

PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP INC  
 Form 4  
 December 09, 2008

**FORM 4** 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).

**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

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
 COSTLEY GARY E

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
 PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP INC [PFG]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer  
 (Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)  
 711 HIGH STREET  
 (Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)  
 12/05/2008

Director  10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below)  Other (specify below)

DES MOINES, IA 50392  
 (City) (State) (Zip)

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

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

**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 Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4)	
				(A) or (D)	Price			
				Code V	Amount			
Common Stock	12/05/2008		A	151	A	\$ 0 (1)	8,909	D
Common Stock							7,000	I

By Gary Costley Living Trust

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

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SEC 1474 (9-02)

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

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. Price or Value of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)
Phantom Stock Units	(2)	12/05/2008		A	140.3	(3) (3)	Common Stock	140.3 \$ 19.00

## Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
COSTLEY GARY E 711 HIGH STREET DES MOINES, IA 50392		X		

## Signatures

Joyce N. Hoffman, by Power of Attorney  
12/09/2008

\*\*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).

(1) Grant of restricted stock units.

(2) The units convert to common stock on a one-for-one basis.

(3) The reported phantom stock units were acquired pursuant to the Principal Deferred Compensation Plan for Non-Employee Directors and will be settled on the reporting person's retirement.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

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