

February 17, 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

Winter Storm Wreaks Havoc Across Mississippi and the South

For days, Mississippi has experienced frozen precipitation and below freezing temperatures. This extreme winter weather event has caused travel to grind to a halt, shutter manufacturing and businesses, and even closed post offices and stopped mail delivery for much of the state. What happened to “Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night.....”???

The fact that United States Postal Service delivery ceased operations in Mississippi for February 16 is a testament to the extremely dangerous and record-setting conditions resulting from The Weather Channel-named Winter Storm Uri.



However, even with the extreme conditions, Mississippi fared very well when it comes to the loss of electricity and/or natural gas service. While those that did lose power or those that remain without power would likely disagree, Mississippi really did dodge huge freight train of destruction. Most of the freezing rain was experienced in a band that went from Marion County north of I-59 towards Newton and Lauderdale Counties.

Thankfully, our utility partners spent this past weekend preparing for the worst. Hundreds of additional linemen, vegetation crews and damage assessment personnel were secured to help respond to outages. By my count, just over 80,000 customers were without power at peak outage across the state on Monday. That was whittled down to just over 20,000 by Tuesday afternoon. Unfortunately, some homes will have to go without power until Wednesday due to icy roads, downed vegetation, ice on infrastructure and other effects of the bitter cold temperatures.

Our utility partners in Mississippi should also be commended for the resiliency of the overall energy supply generation, transmission and distribution system. They spend (and the MPSC evaluates the expenditure of) millions and millions of dollars each year to maintain the safety and reliability of the bulk energy system. Those prudent expenditures are what keeps the energy flowing in times of extreme weather or other natural events.

Did you see what has been happening in Texas? At one point, over 4 million people were without power. The whole state of Mississippi has just under 3 million people!! The causes of the extensive outages in Texas are many and diverse and officials will be pointing fingers in all sorts of directions in the coming days and weeks as people actually lost their lives due to the extended outages and frigid temperatures.





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But we are not totally out of the woods in Mississippi. Just last night, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) issued a Maximum Generation Emergency Step Level 5 Event for the South Region effective from 7:40 pm CT through 12:00 am CT. Level 5 is the highest emergency condition and requires shedding of firm load via rolling brownouts or blackouts. Thankfully, our impacted Mississippi utilities were able to take some of its largest industrial users offline and kept residential outages to a minimum. Thankfully, the Emergency Event was cancelled just before 9:00 pm.

Mississippians need to remain prepared for another potential winter storm that could affect Central and Northern Mississippi beginning Wednesday afternoon (today) into Thursday. The forecast calls for ice accumulations in the Delta region and more frozen precipitation in other parts of the state. You can bet that utilities are adjusting and will be moving resources to respond as thoroughly as possible.

This has been a historic weather event for the state. The long-term frigid temperatures and accompanying weather has resulted in historic demand on utility services. This office will continue to make appeals to customers to practice energy conservation while working to ensure that you have reliable access to sufficient energy resources. Stay safe and stay weather aware!



Other News

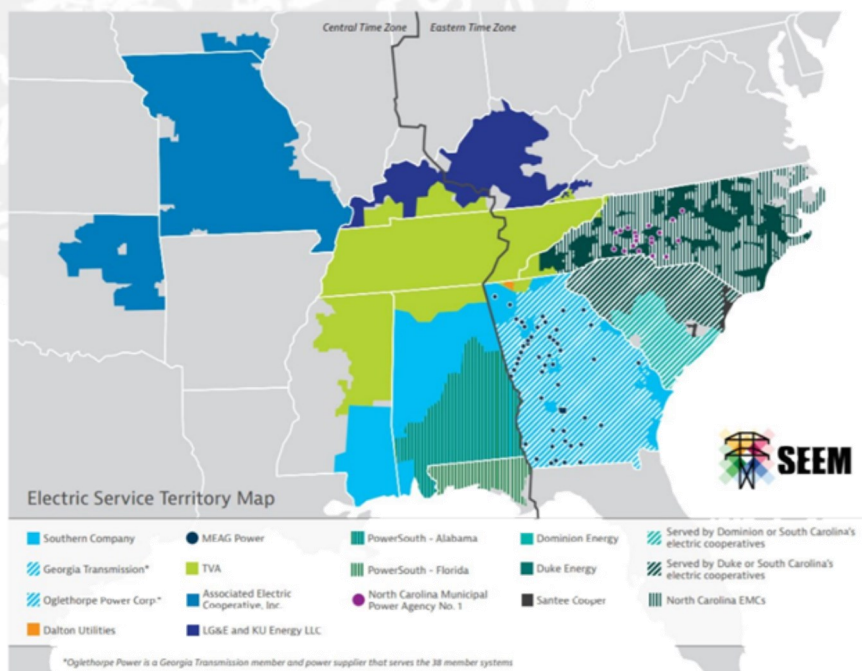
MPCo IRP Technical Conference set for Feb. 25

Mississippi Power Company (MPCo) [noticed](#) its intent to conduct its Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) Technical Conference on Thursday, February 25, 2021, at 9:30am. This Conference will be conducted in the Commission's hearing room on the first floor of the Woolfolk State Office Building, located at 501 N. West Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201. The technical conference is for those parties that have executed a nondisclosure agreement in accordance with Section 108 of the IRP Rule. The purpose of the technical conference is for MPCo to provide an overview of the process, planning assumptions and inputs used to develop its Integrated Resource Plan, and to answer questions.

MPCo shall file its draft IRP Report no later than April 15, 2021. Within sixty (60) days of MPCo filing its IRP, any interested party may file comments addressing the plan.

Southeast Utilities Submit SEEM proposal to FERC

Founding members of a new Southeast Energy Exchange Market (SEEM) submitted its [filing](#) to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on February 12 for approval. The new SEEM platform will facilitate an automated, intra-hour energy exchange for bilateral trading, allowing participants to buy and sell power close to the time the energy is consumed, utilizing available unreserved transmission. The SEEM should result in cost savings to customers and improved integration of all energy resources, including renewables.





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The founding members (including Southern Company and TVA) represent nearly 20 entities in parts of 11 states with more than 160,000 MWs (summer capacity) across two time zones. These companies serve the energy needs of more than 32 million retail customers.

The MPSC will continue to follow the FERC process to evaluate the true benefits to customers of the proposed SEEM platform and to potentially file comments for FERC consideration.

Blueprint for State Action for a More Efficient, Customer-Centric Grid

As part of the conclusion of a national, two-year initiative hosted by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), 12 states made commitments to implement key innovations to electricity planning in their states to better meet system and customer needs and state policy goals. To advance the state-of-the-art of electricity planning, NARUC and NASEO jointly released a [Blueprint for State Action](#), five [Roadmaps for Comprehensive Electricity Planning](#), an online library and additional resources for states.

The joint NARUC-NASEO initiative — the [Task Force on Comprehensive Electricity Planning](#) — presented findings on how states can lead the way in bringing together utilities and stakeholders to plan the grid of the future, impacting how billions of dollars will be invested on behalf of customers. The U.S. Department of Energy provided key support throughout the initiative.

Valuing Distributed Energy Resources at Specific Points on the Grid

A new report, [Locational Value of Distributed Energy Resources](#), explores economic valuation and regulatory considerations for assessing locational value. A free webinar on the [report](#) will be held on March 9, 2021, at 3 pm CT. Register for the webinar here: https://lbnl.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYpceGvpjsqGNKEGdyU4wcb1y_8wrJXZNBKH.

Distributed Energy Resources (DERs) can provide significant benefits to the grid by generating electricity or controlling or reducing electricity consumption, avoiding some types of electricity system costs. The potential value of a DER at a specific location on the grid depends on its capability and potential costs it can avoid at that location.

The report focuses on potential DER benefits for distribution systems, primarily in their role as non-wires alternatives to defer, mitigate, or eliminate the need for some traditional system investments at locations where distribution capacity is insufficient to meet expected future needs. DERs that avoid distribution system losses also may reduce transmission system losses and generation capacity needs. These reductions may have other important benefits, including achieving goals for greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.

The report describes approaches and tools to estimate the locational value of DERs. State guidance to utilities varies with respect to these methods and approaches to procuring DERs to meet distribution and transmission needs. The report includes 24 case studies to illustrate how states and utilities are considering the locational value of DERs.

Legislation Tracker

- [HB 91](#): Removes the Public Service Commission from the provisions of the Mississippi Budget Transparency and Simplification Act
 - *Transmitted to Senate*
- [HB 100](#): Extends repeal date that requires all fees collected under the MS Telephone Solicitation Act be deposited into the general fund
 - *Transmitted to Senate*



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- [HB 505](#): Creates the Mississippi Broadband Accessibility Act.
 - *Transmitted to Senate*
- [HB 632](#): Establishes “All Fuels Act of 2021” and provides that no political subdivision may prohibit the expansion, connection, or reconnection of a service based upon the type of energy provided to a customer.
 - *Transmitted to Senate*
- [HB 942](#): Authorizes investor-owned electric utilities to permit broadband provider use of the electric delivery system.
 - *Transmitted to Senate*
- [HB 1063](#): Act to authorize Supervisors of any county to designate projects as Transformative Renewable Energy Projects.
 - *Transmitted to Senate*
- [SB 2018](#): MS Telephone Solicitation Act; extend repealer on requirement that fees be deposited into State General Fund.
 - *Transmitted to House*
- [SB 2559](#): Authorizes PSC to enter into federal contracts for the mapping of broadband availability.
 - *Transmitted to House*
- [SB 2649](#): Extends repeal date on energy efficiency equipment or service contracts.
 - *Transmitted to House*
- [SB 2798](#): Provides for the participation of investor-owned electric utilities in the expansion of broadband services.
 - *Transmitted to House*

The deadline for Committees to consider and report general bills originating in the other chamber is March 2. The deadline for Floor Action on general bills originating in the other chamber is March 10. Please note that identification of a bill in this newsletter does not indicate support or opposition to a measure. We will continue to monitor progress of these and other legislation impacting the MPSC.



Last week at the MPSC

📁 The following stakeholder had their respective motion to intervene granted in Docket 2021-AD-19 (Review of Net Metering and Interconnection Rules): [City of Jackson](#)

📁 Atmos Energy filed its [Monthly Report](#) on meter estimations.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **51** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	41
Water/Sewer	4
Telecommunications	4
Natural Gas	2

Last week, the Central District received a total of **322** 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, insurance and financial/loans/consolidated debts.

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.