



Minn Power Third Quarter Earnings Reported

Minnesota Power, Inc. (NYSE: MPL) today reported a 34 percent increase in 1999 third quarter net income compared to the same quarter last year. Net income was \$34.5 million on quarterly revenue of \$306.3 million versus \$25.8 million of net income on \$266.3 million of revenue a year ago.

Earnings per share of Minnesota Power common stock were 50 cents for the third quarter compared to 39 cents last year, an increase of 28 percent.

"Third quarter results reflect solid operating performance, reaffirming the value of focused strategies," said Edwin L. Russell, chief executive officer of Minnesota Power.

The automotive services segment continued its strong performance with a 45 percent increase in net income from the same quarter last year. Results in this segment reflect a profitable mix of same-store growth and selective acquisitions.

Net income from water services nearly doubled compared to the same quarter last year, reflecting both regulatory relief granted by the Florida Public Service Commission and a 23 percent increase in the number of customers gained through strategic acquisitions.

Retail electric revenue was down nearly 12 percent, but spot-market opportunities in bulk power trading through the company's MPEX subsidiary helped electric operations post improved net income compared to the third quarter last year. Year-to-date revenue from electric operations remained flat.

"The strong performance of real estate operations at both Palm Coast and Lehigh helped our investments segment keep pace with quarterly results a year ago," Russell said.

Minnesota Power, Inc. is a diversified services company with corporate headquarters in Duluth, Minnesota. Minnesota Power holdings include a low-cost electric utility that serves some of the largest industrial loads in the United States; the second largest wholesale automobile auction network in North America; the leading provider of independent auto dealer inventory financing; the largest private water utilities in Florida and North Carolina and significant real estate holdings in Florida.