



NRG Updates Information Regarding Northeast Generating LLC Bonds

December 19, 2002

MINNEAPOLIS (December 19, 2002) -- NRG Energy, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Xcel Energy (NYSE: XEL), today provided an update on its NRG Northeast Generating LLC bond series, announcing that payments have not been made on the bond series that were due December 15. The payments include \$78.3 million in combined principal and interest obligations on NRG Northeast Generating LLC 8.06 percent Series A-1 senior secured bonds due 2004, 8.84 percent Series B-1 senior secured bonds due 2015 and 9.29 percent Series C-1 senior secured bonds due 2024. NRG has until December 30 to make principal and interest payments on these series.

Also today, Standard and Poor's Ratings Services lowered the corporate credit rating on NRG Energy Northeast Generating LLC to "D" from "CC."

"We do not believe that these missed payments, nor the subsequent downgrade, will affect the course of NRG's restructuring discussions," said Richard C. Kelly, NRG president and chief operating officer. "We are continuing to work with our lenders toward an overall restructuring of NRG's debt and intend to address these payments as part of the broader plan."

NRG Northeast Generating LLC bond series are non-recourse to NRG and Xcel Energy.

NRG Energy, a wholly owned and unregulated subsidiary of Xcel Energy, develops and operates power generating facilities. NRG's operations include competitive energy production and cogeneration facilities, thermal energy production and energy resource recovery facilities.

Xcel Energy is a major U.S. electricity and natural gas company with regulated operations in 12 Western and Midwestern states. The company provides a comprehensive portfolio of energy-related products and services to 3.2 million electricity customers and 1.7 million natural gas customers through its regulated operating companies. In terms of customers, it is the fourth-largest combination natural gas and electricity company in the U.S. Company headquarters are located in Minneapolis.

Certain statements included in this news release are forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Forward-looking statements above include, but are not limited to, the status and planned result of negotiations with lenders. Although NRG believes that its expectations are reasonable, it can give no assurance that its negotiations with its lenders will be successful or what impact such negotiations will have on security holders of NRG.

NRG undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. For more information regarding risks and uncertainties that may affect NRG's future results, review NRG's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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