

December 9, 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

Access to Reliable Water is Essential to Health and Prosperity

Back in October of this year, this [newsletter](#) explored how communities would suffer without access to safe, clean abundant drinking water. We highlighted the "Imagine a Day Without Water Campaign." That campaign offers a day to pause and observe the way potable water impacts our lives and communities and to talk about how water is important to us.

As we draw closer to 2021, we continue to marvel at technological, medical, communications and other advances that shape our lives. These tools and achievements help us to explore our world and expand our abilities. So even in the year 2020 – despite it being a year of pandemic, political polarization, record storms and wildfires, racial strife and more – how do areas of Mississippi continue to lack access to reliable water service?

Recently, I was asked to look into a matter of lack of access to reliable water service in Sharkey County. It was reported that up to 17 homes, one business and a church continued to suffer from a lack of access to safe, reliable water. This certainly appeared to be a dire situation based upon the information I had been given. I reached out to local officials and local non-governmental organization leaders to try to get a better handle on the matter. Finally, I decided to go see for myself. What I found were people making do anyway they could with the limited resources they had.

Approximately 10-12 homes receive water from a free flowing well without the aid of any mechanical pumps or disinfection system. The well is many decades old and has no concrete pad to protect against contamination. Furthermore, the residents connected to this well continually experience low water pressure, which presents a health risk, and at times have no water pressure depending on the activity of agricultural irrigation wells in the area. Most purchase water for cooking and drinking purposes.



The referenced church uses an old agricultural tank for holding water that is delivered to the tank on occasion. The tank is positioned behind the church and is connected to an electric mechanical pump that can be activated to pump water to the church when needed for bathroom and other purposes. The on-site well failed and is inoperable.





Continued...

Other homes in the area share a well between them and do their best to maintain the system. However, one home that is more isolated than the rest does not have any water service and relies on water that is brought in by a family member and is stored in a large tanker trailer. The water is pumped through the old well head and to the piping that serves the home. The on-site well failed several years ago. Water from the tank is used for washing and cleaning. Water for cooking and drinking is purchased.



All the homes identified above reside in an unincorporated, uncertificated area. Despite two different municipal water utilities being located nearby, extending service lines to the area is not as easy as you may think. What is clear is that this will not be a neat one-size-fits-all solution. I have reached out to state and federal agencies, local action agencies and regional organizations and have asked them help identify programs and funding streams that can be leveraged to help bring safe, modern water services to most, but preferably all, of these residents. I am hopeful for a positive resolution and look forward to hopefully sharing positive news regarding these families in the near future.



Other News

Solar Safety Joint Working Group

On Friday, December 4, the [Solar Safety Joint Working Group](#) met telephonically in open session to review consumer protection and safety standards and guidelines for the installation of distributed generation systems and consumer education. Representatives of the MPSC, Attorney General, MS State Board of Contractors and multiple stakeholders were present. Agency reps provided updates on consumer education and professional licensing efforts. Advocate stakeholders expressed concerns regarding the slow adoption of solar and other obstacles. Utility stakeholders indicated no encountered safety concerns or interconnection issues. The Commission may vote to open a new docket in January to reexamine the Net Metering and Interconnection Rule. Please review the [Discussion Notes](#) for more information.



Highlights of the Dec. 8 MPSC Docket Meeting

- ☑ The Commission [Approved](#) the Joint Stipulation between Public Utilities Staff (PUS), Mississippi River Gas (MRG) and C&M Gas Holdings LLC (C&M) and the Transfer of assets and controlling interests of MRG to C&M. MRG provides natural gas service to approximately 2379 residential and 273 business customers in the Central District.
- ☑ The Commission adopted the [Order](#) approving Spire Energy's Asset Management Agreement (AMA) with Symmetry Energy Solutions for a 5-year term. AMA's optimize natural gas supply and storage capacity while providing protections for the gas distributor.



Continued...

- ❑ The Commission [Approved](#) the Amended Agreement for Electric Service between Entergy Mississippi LLC (EML) for Nucor Steel-Jackson in Flowood, MS. EML contends the special contract provides a margin above cost of service while retaining Nucor Steel as a functioning operation.
- ❑ After a brief Public Hearing, the Commission [Approved](#) the Certificate to construct a transmission line and substation in Lamar County (Oak Grove 161/69KV Line/Substation).
- ❑ The Commission approved the [Order](#) granting the transfer of control CBTS Technology Solutions to Red Fiber Parent pending approval by the FCC. The Commission also approved an [Order](#) for Frontier Communications Corporation and its subsidiaries to pursue restructuring actions associated with Chapter 11 Reorganization Plans.
- ❑ The Commission [Approved](#) the sale and transfer of sewer service assets and Certificate from Developers, Inc. to Waste Water Solutions to serve approximately 69 customers in a specified area in Lauderdale County. Also in Lauderdale County, Southern Hill Homeowners Association received Commission [Approval](#) to sell and transfer sewer assets and Certificate to Prime Developers, Inc. to serve approximately 25 customers.
- ❑ The Commission also approved an [Order](#) granting the City of Gulfport's Petition to cancel the Certificate previously held by Lyman Utility. The Commission also [Granted a Facilities Certificate](#) to Wilco Properties, Inc. to perform capital improvements to its various sewer treatment facilities.
- ❑ The Commission, in association with the Attorney General's Office, adopted an [Order for Civil Penalty](#) against Asia Pacific Network, Inc. for potential violations of the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act and willful failure to respond to subpoenas. The Commission entered a Civil Penalty of \$455,000.
- ❑ The Commission [Opened a Public Comment Period](#) to review the proposed modifications to Rule 28 and submit written comments within twenty-five (25) days of December 8, 2020. The proposed modifications to Rule 28 take into consideration the legislative changes to the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act and the Anti-Spoofing Act as well as the evolving rules surrounding the TRACED Act and the FCC-mandated STIR/SHAKEN protocols.
- ❑ The Commission adopted a Resolution supporting efforts to buy American made products when constructing and operating energy infrastructure projects in Mississippi. The Commission also adopted a Resolution recognizing Comm. Presley for his service as NARUC President in 2019-2020.

Last week at the MPSC



❏ **Entergy Mississippi LLC (EML)**, in the matter of the City of Clinton's Amended Formal Complaint against EML, has filed a [Motion for Protective Order of Non-Disclosure](#) of categories of EML Confidential Documents provided to city. A [Proposed Order](#) was attached to the Motion. Furthermore, EML put forth a [Motion to Dismiss the Amended Formal Complaint](#) of the City of Clinton. EML asserts that the matter should be dismissed without hearing due to lack of substantial evidence. EML also filed a [Motion to Stay](#) the matter while the Commission decides the Motion to Dismiss. In turn, the City of Clinton asked for and received an [Extension of Time to File Motion Responses](#).

❏ **Mississippi Power Co. (MPCo)** filed its [Notice of Technical Conference](#) in response to its modified Integrated Resource Planning compliance schedule. The Technical Conference is proposed for Thursday, February 25, 2021, at 9:30 am at the MPSC Hearing Room.



Continued...

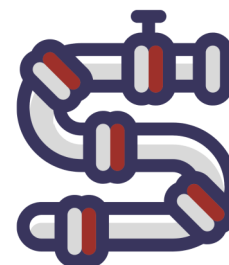
- ✂ **CenterPoint Energy's** Notice of Routine Change in Rates in regards to changes to its Tax Cuts And Jobs Act Rider was **Approved** by the Commission.
- ✂ **4-County EPA** filed a **Petition for Certificate to Construct** an electric substation in Monroe County. The proposed facility, known as the Prairie 161kV Substation, is projected to cost \$3.17 million and placed in service in June 2021. The facility will improve reliability in the area.
- ✂ **Atmos Energy Corp. (Atmos)** filed a Notices of Intent to Seek Approval of Transaction Confirmations for the purchase of natural gas: **Sequent, Twin Eagle, EDF; ConocoPhillips, Texla, Spire.**
- ✂ **Crown Castle Fiber LLC** filed for **Second Motion to Extend Time** to comply with the Commission's Order of December 11, 2018, to provision regulated telecommunication services in MS.
- ✂ **LCR Telecommunications LLC** filed a **Request to Cancel** its service Certification. The company has no customers or revenue in Mississippi as of October 2020.

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

The total amount of construction notices that were received by the Commission in the Central District during the month of September is approximately **\$844,400.**

"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, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **14** complaints in the Central District.

Telecommunications	5
Electric Companies	4
Water/Sewer	4
Natural Gas	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **279** 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 auto warranties, health products/prescription drugs, and insurance.

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.