

January 6, 2021



**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

Central District is Gearing Up for a New Year

One year ago this week, I took the Oath of Office and swore to faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Public Service Commissioner for the Central District of Mississippi. While the past twelve months presented challenges and have absolutely flown by, I have enjoyed every minute working on behalf of the constituents of the Central District.

Last week, this [newsletter](#) offered a recap of some of the actions and achievements of this office. While there is still unfinished business from last year, 2021 promises to be an exciting year for broadband expansion, clean energy and economic development across the state.

As you may recall, successful bidders will receive \$495,725,799.60 through the [Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I auction](#) to deploy broadband to over 218,990 unserved and underserved rural homes and businesses. The Commission will be reviewing the Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) designation applications for the numerous companies that will be deploying fiber-, wireless- and satellite-based broadband and voice services in rural areas of Mississippi. The ETC designation demonstrates companies' financial and technical qualifications to deliver the intended service and meet other requirements. Learn about some of the broadband providers in the "Last Week at the MPSC" section below.

The Commission will soon be establishing a new docket to review the efficacy and fairness of the [Mississippi Renewable Energy Net Metering and Distributed Generation Interconnection Rules](#). The action is consistent with the "Reopener Provision" of the current Net Metering Rule requiring review on the fifth anniversary of enactment. The fifth anniversary of the Rule's effective date was January 3, 2021. Net metering is a billing mechanism that allows homeowners and businesses that generate their own electricity to deliver power they do not use back into the grid and receive a credit.

[Integrated Resource Plan](#) (IRP) is a type of utility planning process that develops long-range resource plans by seeking to identify an optimal combination of resources to meet forecasted load requirements at the lowest reasonable total cost, subject to various objectives and constraints. Mississippi Power Co. (April 15) and Entergy Mississippi (June 15) will each be filing their initial IRP's this spring. In addition, each utility shall conduct a technical conference to provide an overview of the IRP process no later than 45 days prior to the filing of its IRP.



Taking the Oath of Office on Jan. 2, 2020



Continued...

Other matters on tap for 2021 include: The Commission will be considering Certification applications for large-scale wind, solar and battery storage energy facilities. Regulated electric utilities will be wrapping up deployment of its Advanced Metering (smart meter) Infrastructure. The Commission will continue to evaluate actions that reduce robo and scam calls, increase security of our energy delivery network and reduce damages to underground utility infrastructure.

I hope you will not hesitate to [contact me](#) or the [staff of the Central District](#) if we can assist you!

Be safe and here's to healthy, prosperous 2021!

Davis Gates Joins the Central District Staff

Please join me in welcoming [Davis Gates](#) to the Mississippi Public Service Commission Central District as Legal and Policy Advisor. In his new role, Davis will work alongside me in evaluating policy issues impacts on utility customers and utilities and how they might be enacted by the full Commission. On the legal side, Davis will advise me on legal matters pending in front of the Central District and the Commission as a whole.

Davis is a licensed attorney and he's sworn into practice in every state court as well as the US 5th Circuit Court of Appeals. He has experience in private practice and working with state agencies.

Davis is a graduate of the University of Mississippi and the University of Mississippi School of Law (I will try not to hold that against him). He has also studied law at The University of Cambridge, policy at the Jordan University of Science and Technology and Spanish at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito.



Other News

U.S. Residential Electricity Bills Fell in 2019; Mississippians Paid More Than Most

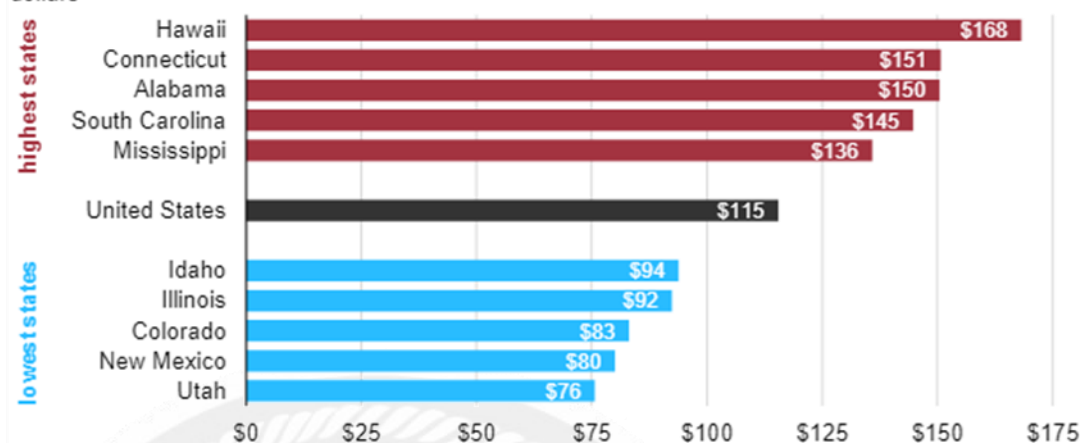
In 2019, the average monthly electricity bill for residential customers in the United States was 1.8% lower than it had been in 2018, down from \$118 to \$115 per month. Although the average U.S. residential electricity price rose from 12.87 cents per kilowatthour (kWh) in 2018 to 13.01 cents per kWh in 2019, less-than-average monthly electricity consumption per customer resulted in a lower average bill in 2019.



Continued...

However, Mississippi had the fifth-highest average consumer electricity bill in the nation (\$136) despite paying lower-than-average electricity prices. Mississippians generally consume more electricity than in other states because of the significant summer cooling demand resulting from hot, humid summer weather. In addition, some areas are seeing increased energy demand in winter due to electric heating appliance use.

Average monthly residential electricity bill, selected states (2019)
dollars



It will be interesting to see how average monthly residential electric bills were impacted due to the COVID-19 driving workers and school children into their homes in 2020. Remember, homeowners can push down purchased electricity consumption by increasing the use of behind-the-meter generation (such as rooftop solar panels), high-efficiency appliances, sealing and insulation, more efficient lighting, and smart energy-saving devices.

EIA Releases New Energy Atlas

Have you ever wondered what type of energy generation technologies are located nearby, or what type of energy transmission infrastructure is located overhead or underground? The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) has released a new interface for web map applications and a comprehensive open data catalogue. With 84 map layers, the [U.S. Energy Atlas](#) includes locations of power plants, coal mines, oil and natural gas wells, pipelines, storage facilities, natural gas processing plants, refineries, and other types of energy facilities.

Check it out and learn about Mississippi's energy resources!!



Last week at the MPSC

📁 Delta Fiber LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Delta Electric Power Association, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, Delta Fiber will use RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its voice and gigabit tier fiber-to-the-home broadband network and Lifeline tier service to all Delta Electric Power Association members throughout the [proposed ETC Designation Area](#), including Bolivar, Holmes, Humphreys, Sunflower and Washington Counties, MS.

📁 East Mississippi Connect LLC filed an [Amended Application for ETC Designation](#). CoastConnect LLC filed an [Amended Application for ETC Designation](#).



Continued...

- ✎ **M-Pulse Fiber LLC**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Monroe County Electric Power Association**, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, M-Pulse Fiber will use RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its voice and gigabit tier fiber-to-the-home broadband network and Lifeline tier service to all Monroe County Electric Power Association members throughout the [proposed ETC Designation Area](#). M-Pulse expects to complete the network in 2023 and include 1,500 miles of fiber.
- ✎ **AT&T Mississippi**, **C Spire**, **CTIA**, **Franklin Telephone Company** and certain [Mississippi Rural Incumbent Local Exchange Companies](#) have submitted comments outlining each organization's opposition to the [amendments proposed in Public Utilities Rules of Practice and Procedure Chapter 28.102](#). Chapter 28 outlines directives for implementing the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act and the Caller ID Anti-Spoofing Act.
- ✎ **TEPA Connect LLC**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **TEPA**, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, TEPA Connect will use RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its voice and gigabit tier fiber-to-the-home broadband network and Lifeline tier service to all TEPA members throughout the [proposed ETC Designation Area](#). TEPA expects to offer service to 2,163 homes and businesses by the end of 2022.
- ✎ **Prentiss Electric Broadband LLC**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Prentiss County Electric Power Association**, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, Prentiss Electric Broadband will use RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its voice and gigabit tier fiber-to-the-home broadband network and Lifeline tier service to all Prentiss County EPA members throughout the proposed [ETC Designation Area](#).
- ✎ **NT Spark LLC**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Natchez Trace Electric Power Association**, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, NT Spark will use RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its voice and gigabit tier fiber-to-the-home broadband network and Lifeline tier service to all Natchez Trace County EPA members throughout the [proposed ETC Designation Area](#).
- ✎ **Conexon Connect LLC**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Conexon LLC**, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, Conexon Connect will use RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its voice and gigabit tier fiber-to-the-home broadband network and Lifeline tier service to customers throughout the proposed ETC Designation Area.
- ✎ **Starlink Services LLC**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Space Exploration Technologies Corp (SpaceX)**, filed its [Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier \(ETC\)](#) for Mississippi. If designated as an ETC, Starlink Services will use \$44,019,661 of RDOF Phase I Auction support for deployment of its broadband and VOIP service network and Lifeline tier service to customers throughout the proposed ETC Service Area. Starlink is a space-based broadband internet system. Over 900 Starlink satellites have been deployed allowing testing in the northern U.S. Starlink has authorization to deploy and operate 4,408 Non-Geostationary Orbit (NGSO) satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO). Starlink and SpaceX aims to achieve total coverage of the contiguous United States and Hawaii in 2021.



Continued...

JAN
12

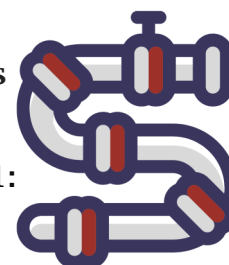
The January monthly docket meeting of the Mississippi Public Service Commission will take place on Tuesday, January 12 at 10 a.m. This meeting will take place telephonically with streaming broadcast over the MPSC YouTube channel at <https://www.psc.ms.gov/webcast>. The meeting notice is now available: <https://www.psc.ms.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/NOTICE-OF-PUBLIC-MEETING-1-12-20.pdf>

Our Pipeline Safety Division completed **6** construction inspections in the Central District during the month of December.

The total amount of construction notices that were received by the Commission in the Central District during the month of December is approximately **\$5,654,000**.

"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, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **17** complaints in the Central District.

Telecommunications	8
Electric Companies	7
Water/Sewer	2

Last week, the Central District received a total of **177** 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, financial loans/consolidated debt, 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.