughput, but lower natural gas and natural gas liquids prices adversely affected their financial performances. Additionally, results of the competitive natural gas sales unit were adversely affected by substantially reduced locational and seasonal price differentials. As the economy improves and stronger energy markets emerge, our regulated utilities and natural gas businesses are well positioned to benefit."

OPERATING INCOME BY SEGMENT

Electric Transmission & Distribution

The electric transmission & distribution segment reported operating income of \$95 million for the fourth quarter of 2009, consisting of \$61 million from the regulated electric transmission & distribution utility operations (TDU) and \$34 million related to transition and system restoration bonds. Operating income for the fourth quarter of 2008 was \$88 million, consisting of \$55 million from the TDU and \$33 million related to transition bonds. Operating income for the fourth quarter of 2008 was \$88 million, consisting of \$55 million from the TDU and \$33 million related to transition bonds. Operating income for the TDU benefited from growth of over 29,000 metered customers since December 2008, higher net transmission revenues and income associated with the company's investment in an advanced metering system (AMS). These benefits were partially offset by reduced energy demand as well as higher operation and maintenance expenses. In addition, the fourth quarter of 2008 reflected lower operating expenses as resources were devoted to recovery from Hurricane Ike.

Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$545 million, consisting of \$414 million from the TDU and \$131 million related to transition and system restoration bonds. Operating income for the same period of 2008 was \$545 million, consisting of \$407 million from the TDU, \$133 million related to transition bonds and \$5 million from the competition transition charge (CTC). The CTC was discontinued in February 2008 when the company securitized the remaining authorized true-up balance. Operating income for the TDU benefited from customer growth, higher net transmission revenues and income associated with the company's investment in AMS, partially offset by reduced energy demand and increased operation and maintenance expenses, primarily employee-related. In addition, 2008 included a gain from a land sale, lower net revenues related to Hurricane Ike and a refund of prior years' state franchise taxes.

Natural Gas Distribution

The natural gas distribution segment reported operating income of \$99 million for the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to \$96 million for the same period of 2008. Operating income increased from higher rates, other miscellaneous revenues and lower bad debt expense, partially offset by higher pension expense of \$11 million.

Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$204 million compared to \$215 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was primarily due to higher pension expense of \$37 million and other operating expenses, partially offset by higher rates and lower bad debt expense.

Interstate Pipelines

The interstate pipelines segment reported operating income of \$62 million for the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to \$66 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was primarily due to higher pension and other operating expenses. Higher revenue from new firm contracts was offset by lower revenue from off-system sales.

In addition to operating income, this segment recorded equity income of \$5 million for the fourth quarter of 2009 primarily from its 50 percent interest in the Southeast Supply Header (SESH), which went into service in September 2008, compared to equity income of \$2 million for the same period of 2008.

Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$256 million compared to \$293 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was primarily due to higher pension and other operating expenses. Higher revenue from new firm contracts was partially offset by lower revenue from ancillary services and off-system sales. Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2008, included a net gain of \$11 million associated with the sale of two storage development projects and a write-down of pipeline assets removed from service.

In addition to operating income, this segment had equity income of \$7 million for the year ended December 31, 2009, primarily from its interest in SESH, which included non-cash charges of \$16 million to reflect SESH's discontinued use of regulatory accounting. For the year ended December 31, 2008, equity income was \$36 million primarily from allowance for funds used during construction.

Field Services

The field services segment reported operating income of \$22 million for the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to \$26 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was primarily the result of commodity prices that were higher in 2008 than in 2009, partially offset by growth in core gathering throughput.

In addition to operating income, this segment recorded equity income of \$2 million in the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to \$3 million in the fourth quarter of 2008 from its 50 percent interest in a gas processing plant. The decline was primarily due to lower natural gas liquids prices.

Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$94 million compared to \$147 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was primarily the result of commodity prices that were significantly lower in 2009 than in 2008, partially offset by growth in core gathering throughput. Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2008, included gains of \$17 million associated with the sale of non-strategic assets and the settlement of a contractual dispute. Equity income from the jointly-owned gas processing plant was \$8 million for the year ended December 31, 2009, compared to \$15 million for the same period of 2008.

Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services

The competitive natural gas sales and services segment reported operating income of \$21 million for the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to \$26 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was due to reduced locational and seasonal price differentials, partially offset by lower operation and maintenance expenses. In addition, operating income for the fourth quarter of 2009 included charges of \$1 million resulting from mark-to-market accounting for derivatives associated with certain forward natural gas purchases and sales used to lock in economic margins. The fourth quarter of 2008 included a \$6 million write-down of natural gas inventory to the lower of average cost or market.

Operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, was \$21 million compared to \$62 million for the same period of 2008. The decline in operating income was due to substantially reduced locational and seasonal price differentials. In addition, operating income for the year ended December 31, 2009, included charges of \$23 million resulting from mark-to-market accounting compared to gains of \$13 million for the same period of 2008. The year ended December 31, 2009, also included \$6 million in inventory write-downs compared to \$30 million in inventory write-downs for the same period of 2008.

DIVIDEND DECLARATION

On January 21, 2010, CenterPoint Energy's board of directors declared a regular quarterly cash dividend of \$0.195 per share of common stock payable on March 10, 2010, to shareholders of record as of the close of business on February 16, 2010. This represents more than a 2.6 percent increase over the \$0.19 per share of common stock quarterly dividends paid by the company in 2009.

OUTLOOK FOR 2010

CenterPoint Energy expects earnings for 2010 to be in the range of \$1.02 to \$1.12 per diluted share. This guidance takes into consideration various economic and operational assumptions related to the business segments in which the company operates. The company has made certain assumptions regarding the timing and cost of certain financing activities and the

impact to earnings of various regulatory proceedings. In providing this guidance, the company has not included the impact of any changes in accounting standards, any impact from acquisitions or divestitures, the timing effects of mark-to-market or inventory accounting in the company's competitive natural gas sales and services business, or the outcome of the TDU's trueup appeal. The company has also excluded any impact to income from the change in value of Time Warner stocks and the related ZENS securities. For the impact of these factors on 2009 earnings, see the attached reconciliation.

FILING OF FORM 10-K FOR CENTERPOINT ENERGY, INC.

Today, CenterPoint Energy, Inc. filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the period ended December 31, 2009. A copy of that report is available on the company's Web site, www.CenterPointEnergy.com, under the Investors section. Other filings the company makes with the SEC and other documents relating to its corporate governance can also be found on that site.

WEBCAST OF EARNINGS CONFERENCE CALL

CenterPoint Energy's management will host an earnings conference call on Friday, February 26, 2010, 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 www.CenterPointEnergy.com. 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. Supplemental materials are also available on the company's Web site.

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, interstate pipelines, and field services operations. The company serves more than five million metered customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Texas. Assets total nearly \$20 billion. With about 8,800 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 135 years. For more information, visit the Web site at 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 natural gas and natural gas liquids prices, the impact of unplanned facility outages, and other factors discussed in CenterPoint Energy's Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2009, and other filings with the SEC.

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CenterPoint Energy, Inc. and Subsidiaries

Reconciliation of reported Net Income and diluted EPS to the basis used in providing earnings guidance

As reported	\$372	\$1.01
Timing effects impacting CES*:		
Mark-to-market (gains) losses – natural gas		
derivative contracts	15	0.04
Natural gas inventory write-downs	4	0.01
ZENS-related mark-to-market (gains) losses:		
Marketable securities**	(53)	(0.15)
Indexed debt securities	44	0.12
Accounting change***	10	0.03
Per earnings guidance	\$392	\$1.06
	====	=====

* Competitive natural gas sales and services

** Time Warner Inc., Time Warner Cable Inc. and AOL Inc.

*** Non-cash charge to reflect SESH's discontinued use of regulatory accounting $% \mathcal{T}_{\mathrm{S}}^{\mathrm{S}}$

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

	Decemb	r Ended er 31,	Year Ended December 31,	
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Revenues:				
Electric Transmission & Distribution	\$445	\$472	\$1,916	\$2,013
Natural Gas Distribution Competitive Natural Gas Sales and	1,250	1,043	4,226	3,384
Services	896	634	4,528	2,230
Interstate Pipelines	182	137	650	598
Field Services	61	65	252	241
Other Operations			11	
Eliminations			(261)	
Total			11,322	8,281
Expenses:				
Natural gas			7,466	
Operation and maintenance		438		
Depreciation and amortization	168		708	
Taxes other than income taxes	88	91		379
Total		2,000	10,049	
Operating Income			1,273	1,124
Other Income (Expense) :				
			(139)	
Gain (loss) on indexed debt securities				
Interest and other finance charges Interest on transition and system	(122)	(129)	(468)	(513)

restoration bonds	(34)	(33)	(136)	(131)
Distribution from AOL Time Warner litigation settlement	_	3	_	3
Additional distribution to ZENS holders Equity in earnings of unconsolidated	-	(3)	-	(3)
affiliates	5	7	51	15
Other - net	4	8	14	39
Total	(151)	(147)	(550)	(576)
Income Before Income Taxes	152	152	723	548
Income Tax Expense	(65)	(47)	(277)	(176)
Net Income	\$87 ===	\$105 ====	\$446 ====	\$372 ====

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

	Quarter Ended December 31,			
		2009		2009
Basic Earnings Per Common Share	\$0.25 =====	\$0.27 =====	•	·
Diluted Earnings Per Common Share	\$0.25 =====	\$0.27 =====	•	•
Dividends Declared per Common Share	\$0.1825	\$0.19	\$0.73	\$0.76
Weighted Average Common Shares Outstanding (000): - Basic - Diluted	-	390,922 393,472	-	-

Operating Income (Loss) by Segment

Electric Transmission & Distribution:				
Electric Transmission and				
Distribution Operations	\$55	\$61	\$407	\$414
Competition Transition Charge	-	-	5	-

Total Electric Transmission

and Distribution Utility Transition and System	55	61	412	414
Restoration Bond Companies	33	34	133	131
Total Electric Transmission				
& Distribution	88	95	545	545
Natural Gas Distribution	96	99	215	204
Competitive Natural Gas Sales and				
Services	26	21	62	21
Interstate Pipelines	66	62	293	256
Field Services	26	22	147	94
Other Operations	1	-	11	4
Total	\$303	\$299	\$1,273	\$1,124
	====	====	======	=====

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

Electric Transmission & Distribution

		Ended er 31,	 % Diff	Year Ended December 31, Diff		
	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)
Results of Operations: Revenues: Electric transmission and distribution utility Transition and system restoration bond companies	\$373		5%			5%
bona companieb	72	80	11%	323	340	5%
Total	445 	472	6%	1,916	2,013	5%
Expenses: Operation and maintenance Depreciation and	201	211	(5%)	703	774	(10%)
amortization Taxes other than income	69	70	(1%)	277	277	_

taxes Transition and system	48	50	(4%)	201	208	(3%)
restoration bond companies	39	46	(18%)	190	209	(10%)
Total	357	377	(6%)	1,371	1,468	(7%)
Operating Income	 \$88 ===	 \$95 ===	88	\$545 ====	\$545 ====	-
Operating Income: Electric transmission and distribution operations	\$55	\$61	11%	\$407	\$414	2%
Competition transition	622	ŶŬŢ	110	Ç107	ŶŢŢŢ	20
charge Transition and system restoration	-	-	-	5	-	(100%)
bond companies	33	34	3%	133	131	(2%)
Total Segment Operating Income	\$88 ===	\$95 ===	88	\$545 ====	\$545 ====	_
Electric Transmission & Distribution Operating Data: Actual MWH Delivered Residential 4, Total 16,		4,774,799 16,632,601		24,258,254 74,839,972		2% -
Weather (average for service area): Percentage of 10-year average: Cooling degree						
days Heating degree	88%	82%	(6%)	102%	105%	3%
days	88%	122%	34%	92%	103%	11%
Number of metered customers - end of period:						
Residential 1,	821,267 064,854	1,849,019 2,094,210	2% 1%	1,821,267 2,064,854	1,849,019 2,094,210	2% 1%

Natural Gas Distribution

	Decem	r Ended ber 31,		Ended Der 31,		
			% Diff			% Diff
	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)
Results of						
Operations:						
Revenues	\$1,250	\$1,043	(17%)	\$4,226	\$3,384	(20%)
Expenses:						
Natural gas Operation and	928	713	23%	3,124	2,251	28%
maintenance Depreciation and	153	161	(5%)	589	639	(8%)
amortization Taxes other	39	40	(3%)	157	161	(3%)
than income taxes	34	30	12%	141	129	9%
mata 1			109			01.0
Total	1,154	944	18%	4,011	3,180	21%
Operating						
Income	\$96 ===	\$99 ===	3%	\$215 ====	\$204 ====	(5%)
Natural Gas Distribution Operating Data: Throughput data in BCF Residential Commercial and	58	62	78	175	173	(1%)
Industrial	65	69	6%	236	233	(1%)
Total						
Throughput	123 ===	131 ===	7%	411 ===	406 ===	(1%)
Weather (average for service are Percentage of 10-year average Heating degree days	ea)	110	8 88	104%	105	3 18
Commercial	2,987,222	3,002,114	-	2,987,222	3,002,114	_
and Industrial	248,476	244,101	(2%)	248,476	244,101	(2%)

	=========	=========		========	=========	
Total	3,235,698	3,246,215	-	3,235,698	3,246,215	-

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

Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services

	Decemb	Ended Der 31,	 % Diff	Decer	Ended mber 31,	% Diff
	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)
Results of Operations:						
Revenues	\$896 	\$634 	(29%)	\$4,528 	\$2,230	(51%)
Expenses: Natural gas	856	603	30%	4.423	2,165	51%
Operation and maintenance	13	9	31%	39		-
Depreciation and amortization	1	1	_	3	4	(33%)
Taxes other than income					-	
taxes			-	1	_	-
Total	870	613	30%	4,466	2,209	51%
Operating Income	\$26 ===	\$21 ===	(19%)	\$62 ===		(66%)
Competitive Natural Gas Sales and Services Operating Data:						
Throughput data in BCF	136 ===	134 ===	(1%)	528 ===		(5%)
Number of customers - end of period		11,168	14%		11,168 ======	14%

Interstate Pipelines

Quarter Ended		Year Ended	
December 31,		December 31,	
	% Diff		% Diff

	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)
Results of Operations:		±100		+ < = 0	+= 0.0	
Revenues	\$182	\$137	(25%)	\$650	\$598	(8%)
Expenses:						
Natural gas	58	12	79%	155	97	37%
Operation and	00			200		0,0
maintenance	40	43	(8%)	133	166	(25%)
Depreciation						
and						
amortization	12	12	-	46	48	(4%)
Taxes other						
than income						
taxes	6	8	(33%)	23	31	(35%)
Total	116	75	35%	357	342	4%
Operating Income	\$66	\$62	(6%)	\$293	\$256	(13응)
	===	===		====	====	
Pipelines Operating						
Data:						
Throughput data in BCF	ŗ					
Transportation	393	357	(9%)	1,538	1,592	4%
-	===	===		=====	=====	

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

	Field Services						
	Quarter Ended December 31,		Year Ended December 31, % Diff Fav/		% Diff Fav/		
	2008	2009	(Unfav)	2008	2009	(Unfav)	
Results of Operations:							
Revenues	\$61	\$65	7%	\$252	\$241	(4%)	
Expenses:							
Natural gas	10	15	(50%)	21	51	(143%)	
Operation and maintenance	21	23	(10%)	69	77	(12%)	
Depreciation and amortization Taxes other than	3	4	(33%)	12	15	(25%)	
income taxes	1	1	_	3	4	(33%)	

Field Services

Total	35	43	(23%)	105	147	(40%)
Operating Income	\$26	\$22	(15%)	\$147	\$94	(36%)
	===	===		====	===	
Field Services Operating						
Data:						
Throughput data in BCF						
Gathering	110	114	4%	421	426	1%
	===	===		===	===	

			Other Operations				
	Quarter Ended December 31,		Year Ended December 31, Diff		% Diff		
	2008	2009	Fav/ (Unfav)			Fav/	
Results of Operations:							
Revenues	\$3	\$2	(33%)	\$11	\$11	-	
Expenses	2	2	-	-	7	-	
Operating Income	\$1	\$-	(100%)	\$11	\$4	(64%)	
	===	===		===	===		

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

	~		Quarter Ended Year En December 31, December		
	2008	2009	2008	2009	
Capital Expenditures by					
Segment					
Electric Transmission					
& Distribution	\$80	\$114	\$336	\$402	
Hurricane Ike	4	-	145	26	
	-	-			
Total Electric					
Transmission &					
Distribution	84	114	481	428	
Natural Gas					
Distribution	63	44	214	165	
Competitive Natural					
Gas Sales and Services					
	5	-	8	2	
Interstate Pipelines	59	58	189	176	
Field Services	45	131	122	348	
Other Operations	21	11	39	29	
Total	\$277	\$358	\$1,053	\$1,148	
	====	====	=====	======	

Interest Expense Detail (Millions of Dollars) (Unaudited)

	Quarter Ended December 31,		Year 1 Decem	Ended ber 31,
	2008	2009	2008	2009
Interest Expense Detail Amortization of Deferred Financing				
Cost Capitalization of	\$7	\$7	\$25	\$34
Interest Cost Transition and System Restoration Bond	(2)	-	(12)	(4)
Interest Expense	34	33	136	131
Other Interest Expense	117	122	455	483
Total Interest				
Expense	\$156	\$162	\$604	\$644
	====	====	====	====

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)

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	December 2008 	31, D	ecember 2009 	31,
ASSETS				
Current Assets:				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$167		\$740	
Other current assets	2,868		2,164	
Total current assets	3,035		2,904	
Property, Plant and Equipment, net	10,296		10,788	
Other Assets:				
Goodwill	1,696		1,696	
Regulatory assets	3,684		3,677	
Other non-current assets	965		708	

Total other assets	6,345	6,081
Total Assets	\$19,676	\$19,773
	======	======
LIABILITIES AND SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Current Liabilities:		
Short-term borrowings	\$153	\$55
Current portion of transition and system		
restoration bonds long-term debt	208	241
Current portion of other long-term debt	125	662
Other current liabilities	2,362	2,080
Total current liabilities	2,848	3,038
Other Liabilities: Accumulated deferred income taxes, net and		
investment tax credit	2,632	2,792
Regulatory liabilities	821	921
Other non-current liabilities	1,172	1,264
Total other liabilities	4,625	4,977
Total other Habilities	4,025	4,977
Long-term Debt:		
Transition and system restoration bonds	2,381	2,805
Other	7,800	6,314
Total long-term debt	10,181	9,119
Shareholders' Equity	2,022	2,639
Sharehorders Equity	2,022	2,055
Total Liabilities and Shareholders'		
Equity	\$19,676	\$19,773
± -4	======	======

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

	Year Ended December 33	
	2008	2009
Cash Flows from Operating Activities: Net income Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operating activities:	\$446	\$372

Depreciation and amortization	737	780
Deferred income taxes	487	269
Write-down of natural gas inventory	30	6
Changes in net regulatory assets	(366)	-
Changes in other assets and liabilities	(450)	398
Other, net	(33)	16
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	851	1,841
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities	(1,368)	(896)
Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Financing Activities	555	(372)
Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	38	573
Cash and Cash Equivalents at Beginning of Period	129	167
Cash and Cash Equivalents at End of Period	\$167	\$740
	====	====

SOURCE CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

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