

| ANNUAL RATES | Past | Past |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Ost'd '14-'16 |  |  |  |
| of change (per sh) | 10 Yrs. | 5 Yrs. | to'20.'22 |
| Sales | $6.0 \%$ | $6.0 \%$ | $6.0 \%$ |
| "Cash Flow" | $6.0 \%$ | $8.0 \%$ | $8.5 \%$ |
| Earnings | $6.0 \%$ | $7.5 \%$ | $9.5 \%$ |
| Dividends | $9.0 \%$ | $13.5 \%$ | $8.5 \%$ |
| Book Value | $3.5 \%$ | $-1.5 \%$ | $5.0 \%$ |


| Cal-endar | QUARTERLY SALES (\$ mill.) |  |  |  | Full Year |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Mar. 31 | Jun. 30 | Sep. 30 | Dec. 31 |  |
| 2014 | 7831 | 8134 | 8137 | 7719 | 31821 |
| 2015 | 7578 | 7686 | 7712 | 7298 | 30274 |
| 2016 | 7409 | 7662 | 7709 | 7329 | 30109 |
| 2017 | 7685 | 7810 | 8172 | 7798 | 31465 |
| 2018 | 8100 | 8275 | 8650 | 8250 | 33275 |
| Calendar | $\begin{array}{\|c\|c\|} \hline \text { EAF } 31 \\ \hline \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { RNINGS } \\ & \text { Jun. } 30 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { PER SHARI } \\ & \text { Sep. } 30 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \hline \text { E } \\ & \text { Dec. } 31 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | Full Year |
| 2014 | 1.79 | 1.91 | 1.98 | 1.81 | 7.49 |
| 2015 | 1.85 | 2.02 | 2.05 | 1.66 | 7.58 |
| 2016 | 2.05 | 2.08 | 2.15 | 1.88 | 8.16 |
| 2017 | 2.16 | 2.58 | 2.33 | 2.03 | 9.10 |
| 2018 | 2.35 | 2.70 | 2.55 | 2.25 | 9.85 |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { Cal- } \\ \text { endar } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { QUART } \\ \text { Mar. } 31 \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { TERLY DII } \\ & \text { Jun. } 30 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { VIDENDS P } \\ & \text { Sep. } 30 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \hline \mathrm{AlD}_{\mathbf{n}} \\ & \text { Dec. } 31 \end{aligned}$ | Full Year |
| 2014 | . 855 | . 855 | . 855 | . 855 | 3.42 |
| 2015 | 1.025 | 1.025 | 1.025 | 1.025 | 4.10 |
| 2016 | 1.11 | 1.11 | 1.11 | 1.11 | 4.44 |
| 2017 | 1.175 | 1.175 | 1.175 | 1.175 | 4.70 |
| 2018 |  |  |  |  |  |

Shares of 3M preformed very well in 2017 and are likely to continue to do so in the months ahead. The stock, which increased $35 \%$ in value last year, is ranked 2 (Above Average) for Timeliness and pegged to outpace the broader market averages for the coming six to 12 months.
We suspect that the company closed 2017 in healthy fashion. Earnings for the third quarter easily surpassed expectations, coming in at $\$ 2.33$ a share, $8 \%$ higher than the year-earlier tally and nearly triple the growth we were anticipating. Although margins continued to benefit from cost controls, the top line rose a better-than-expected $6 \%$, calming some fears we had about the pipeline. Indeed, each of the five business segments reported improvement, despite divestitures and currency headwinds. Although domestic growth remained weak relative to other areas of the world, management raised its full-year earnings guidance to $\$ 9.00-\$ 9.10$ a share, from $\$ 8.80-\$ 9.05$. We have upped our forecast to the high end of the revised outlook, and call for an $8 \%$ fourth-quarter advance, on a 6\% top-line increase.
Management's 2018 guidance is favor-
able, too. It anticipates earnings between $\$ 9.60$ and $\$ 10.00$ a share this year, the midpoint of which assumes an $8 \%$ improvement. Sales growth is expected to remain in the $5 \%-7 \%$ range, with ongoing margin expansion and share repurchases picking up the slack.
Three- to five-year appreciation potential took a hit after the stock recently set a new high-water mark for price. That said, appeal is better on a risk-adjusted basis, given the equity's 1 (Highest) Safety rank, and favorable scores for Price Stability and Price Growth Persistence. The dividend is another plus, as are the company's healthy finances and strong cash flow generation. Management continues to streamline the business, and further efforts on this front are likely to prove our current projections conservative in time. Most recently, it agreed to sell the Communication Markets division to Corning for $\$ 900$ million. The deal is expected to close by yearend. Also, this stock would probably hold up better than most if the broader market was to cool off. Prospective accounts are advised to buy on dips. AndreJ. Costanza

J anuary 12, 2018
(A) Diluted earnings. Excludes nonrecurring 01, (5c); 10, (12c). Excludes discontinued: 06, 474; '07, 60c. Earnings may not sum due to rounding or changes in shares outstanding.

Next earnings report due late January. (B) Dividends historically paid mid-March, June, September, and December. ■ Dividend reinvestment plan available.

