

Fitch Affirms Northwestern Mutual's Financial Strength with Best-Possible AAA Rating, Stable Outlook

MILWAUKEE ([BUSINESS WIRE](#)), August 25, 2011 - Fitch Ratings on Tuesday affirmed the AAA insurance financial strength rating of [Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company](#) and [Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company](#). This is the agency's best possible rating assigned to an insurer's financial strength and recognizes the company's superior ability to meet its ongoing obligations to policyowners. Fitch also said the outlook for both companies remains stable.

This affirmation by Fitch means that Northwestern Mutual, the "World's Most Admired" life insurance company according to FORTUNE magazine¹, maintains insurance financial strength ratings that are unsurpassed in the industry².

"Through economic ups and downs, Northwestern Mutual has remained committed to its long-term focus and a mutual business model that has allowed it to consistently deliver value and financial security to policyowners," says Chris Kelly, Northwestern Mutual vice president and controller. "This action by Fitch affirms what we know to be true: that the company is just as strong and stable today as it has ever been."

In its announcement, Fitch said its ratings reflect Northwestern Mutual's very strong competitive position in the U.S. individual life insurance market, exceptionally strong balance sheet fundamentals and stable earnings profile. According to Fitch, the company's key competitive advantages include a successful distribution system, large and stable block of traditional life insurance and focus on expense control.

Further, Fitch said it "believes that Northwestern Mutual's overall exposure to investment risk is manageable considering the company's stable, long-duration participating liabilities and strong statutory position."

About Northwestern Mutual

The [Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company](#) - Milwaukee, WI (Northwestern Mutual) has helped clients achieve financial security for more than 150 years. As a mutual company with \$1.2 trillion of [life insurance](#) protection in force, Northwestern Mutual shares, where possible, its gains with policyowners and delivers consistent and dependable value to clients over time. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a holistic approach to financial security solutions including: [life insurance](#), [long-term care insurance](#), [disability insurance](#), [annuities](#), [investment products](#), and [advisory products and services](#). Subsidiaries include Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC, broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, limited purpose federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company; and [Russell Investments](#).

¹ FORTUNE, 2011

² *A.M. Best Company A++ (highest), 2/2011; Fitch Ratings AAA (highest), 1/2011; Moody's Investors Service Aaa (highest), 6/2011; Standard & Poor's AA+ (second highest), 8/2011. Ratings are subject to change.*