

August 5, 2020



**FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE**



The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues and the continuous work we are doing for the citizens in the Central District and across the state of Mississippi. Thank you again for allowing me to serve you in this capacity.

Brent Bailey



MPUS and MPSC Recognize Broadband Grant Awardees

Last week, the Mississippi Public Utilities Staff announced that over \$66 million in grants were awarded to fifteen electric cooperatives, two water associations and two telecommunications companies to provide high-speed internet to unserved and underserved households and businesses in rural Mississippi. The grants and matching funds will provide at least a \$150 million in investment in Mississippi communities. All grant monies will be expended by the end of the year. The selected awardees estimate that broadband services will potentially reach over 50,000 residents, of which over 40,000 are deemed underserved by the Federal Communication Commission, and over 5,000 miles of fiber optic cable will be installed.

In the Central District, two electric cooperatives, two water associations and one telecomm received grants from the Mississippi Electric Cooperatives Broadband COVID-19 Grant Program Fund.

Sebastopol Water Association (SWA) will invest at least \$200,000 in fixed wireless technology. By the end of 2020, SWA plans to have a total of 19 transmitters on seven elevated water tanks, all in Scott, Leake and Neshoba counties, including an elevated tank in Walnut Grove. In 2021, SWA plans to install at least two more transmitters on two elevated tanks in Newton County.



North Lauderdale Water Association (NLWA) will leverage the \$175,000 grant with \$175,000 in matching funds for a total of \$350,000 investment in fixed wireless broadband coverage across much of NLWA's service area. Located north of Meridian in Lauderdale County, this area comprises 117 square miles and 3,500 homes, including base housing at NAS Meridian.

4-County Electric Power Association (4-County) will install fiber and deploy broadband internet in the Brooksville community in north Noxubee County as one of three pilot programs. 4-County is leveraging about \$7 million of private match to the \$5.4 million in grant funds it received. Other projects are in north east Choctaw County and west Clay County.

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C Spire will implement at least two projects in Central Mississippi. One project will be located in Hinds County. Fiber optic infrastructure will be installed along Highway 18 from Raymond to Utica then up Highway 27 towards Vicksburg. This project passes 157 homes in eligible areas and a total of 339 homes along the route, some of which are not in eligible areas. The other project will be located on the west side of Canton in Madison County. Fiber optic will be installed to serve businesses located along Soldiers Colony Road and Watford Parkway Drive.



Congratulations to all the grantees for thinking outside the box and taking urgent action to secure the resources needed to get their projects moving forward. School kids, small businesses and rural communities will benefit immensely from this program. A complete list of program grantees is below.

Provider Name	Amount Awarded
Telepak Networks, Inc. dba C Spire Fiber	\$ 850,658
North Lauderdale Water Association	\$ 175,000
Sebastopol Water Association	\$ 100,000
Uplink Internet	\$ 150,000
Alcorn County Electric Power Association	\$ 4,911,998
Coast Electric Power Association	\$ 5,425,826
Delta Electric Power Association	\$ 4,431,896
Dixie Electric Power Association	\$ 3,324,675
East Mississippi Electric Power Association	\$ 5,425,826
4-County Electric Power Association	\$ 5,425,826
Monroe County Electric Power Association	\$ 3,804,101
Natchez Trace Electric Power Association	\$ 3,942,547
North East Mississippi Electric Power Association	\$ 3,706,380
Northcentral Electric Power Association	\$ 2,486,837
Prentiss County Electric Power Association	\$ 4,521,522
Tallahatchie Valley Electric Power Association	\$ 4,080,917
Tippah Electric Power Association	\$ 5,425,826
Tishomingo County Electric Power Association	\$ 4,288,654
Tombigbee Electric Power Association	\$ 3,797,167
Total	\$ 66,275,658



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Highlights from the August 4 Docket Meeting

- ☑ The Commission approved an [Order](#) accepting Entergy Mississippi Ad Valorem Tax Adjustment Rider Percentage Adjustment Factor of 1.4284%. The revised factor provides for an increase of \$0.54 on an average residential bill of 1000 kWh. The increase is primarily due to the acquisition of the Choctaw Generating Station.
- ☑ Atmos Energy was granted a [Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity](#) to provide natural gas service in a new service area of DeSoto County. This action is supported by Atmos' Rural Expansion Initiative.
- ☑ The Commission [Ordered](#) Mississippi Power Co. to implement a plan of action in response to three recommendations as set forth in the "Management Review Audit of Mississippi Power Company Fuel & Electricity Procurement" report.
- ☑ Spire Energy's Application for Authorization of a Natural Gas Expansion and Economic Development Initiative was [referred](#) for hearing at a later date.
- ☑ The Commission granted all Motions to Intervene filed by various stakeholders in response to Entergy Mississippi's and/or Mississippi Power Co.'s respective Integrated Resources Planning (IRP) Notice. These Motions to Intervene had been lingering since January. Commission legal staff will draft the orders granting the petitions.
- ☑ Following adjournment of the Docket Meeting, a hearing was convened to consider the petitions of [Cane Creek Solar](#) and [Moonshot Solar](#) for Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity to construct, own and operate solar facilities. The Certificates were granted.



Last week at the MPSC

- ☐ Atmos Energy filed its Construction Notice for a project in Meridian, Lauderdale County, MS to replace approximately 37,771 feet of 2-inch steel pipe and 4,173 feet of 4-inch steel main over four phases. [Phase 1](#); [Phase 2](#); [Phase 3](#); [Phase 4](#)
- ☐ Russell Utilities and Toomsba Water System [withdrew](#) their joint petition for transfer of service.
- ☐ The Commission issued an [Order](#) accepting CenterPoint Energy's Energy Efficiency Cost Recovery Rider compliance tariff filing approved during the July 7, 2020 Docket Meeting.
- ☐ [Business Telecom LLC](#) and [Delta Com LLC](#) were each granted its request to withdraw its revised Mississippi Tariff No. 3 filed in April 2019.



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A First-of-its-kind Virtual Event

Connecting Mississippians to
Candidates and Elected Officials

Scheduled Release:
August 6, 2020
10:00am

Watch on Y'all Politics social media platforms

facebook

YouTube

Sponsored in part by Bryant Songy Snell Global Partners

Mark your calendars now for [Y'all Politic's](#) first-of-its-kind virtual [event](#) tomorrow starting at 10 a.m.

I and other elected officials and candidates across the state will give our best stump speeches. These speeches would originally be made at the annual Neshoba County Fair in July. It is sure to be both educational and fun!



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **25** complaints in the Central District.

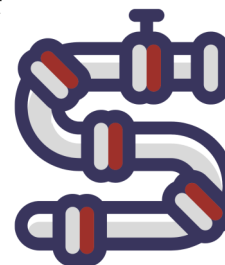
Electric Companies	10
Telecommunications	13
Water/Sewage	2

Our Pipeline Safety Division completed **7** construction inspections in the Central District during the month of June.

The total amount of construction notices that were received by the Commission in the Central District during the month of July is approximately **\$7,988,000**.

"Reporting of Construction Work"- The rule is found in Chapter 57.1: All Construction work involving gas facilities in which the estimated cost of proposed facilities is in excess of eight thousand dollars are related facilities that would be governed by the Federal Minimum Safety Requirements, will be reported in writing, or via telephone to the MS Public Service Commission prior to starting date of such construction. (There are exceptions for emergencies.)

The Commission encourages all intra-state natural gas operators to comply with the rule.



Last week, the Central District received a total of **182** complaints from consumers against potential telemarketers through our no call app, website and mail-ins. The top three general issues reported by consumers are related to insurance, credit cards and auto warranties.

We encourage consumers to file telemarketing complaints with the Federal Trade Commission at <http://www.donotcall.gov/> in addition to filing complaints with the Mississippi Public Service Commission.