



CenterPoint Energy Files to Deploy Up to 250,000 Interactive Meters

Meters Would Enable Retail Electric Providers to Offer Consumers Innovative Products and Services

HOUSTON, May 5, 2008 (PrimeNewswire via COMTEX News Network) -- CenterPoint Energy, Inc.'s (NYSE:CNP) electric transmission and distribution subsidiary, CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, today filed with the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) an Advanced Metering System (AMS) initial deployment plan. The plan is subject to review and approval by the PUC. Following issuance of an acceptable order by the PUC, the Company anticipates that it would begin deployment of up to 250,000 interactive meters and related infrastructure over a three-year period.

"This new metering technology is the first step in moving the electric grid into the digital age," said Tom Standish, Regulated Operations group president for CenterPoint Energy. "This innovative technology should encourage greater energy conservation by giving Houston-area electric consumers the ability to better monitor and manage their electric use and its cost in near real-time."

"Although we don't send electric bills to end-use customers, CenterPoint Energy is responsible for meter reading and maintaining service reliability to two million electric customers in the Houston area. We're confident that over the long run this infrastructure upgrade will prove beneficial to end-use consumers, retail electric providers, and as importantly, the environment - by promoting greater energy awareness and conservation," said Standish.

The interactive meter will enable retail electric providers (REPs) to offer new products and services to their customers such as time-of-use rates, which encourage shifting electricity demand from peak to off-peak times when costs are lower, thereby helping to offset the need to build new generation. Interactive meters will also enable customers to take advantage of greater transparency regarding their usage and allows them better means to evaluate various REP rates, helping customers to seek the best retail prices and services.

Interactive meters offer additional benefits as well. The meters will not only automate meter reading, but also electric service connection and disconnection, which should significantly reduce the time required for customers to have new electric service connected or to switch REPs.

In its filing, the company is seeking to recover the cost of this initial deployment of the Advanced Metering System in two separate monthly charges. All REPs will be billed a monthly infrastructure charge for eight years based on usage. The filing projects this charge to be about \$1.75 per month for each REP customer, based on usage of 1,000 Kwh. The second charge of about \$4.75 per month would be billed to REPs for each interactive meter the company installs for that REP's customers. That charge would continue for five years after the meter is installed.

CenterPoint Energy has conducted extensive testing of and has seen positive results from interactive meter technology through a 10,000 meter pilot program that began in 2007. The company plans to begin implementation of its AMS initial deployment plan upon completion of the PUC review and issuance of a PUC order acceptable to the company. PUC review could take up to 150 days. Beginning in the fall of 2009, the meters would be installed on homes and businesses as requested by REPs who elect to participate in the plan. During this initial deployment period, CenterPoint Energy will also implement a load research program to measure the impact on consumers' electricity usage from the information and capabilities made available from the advanced metering system. Results of this initial deployment would be evaluated in deciding whether to seek subsequent approval by the PUC for full deployment across our system.

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 over \$17 billion. With about 8,600 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 130 years. For more information, visit the Web site at www.CenterPointEnergy.com.

The CenterPoint Energy logo is available at <http://www.primenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=3588>

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, 2007, CenterPoint Energy's Form 10-Q for the period ended March 31, 2008, and other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

This news release was distributed by PrimeNewswire, www.primenewswire.com

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