



COMPANY UPDATE

Key Metrics

CMS - NYSE (Price as of 10/25/17)	\$47.97
Price Target	N/A
52-Week Range	\$38.78-\$49.11
Shares Outstanding (mm)	281.0
Market Cap. (\$mm)	\$13,479
3-Mo. Average Daily Volume	1,758,000
Institutional Ownership	90.0%
Debt/Total Capital	69.8%
ROE (ttm)	12.4%
Book Value/Share	\$15.80
Price/Book Value	3.0x
Indicated Dividend / Yield	\$1.33 2.8%
Dividend Cycle	Feb., May, Aug., Nov.

EPS FY 12/31

	2016	Prior 2017E	Curr. 2017E	Prior 2018E	Curr. 2018E
1Q		--		--	--
2Q		--		--	--
3Q		--		--	--
4Q		--		--	--
Year	\$2.02		\$2.17	\$2.34	\$2.32
P/E	23.7x		22.1x		20.7x
Payout	61%		61%		57%

Note: Figures exclude non-recurring items

Revenue (\$mm)

	2016	Prior 2017E	Curr. 2017E	Prior 2018E	Curr. 2018E
1Q		--		--	--
2Q		--		--	--
3Q		--		--	--
4Q		--		--	--
Year	\$6,399		\$6,575		\$6,725

Company Description: Headquartered in Jackson, Michigan, CMS Energy is an integrated energy company. It has two principal subsidiaries: Consumers Energy and CMS Enterprises. Consumers Energy is a public utility that provides electricity to 1.8 million customers and natural gas to 1.7 million residents. CMS Enterprises' primary business is independent power production. Fuel sources: Gas 34%, Coal 22%, Pumped storage 11%, Renewables 12%, Oil 10%, Nuclear 8%, Purchased 3%.

CMS Energy

CMS -- NYSE -- Neutral -- 2

Company raises low end of 2017 guidance range and introduces 2018 expectations

- CMS Energy reported third quarter adjusted operating earnings of \$0.62 per share versus \$0.70 per share in the third quarter of 2016.** Earnings were modestly above expectations. As has been the case for much of this year, results were negatively impacted by unfavorable weather. On a weather adjusted basis, earnings were \$0.64 per share compared to \$0.60 per share in last year's third quarter. Through the first nine months of the year earnings were \$1.66 versus \$1.74 per share last year. However, on a weather adjusted basis, year to date 2017 earnings are \$1.84 per share versus \$1.72 per share in 2016. Through the nine months of the year CMS has been able to offset \$0.24 of mild weather and storm-related expenses through cost reductions. CMS continues to deliver consistent financial performance. Earnings have grown by 7% annually over the past 14 years.
- Management revises 2017 earnings guidance and introduces 2018 expectations.** CMS expects this year's earnings to be in a range of \$2.15 to \$2.18 per share. The low end of guidance was raised to \$2.15, up from \$2.14 previously. We are maintaining our 2017 EPS estimate of \$2.17, which would represent nearly a 7.5% increase over last year's \$2.02. CMS expects 2018 earnings to be in a range of \$2.29 to \$2.33 per share. Accordingly, we are trimming our 2018 earnings estimate by \$0.02 to \$2.32 per share. The company expects to grow its earnings by a 6% to 8% annual rate. Earnings growth is expected to be driven by sales growth, cost reductions and capital spending. We expect a similar dividend growth rate.
- We maintain our Neutral rating on CMS due to valuation.** While we believe CMS deserves to trade at a premium valuation, we view the shares as more fairly valued than undervalued. However, we continue to regard CMS as an excellent long-term core holding for investors seeking both capital appreciation and growing dividends. We would maintain positions in CMS as we expect the company to continue to deliver top tier utility performance.

Note Important Disclosures on Pages 2 and 3.
Note Analyst Certification on Page 2.

Suitability

We assign a 2 suitability rating to CMS Energy. The company's primary businesses, gas and electricity, are regulated, which generates stable results. CMS generates the most consistent financial performance of any utility in our coverage. We believe CMS is a suitable holding for conservative investors seeking both capital appreciation and a rising dividend income stream.

Additional information is available upon request.

Analyst Certification

I, David B. Burks, hereby certify that the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect my personal views about the subject company(ies) and its (their) securities. I also certify that I have not been, am not, and will not be receiving direct or indirect compensation in exchange for expressing the specific recommendation(s) in this report.

Important Disclosures

Hilliard Lyons' analysts receive bonus compensation based on Hilliard Lyons' profitability. They do not receive direct payments from investment banking activity.

Investment Ratings

Buy - We believe the stock has significant total return potential in the coming 12 months.

Long-term Buy - We believe the stock is an above average holding in its sector, and expect solid returns to be realized over a longer time frame than our Buy rated issues, typically 2 to 3 years.

Neutral - We believe the stock is an average holding in its sector, is currently fully valued, and may be used as a source of funds if better opportunities arise.

Underperform - We believe the stock is vulnerable to a price set back in the next 12 months.

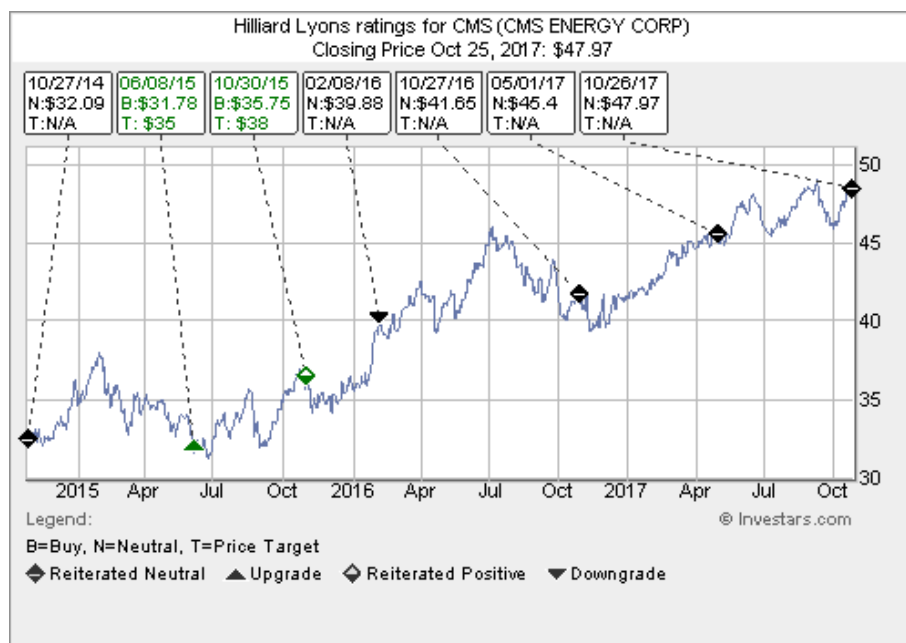
Suitability Ratings

1 - A large cap, core holding with a solid history

2 - A historically secure company which could be cyclical, has a shorter history than a "1" or is subject to event driven setbacks

3 - An above average risk/reward ratio could be due to small size, lack of product diversity, sporadic earnings or high leverage

4 - Speculative, due to small size, inconsistent profitability, erratic revenue, volatility, low trading volume or a narrow customer or product base



Rating	Hilliard Lyons Recommended Issues		Investment Banking Provided in Past 12 Mo.	
	# of Stocks Covered	% of Stocks Covered	Banking	No Banking
Buy	39	32%	8%	92%
Hold/Neutral	74	60%	9%	91%
Sell	8	7%	0%	100%
Restriction	2	2%	100%	0%

As of 5 October 2017

Other Disclosures

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