

RICHARDSON DEBRA J
 Form 5
 February 12, 2009

FORM 5

OMB APPROVAL

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
 Washington, D.C. 20549**

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 Form 3 Holdings Reported Form 4 Transactions Reported

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
 RICHARDSON DEBRA J

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
 AMERICAN EQUITY INVESTMENT LIFE HOLDING CO [AEL]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer
 (Check all applicable)
 Director 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)
 Senior VP & Secretary

(Last) (First) (Middle)

3. Statement for Issuer's Fiscal Year Ended (Month/Day/Year)
 12/31/2008

5000 WESTOWN PARKWAY,
 SUITE 440

(Street)

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting
 (check applicable line)

WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266

Form Filed by One Reporting Person
 Form Filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at end of Issuer's Fiscal Year (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4)
Common Stock				(A) or (D) Price	101,424	D	

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

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1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)		7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)		
					(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 10.85	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	06/11/2011	06/11/2018	Common Stock	40,000
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 10.77	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	06/30/2005	12/31/2014	Common Stock	20,000
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 11	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	06/10/2004	06/10/2014	Common Stock	20,000
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 9	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	12/04/2003	12/04/2013	Common Stock	20,000
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 9.67	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	12/29/2000	12/29/2010	Common Stock	30,000
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 9.67	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	05/05/2000	05/05/2010	Common Stock	17,250
Options - Right to Buy	\$ 7.33	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	04/14/1999	04/14/2009	Common Stock	33,000
American Equity Capital Trust I 8% Conv TP	\$ 10	Â	Â	Â	Â	Â	09/30/2002	09/30/2029	Common Stock	3,000

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address

Relationships

Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
Â X	Â	Â Senior VP & Secretary	Â

RICHARDSON DEBRA J
5000 WESTOWN PARKWAY, SUITE 440
WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266

Signatures

Debra J. 02/12/2009
Richardson

 Signature of
Reporting Person

Date

Explanation of Responses:

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space provided is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.