



Gartzke Named ALLETE Chairman, CEO

(Duluth, Minn.) -- David Gartzke, president of ALLETE, Inc., was named chairman and chief executive officer today, announced Nick Smith, chair of the executive committee of ALLETE's Board of Directors. Gartzke will retain the title of president.

"David's leadership skills have served ALLETE well for many years," said Smith. "In his expanded role, Dave will be better able to chart the course for future growth of the Company, and we're excited by this prospect."

Gartzke, 58, received his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Minnesota-Duluth in 1971 and his master's degree in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1972. Gartzke began his career at ALLETE (formerly Minnesota Power) in 1975. After holding several positions, including Director of Rates, Director of Planning and Treasurer, he was named Senior Vice President-Finance and Chief Financial Officer in December, 1995. Gartzke became president of ALLETE in August, 2001.

Arend Sandbulte is stepping down from the position of board chairman and will be retiring from the board in May pursuant to the board's retirement policy.

ALLETE's corporate headquarters are located in Duluth, Minnesota. ALLETE's holdings include the second largest wholesale automobile auction network in North America, the leading provider of independent auto dealer inventory financing, significant real estate holdings in Florida and a low-cost electric utility that serves some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. For more information about ALLETE, visit the company's web site at www.allete.com.

The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.