

## News Release

### **Eversource to Acquire Columbia Gas of Massachusetts Assets for \$1.1 Billion**

*Eversource brings strong track record of corporate responsibility and commitment to safety to Columbia Gas customers and communities*

**BOSTON, Mass. and HARTFORD, Conn. (Feb 26, 2020)** – Eversource Energy (NYSE: ES) today announced that it has reached an agreement to purchase the Massachusetts natural gas assets of Columbia Gas for \$1.1 billion from NiSource. The acquisition will bring Columbia Gas operations in Massachusetts under local ownership by the largest energy company in New England.

Columbia Gas currently serves 330,000 natural gas customers in more than 60 communities in Massachusetts. Eversource has 300,000 natural gas customers and 1.5 million electric customers in 51 communities across the commonwealth. Many communities that Columbia Gas serves with natural gas already receive electric service from Eversource.

“Eversource is uniquely positioned to leverage the strengths of our current and future workforce, facilities, gas supply resources and business processes to achieve greater operational efficiency, while continuing to deliver on our unwavering commitment to safety and superior service for our customers,” said Eversource Chairman, President and CEO Jim Judge. “As the #1 rated energy company in the U.S. by Newsweek and the #1 ranked utility according to *Forbes* and JUST Capital for corporate social responsibility, we are focused on providing safe and reliable service to our customers while at the same time nurturing a diverse and engaged workplace for employees and working to protect the environment. We look forward to bringing that commitment to all of our new customers and employees.”

Under the asset purchase agreement, liabilities related to the September 2018 gas distribution incidents in the Merrimack Valley will remain the responsibility of Columbia Gas’ current parent company, NiSource.

Eversource recently announced an industry-leading strategy to achieve carbon neutrality in its operations by 2030. The energy company will extend the same carbon reduction initiatives in the extended service territory of Columbia Gas in order to achieve that aggressive goal.

Columbia Gas customers will have the opportunity to realize numerous benefits from the transaction including:

- Ownership by a larger, locally focused company with expertise and resources to excel at delivering safe and reliable energy for customers
- Improved safety and reliability through additional investments in infrastructure upgrades
- The advantage of locally based gas dispatch and emergency response in Massachusetts
- Expanded opportunities to benefit from Eversource’s #1 in the nation energy efficiency programs
- Improved potential to participate in demand response and other clean energy initiatives that Eversource is undertaking
- Potential for reduced gas supply costs and increased reliability through portfolio optimization and management

- A commitment to maintain appropriate staffing levels that enable safe and reliable operations
- Strong financial profile with access to Eversource’s top tier credit ratings that helps to lower financing costs for customers

“We have a strong track record of investing in infrastructure to significantly improve the reliability and safety of our systems,” said Eversource Gas President Bill Akley. “Our commitment to operational excellence and superior customer service will create value for customers, employees, shareholders, and the communities we serve.”

The transaction is expected to be accretive to Eversource’s earnings per share in the first 12 months after closing. The company plans to finance the transaction with a balance of new equity and debt that maintains its strong credit profile.

“We look forward to working with Columbia Gas to achieve the transaction and ensure a safe and smooth transition of services for customers in Massachusetts,” Judge added.

The transaction will require approval from the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities and the U.S. Justice Department under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Act. Eversource and Columbia Gas intend to engage with key regulatory stakeholders and consumer advocates over the next 30 days to review the investments needed to operate the system, to minimize rate impacts and review key benefits for customers.

The parties expect to close the transaction by the end of the third quarter 2020.

Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC is serving as the exclusive financial advisor and Ropes & Gray LLP is acting as legal advisor to Eversource Energy on this transaction.



*Eversource (NYSE: ES) transmits and delivers electricity and natural gas and supplies water to approximately 4 million customers in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Celebrated as a national leader for its corporate citizenship, Eversource is the #1 energy company in Newsweek’s list of America’s Most Responsible Companies for 2020 and recognized as one of America’s Most JUST Companies and the #1 utility by Forbes and JUST Capital. Eversource harnesses the commitment of approximately 8,300 employees across three states to build a single, united company around the mission of safely delivering reliable energy and water with superior customer service. The company is empowering a clean energy future in the Northeast, with nationally recognized energy efficiency solutions and successful programs to integrate new clean energy resources like solar, offshore wind, electric vehicles and battery storage, into the electric system. For more information, please visit our website ([www.eversource.com](http://www.eversource.com)) and follow us on Twitter ([@EversourceCorp](https://twitter.com/EversourceCorp)) and Facebook ([facebook.com/EversourceEnergy](https://facebook.com/EversourceEnergy)). For more information on our water services, visit [www.aquarionwater.com](http://www.aquarionwater.com).*

*This news release includes statements concerning Eversource Energy's expectations, beliefs, plans, objectives, goals, strategies, assumptions of future events, future financial performance or growth and other statements that are not historical facts, including statements regarding the planned acquisition of Columbia Gas, the timing of such transaction and benefits anticipated from such transaction. These statements are "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Generally, readers can identify these forward-looking statements through the use of words or phrases such as "estimate," "expect," "anticipate," "intend," "plan," "project," "believe," "forecast," "should," "could" and other similar expressions. Forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results or outcomes to differ materially from those included in the forward-looking statements. factors that may cause actual results to differ materially from those included in the forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to: the transaction is subject to conditions to closing, including regulatory approvals, that may not be satisfied; it may take longer than anticipated to consummate the transaction; we may not realize the benefits we anticipate from the transaction; unforeseen liabilities; risks relating to integration of the acquired business; and other presently unknown or unforeseen factors.*

*Other risk factors are detailed in Eversource Energy's reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and updated as necessary, and are available on Eversource Energy's website at [www.eversource.com](http://www.eversource.com) and on the SEC's website at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov). All such factors are difficult to predict and contain uncertainties that may materially affect Eversource Energy's actual results, many of which are beyond our control. You should not place undue reliance on the forward-looking statements; each speaks only as of the date on which such statement is made, except as required by federal securities laws, and Eversource Energy undertakes no obligation to update any forward-looking statement or statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which such statement is made or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events.*

**Media Contact:**

Caroline Pretyman

617-424-2460

[caroline.pretyman@eversource.com](mailto:caroline.pretyman@eversource.com)**Investor Inquiries:**

Jeff Kotkin

860-665-5154

[jeffrey.kotkin@eversource.com](mailto:jeffrey.kotkin@eversource.com)

###