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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Allegheny Power ranks among nation's leaders in customer satisfaction**

**(Greensburg, Pa., April 17, 2000)**--Allegheny Power has been ranked among the top-rated electric utilities in the nation in a recent national business customer satisfaction study conducted by J.D. Power and Associates and Navigant Consulting, Inc. Allegheny was ranked second in the eastern United States and ninth nationally.

The *2000 Electric Utility Midsize Business Customer Satisfaction Study* was based on responses from more than 5,600 business customers from throughout the United States. The study found that the key determinant of satisfaction in the electric utility industry is a provider's image. The "company image" area includes 11 specific attributes, including being: customer oriented, a leader in the industry, and honest and ethical. Other determinants of overall satisfaction, in order of importance, are price and value, power quality and reliability, account maintenance, billing and payment, customer service, and field crews.

"Allegheny Power takes its commitment seriously to customer satisfaction," said Jay S. Pifer, President of Allegheny Power. "Meeting the needs of all our customers, whether they are residential, commercial and industrial, is critical to our success. Our employees are focused on achieving high levels of customer satisfaction, and their hard work is demonstrated in these latest results.

"In addition, we use a wide range of customer feedback resources because we recognize the importance of listening to our customers," said Pifer. "In a competitive marketplace, customer satisfaction defines a company's image. Midsize businesses are the backbone of our economy and providing quality service to that group of customers is important to their success. We believe this independent study by J.D. Power and Associates and Navigant Consulting, Inc., provides valuable data that enables us to improve our customer satisfaction."

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**Allegheny Power/Customer Satisfaction**  
**Page 2**

The J.D. Power study reports that the characteristics of the highest rated companies include offering value, providing options, communicating with and informing their customers, and delivering proactive and responsive customer service.

“While cost of service is a significant factor among midsize businesses, a utility provider that combines value with a solid customer-oriented image is more likely to have a competitive advantage,” said Jim Gaz, director of energy services at J.D. Power and Associates.

The 2000 Electric Utility Midsize Business Customer Satisfaction Study ranked the top 44 electric utilities and the responses were collected through interviews from November 1999 through January 2000.

Navigant Consulting, Inc., based in Chicago, Illinois, is a global management consulting firm that provides strategic, financial, management and expert services to *Fortune* 100 companies, government agencies, and legal counsels, and as well as regulated and network industries. The company focuses on industries undergoing substantial structural change and the issues that drive it. Navigant Consulting can be accessed through the World Wide Web at [www.navigantconsulting.com](http://www.navigantconsulting.com). Additional details about this study are available at <http://csi.navigantconsulting.com>.

Headquartered in Agoura Hills, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services firm operating in key business sectors including market research, forecasting and customer satisfaction. The firm’s quality and satisfaction measurements are based on actual customer responses from more than one million consumers annually. J.D. Power and Associates can be accessed through the World Wide Web at [www.jdpower.com](http://www.jdpower.com).

Allegheny Power, an Allegheny Energy company, delivers low-cost energy to three million people in parts of Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. For more information about Allegheny, visit our web site at [www.alleghenypower.com](http://www.alleghenypower.com).

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