



CenterPoint Energy Works on Recovery Efforts in Louisiana and Mississippi

Additional Crews From Arkansas, Texas and North Louisiana Brought in to Help Local Operations

HOUSTON, Aug 31, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- CenterPoint Energy (NYSE: CNP) continues to assess and repair damage to its natural gas facilities severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Additional company crews from Arkansas, north Louisiana and Houston and have been deployed to help handle emergencies and ultimately work to restore natural gas service.

"We have started damage assessment but there are still many areas in our service territory that we are unable to reach due to flooding and debris," said Mike Fine, vice president and general manager of CenterPoint Energy's operations in Mississippi. "The hardest hit areas are towns along the Gulf Coast, Laurel and Columbia. At this point, we are handling natural gas emergencies only, and will then concentrate on restoring service in areas that are not inhibited by flood waters or other obstacles. We will work toward the harder hit areas once we gain access."

"Damage to CenterPoint Energy facilities in Louisiana was primarily centered around the Covington/Bogalusa area," added Walter Bryant, vice president and general manager of CenterPoint Energy's operations in Louisiana. "We appreciate our customers' patience as we respond to emergency calls first, then focus on restoring service."

To report natural gas emergencies call:

Louisiana - 800-477-0177.

Mississippi - Contact your local office, if you are unable to get through please call 800-371-5417

CenterPoint Energy offers these post-storm natural gas safety tips.

* If you smell natural gas leave the area immediately and contact CenterPoint Energy or emergency personnel as soon as possible. It may be several days before crews can gain access to these areas due to flooding and other obstacles.

* If your home was flooded, call a licensed plumber or a gas appliance technician to inspect your appliances and gas piping to make sure it is in good operating condition before calling CenterPoint Energy to reconnect service. This includes outdoor gas appliances also, such as pool heaters, gas grills, and gas lights.

CenterPoint Energy, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a domestic energy delivery company that includes electric transmission & distribution, natural gas distribution and sales, and interstate pipeline and gathering operations. The company serves nearly five million metered customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas. Assets total approximately \$16 billion. With more than 9,000 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 130 years. In Louisiana, CenterPoint Energy serves more than 250,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in 175 communities. In Mississippi, CenterPoint Energy serves more than 125,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in about 100 communities. For more information, visit the Web site at <http://www.CenterPointEnergy.com> .

SOURCE CenterPoint Energy, Inc.

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