

CARLSON WENDY L  
 Form 5  
 February 12, 2009

**FORM 5**

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

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).  
 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 \*  
 CARLSON WENDY L

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)  
 CFO & General Counsel

(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) Amount (D) Price  | 108,125  | 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) | 8.                         |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|-----------------|---|----------------------------|
|  |  |                                      |  |                                | (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  | 15,000                     |
| Options - Right to Buy                     | \$ 7.33  | Â                                    | Â  | Â                              | Â Â   | 06/07/1999   | 06/07/2009      | Common Stock  | 52,500                     |

## Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address  | Relationships |           |                         |       |
|---|---------------|-----------|-------------------------|-------|
|   | Director      | 10% Owner | Officer                 | Other |
| CARLSON WENDY L<br>5000 WESTOWN PARKWAY, SUITE 440<br>WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266 | Â X           | Â         | Â CFO & General Counsel | Â     |

## Signatures

Debra J. Richardson, by Power of  
Attorney

02/12/2009

\_\_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.