



CenterPoint Energy sells its final asset in Argentina

Company completes strategy to exit South America

Houston - April 4, 2003 - CenterPoint Energy, Inc. (NYSE:CNP) announced today that it sold its final asset in Argentina, a 90 percent interest in Empresa Distribuidora de Electricidad de Santiago del Estero S.A. (Edese), to a group of Argentine investors, led by Banco de Santiago del Estero. As a result of the sale, the company expects to record a small gain in 2003. Terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

Edese is an electric utility distribution company that serves about 160,000 customers in Santiago del Estero, a rural province in North Central Argentina. CenterPoint Energy acquired its interest in Edese in January 1995. The remaining 10 percent is owned by Edese employees.

"The sale of Edese today and Argener, a cogeneration facility sold in February, completes our exit from South America," said David McClanahan, president and chief executive officer for CenterPoint Energy. "Our strategy to sell our international operations will allow us to focus on our vision of becoming America's leading energy delivery company."

CenterPoint Energy, Inc., headquartered in Houston, Texas, is a domestic energy delivery company that includes electric transmission and distribution, natural gas distribution and sales, interstate pipeline and gathering operations, and more than 14,000 megawatts of power generation in Texas. The company serves nearly five million customers primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. Assets total more than \$19 billion. CenterPoint Energy became the new holding company for the regulated operations of the former Reliant Energy, Incorporated in August 2002. With more than 11,000 employees, CenterPoint Energy and its predecessor companies have been in business for more than 130 years.

This news release includes forward-looking statements. Actual events and results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these statements. Factors that could affect actual results include the timing of receipt of regulatory approvals, changes in CenterPoint Energy's business plans, financial market conditions and other factors discussed in CenterPoint Energy's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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