



Evergy Inc. (EVRG)

Updated August 31st, 2021 by Aristofanis Papadatos

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$68	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	7.6%	Market Cap:	\$15.6 B
Fair Value Price:	\$60	5 Year Growth Estimate:	7.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	8/10/2021
% Fair Value:	113%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-2.3%	Dividend Payment Date:	9/20/2021
Dividend Yield:	3.1%	5 Year Price Target	\$85	Years Of Dividend Growth:	16
Dividend Risk Score:	C	Retirement Suitability Score:	B	Last Dividend Increase:	5.9%

Overview & Current Events

Evergy is an electric utility holding company incorporated in 2017 and headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri. Through its subsidiaries Evergy Kansas, Evergy Metro and Evergy Missouri West, the company serves approximately 1.4 million residential customers, nearly 200,000 commercial customers and 6,900 industrial customers and municipalities in Kansas and Missouri. Evergy has a market capitalization of \$15.6 billion and is significantly impacted by seasonality, as about one-third of its retail revenues is recorded in the third quarter.

In early August, Evergy reported (8/5/21) financial results for the second quarter of fiscal 2021. The company benefited from strong consumer demand, higher transmission margin and lower operating and maintenance expenses. As a result, Evergy grew its adjusted earnings-per-share 25%, from \$0.68 in last year's quarter to \$0.85, and exceeded analysts' consensus by \$0.12.

Management reiterated its guidance for adjusted earnings-per-share of \$3.20-\$3.40 this year and reaffirmed its outlook for 6%-8% adjusted earnings-per-share growth until 2024.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
EPS	\$1.93	\$2.15	\$2.27	\$2.35	\$2.09	\$2.43	\$2.27	\$2.50	\$2.89	\$3.10	\$3.32	\$4.66
DPS	\$1.28	\$1.32	\$1.36	\$1.40	\$1.44	\$1.52	\$1.60	\$1.74	\$1.93	\$2.05	\$2.14	\$3.04
Shares¹	118.3	126.9	128.3	132.8	139.3	142.5	142.6	214.1	239.9	227.5	230.0	200.0

Evergy has grown its earnings-per-share at a 5.4% average annual rate over the last decade. This mid-single digit growth rate is typical in the utility sector. However, Evergy has enhanced its investments in growth projects lately and hence it is likely to accelerate its growth pattern in the upcoming years. The company expects to spend \$9.2 billion on capital expenses in 2021-2025 while it will also reduce its operational and maintenance expenses. It reduced these expenses by 10% in 2020 and expects to reduce them by another 8% until 2024. Given also expected regulatory approval of 5%-6% annual growth in rates, Evergy expects to grow its earnings-per-share by 6%-8% per year until at least 2024. The utility also expects to grow its dividend in line with its earnings-per-share, at a 6%-8% annual rate, and maintain a dividend payout ratio of 60%-70% until at least 2024.

Valuation Analysis

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Now	2026
Avg. P/E	13.7	13.4	14.0	15.3	18.5	21.6	23.4	21.8	20.9	19.0	20.5	18.2
Avg. Yld.	4.8%	4.6%	4.3%	3.9%	3.7%	2.9%	3.0%	3.2%	3.2%	3.5%	3.1%	3.6%

Evergy is currently trading at a price-to-earnings ratio of 20.5, which is higher than its historical 10-year average of 18.2. If the stock trades at its 10-year average valuation level in five years, it will incur a -2.3% annualized drag in its returns.

¹ In millions.

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2026
Payout	66%	61%	60%	60%	69%	63%	70%	70%	67%	66%	65%	65%

The subsidiaries of Evergy operate on a fully regulated retail utility model in Missouri and Kansas and thus they do not face any competition in these markets. This typical utility model, which generates reliable and growing earnings, is undoubtedly a strong competitive advantage.

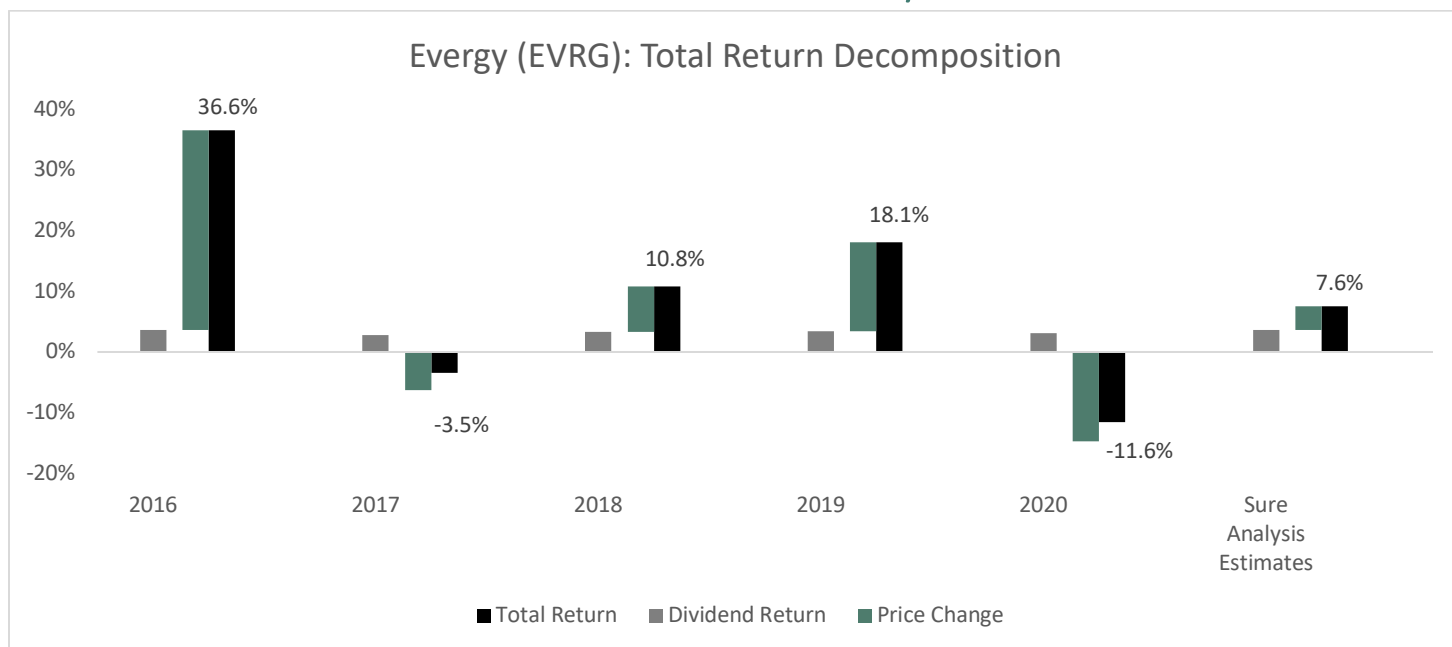
Another major advantage of utilities is their resilience to recessions. Even during the fiercest recessions, people do not cut electricity consumption. In fact, they spend more time at home and thus they increase their consumption. In the severe recession, which was caused by the pandemic, Evergy grew its adjusted earnings-per-share 7% in 2020, to an all-time high level. Moreover, thanks to its 3.1% dividend, its healthy payout ratio of 65% and its expected dividend growth rate of 6%-8% per year until at least 2024, Evergy is a great candidate for income-oriented investors. We also expect Evergy to raise its dividend by ~6% in the fourth quarter of this year.

The only material risk factor for Evergy is an environment of higher interest rates. Treasury yields have advanced this year due to expectations that the unprecedented stimulus packages in response to the pandemic will eventually lead to higher inflation. If bond yields continue to rise, they will render the dividend yield of Evergy less attractive and hence they will exert pressure on its stock price. On the other hand, Evergy has a higher growth rate and more attractive valuation than most of its peers. As a result, it is less vulnerable to higher interest rates than most of its peers.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Evergy has proved resilient to the pandemic and has one of the most promising growth prospects in the utility sector. It also has a reasonable valuation. We expect the stock to offer a 7.6% average annual return over the next five years thanks to 7.0% earnings-per-share growth and its 3.1% dividend, partly offset by a -2.3% annualized contraction of its valuation level. While we still view the stock as attractive, we lower its rating from “buy” to “hold” due to its 30% rally in about six months and the resultant decrease in its expected return.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Revenue	2,171	2,261	2,371	2,602	2,459	2,562	2,571	4,276	5,148	4,913
Gross Profit	1,075	1,163	1,198	1,310	1,339	1,233	1,218	1,822	2,413	2,388
Gross Margin	49.5%	51.4%	50.5%	50.4%	54.4%	48.1%	47.4%	42.6%	46.9%	48.6%
SG&A Exp.	185	226	224	250	250	---	---	---	---	---
D&A Exp.	306	295	295	312	338	365	404	662	913	938
Operating Profit	512	562	579	633	621	702	679	934	1,186	1,144
Operating Margin	23.6%	24.9%	24.4%	24.3%	25.3%	27.4%	26.4%	21.8%	23.0%	23.3%
Net Profit	230	275	293	313	292	347	324	536	670	618
Net Margin	10.6%	12.2%	12.3%	12.0%	11.9%	13.5%	12.6%	12.5%	13.0%	12.6%
Free Cash Flow	(235)	(211)	(77)	(27)	16	(283)	148	428	539	194
Income Tax	103	126	124	151	152	185	151	59	97	102

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Assets	8,683	9,265	9,597	10,289	10,706	11,487	11,624	25,598	25,976	27,115
Cash & Equivalents	4	6	4	5	3	3	3	160	23	145
Accounts Receivable	226	224	250	267	258	289	165	17	7	5
Inventories	229	249	240	247	301	300	294	511	482	505
Goodwill & Int. Ass.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	2,339	2,337	2,337
Total Liabilities	5,882	6,355	6,529	6,988	7,034	7,654	7,764	15,607	17,431	18,396
Accounts Payable	187	181	233	219	221	221	204	452	529	654
Long-Term Debt	3,055	3,407	3,576	3,639	3,581	4,018	4,073	8,527	9,950	10,321
Shareholder's Equity	2,769	2,896	3,063	3,295	3,657	3,806	3,908	10,028	8,572	8,733
D/E Ratio	1.09	1.18	1.17	1.10	0.98	1.06	1.04	0.85	1.16	1.18

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Return on Assets	2.7%	3.1%	3.1%	3.2%	2.8%	3.1%	2.8%	2.9%	2.6%	2.3%
Return on Equity	8.9%	9.7%	9.8%	9.9%	8.4%	9.3%	8.4%	7.7%	7.2%	7.1%
ROIC	4.1%	4.5%	4.5%	4.6%	4.1%	4.6%	4.1%	4.1%	3.6%	3.3%
Shares Out.	118.3	126.9	128.3	132.8	139.3	142.5	142.6	214.1	239.9	227.5
Revenue/Share	18.35	17.82	18.48	19.59	17.66	17.98	18.03	19.97	21.46	21.60
FCF/Share	(1.98)	(1.66)	(0.60)	(0.20)	0.11	(1.99)	1.04	2.00	2.25	0.85

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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