

April 14, 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*

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## ***Commission Designates East MS Connect as ETC; Opens Door to \$38M***

Last Friday, I joined my colleagues to deliver the leaders of East Mississippi Connect LLC a signed [Order](#) that designates East Mississippi Connect LLC as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC). Designation as an ETC opens the door for [East Mississippi Connect LLC](#) to receive up to \$38,600,321 from the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) Phase I to support deployment of fiber-based, high-speed internet and voice service to 13,535 rural customers in Clarke, Kemper, Lauderdale, Winston and portions of neighboring counties served by East Mississippi Electric Power Association (EMEPA).

Today, EMEPA provides electric service to nearly 43,000 residences and businesses. The projected timeline is five years to bring state-of-the-art, fiber-to-the-home broadband connectivity to every area of EMEPA's service territory.

To help celebrate East Mississippi Connect LLC's ETC Designation, EMEPA board members, East MS Connect board members, my fellow commissioners, local state legislators and other local officials came together to commend the leadership at EMEPA as they continue to move forward advancing education, health, commerce and economic opportunity through broadband expansion. Furthermore, we recognized the incredible success of Mississippi's rural electric cooperatives' national leadership in the deployment of broadband. Seventeen of the twenty-five rural electric cooperatives in Mississippi have established broadband subsidiaries to deliver fiber-to-the-home internet service. That is the highest percentage of electric cooperatives than any other state in the nation. If it weren't for the Mississippi Broadband Enabling Act of 2019 and the Mississippi Electric Cooperatives Broadband COVID-19 Act of 2020, we would probably not be in the enviable position that we are today. I know that we still have work to do across the state, but Mississippi will look drastically different in 5 years from a connectivity standpoint. Let's stay focused on the future!





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## Joining the OMS Board of Directors

This week, I was designated as the Mississippi representative to the [Organization of MISO States](#) (OMS) Board of Directors. The announcement came in conjunction with a visit to Jackson by OMS Board President and North Dakota Public Service Commission Chairperson Julie Fedorchak and OMS Executive Director Marcus Hawkins. The Board consists of 17 regulatory representatives from 15 states and Manitoba, Canada. The Organization of MISO States was created in 2003 to help state regulators collaborate in the monitoring and formulation of strategies that help to guide the function of the wholesale power markets and transmission planning process at the [Midcontinent Independent System Operator](#) (MISO).

MISO is a regional transmission organization that maintains and operates the high-voltage transmission grid as one large network. MISO is responsible for maintaining reliability of the transmission network, creating an annual transmission expansion plan, and operating a wholesale energy market that allows electric generators to compete against each other. These functions should increase reliability and lower costs for the benefits of retail electric customers throughout the MISO territory.

MISO was created in 1998 when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved MISO as the first non-power pool and non-legislatively mandated Independent System Operator. Initially, ten electric utilities came together to share information, transmission access and electricity markets. Over the years, more utilities joined MISO. In December 2012, the Entergy Corp. operating companies, including Energy Mississippi joined MISO as a transmission owning member. Today, MISO manages the dispatch of operations of 66,000 miles of transmission lines and over 6,500 generation units with a total generating capacity of nearly 196,000 MW.



Since 2003, OMS has supported its agency members to provide coordinated recommendations to MISO, the MISO Board of Directors, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in an effort to promote public interests and social welfare as they relate to electricity planning and distribution. The support, collaboration and leadership provided by the OMS members have, and continue to be, a foundational element of MISO's role as a regional transmission organization. I look forward to working with fellow commissioners from the various states located within the MISO territory.

## Celebrate Lineman Appreciation Day on April 18

National Lineman Appreciation Day is celebrated each year on April 18 and honors the hard work, innovation and dedication of America's electrical lineworkers. The MPSC Central District will be celebrating these hard working men and women who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on. Stay tuned.... #Thankalineman





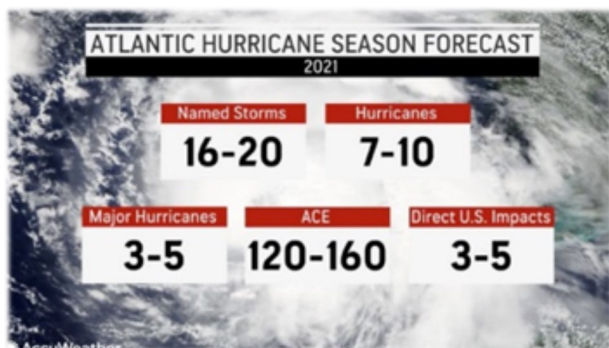


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## Other News

### AccuWeather Predicts Another Busy Year in the Tropics



The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season produced 30 named storms, the most on record. The United States suffered 12 direct strikes, smashing the previous record of nine set in 1916. Forecasters even had to turn to the rarely used Greek alphabet for only the second time in history to name tropical systems.

AccuWeather predicts that the 2021 Atlantic hurricane season will result in 16-20 named storms, including seven to 10 hurricanes. Of the storms projected to reach hurricane strength, three to five are predicted to become major hurricanes. If you are in a storm prone area, now is the time to begin assessing your readiness and formulating a hurricane safety plan.



### President Biden Highlights States' Needs to Push American Jobs Plan

On Monday, President Biden released state-by-state fact sheets to highlight the infrastructure investment needs across the country. [Mississippi's infrastructure](#) received a D+ grade. The action plan scopes out investment needs for drinking water infrastructure, broadband deployment, home weatherization to reduce energy costs and clean energy generation expansion, among other areas.

### Synapse Electricity Snapshot 2021



**Synapse**  
Energy Economics, Inc.

The [Synapse Electricity Snapshot 2021](#) was released last month to recognize several major trends in 2020 electric sector capacity, generation, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and related statistics. Key findings of the report include:

- Renewable capacity (wind, solar, and geothermal) in the United States is now at 173,000 megawatts (MW), exceeding both hydro and nuclear capacity. 25,000 MW of renewable capacity was installed in 2020, more than any other year. Renewables are the third-largest resource on a capacity basis, behind natural gas and coal.
- In 2020, natural gas generation surpassed coal generation every month.
- For the first time since the early 1970s, coal generation dropped below 800 TWh per year. Coal now makes up less than one-fifth of electricity generation in the United States.
- Electric-sector CO<sub>2</sub> emissions dropped by 11% from 2019 to 2020. This is the largest annual decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions ever observed.

Since reaching an all-time peak in 2007, electric sector CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have declined to their lowest level since the 1970s.



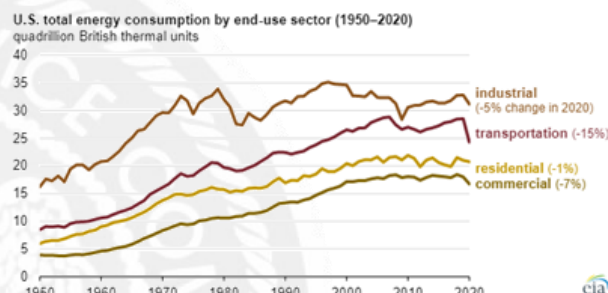
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## U.S. Energy Consumption Fell by a Record 7% in 2020

In 2020, total U.S. energy consumption fell to 93 quadrillion British thermal units (quads), down 7% from 2019, according to EIA's [Monthly Energy Review](#). Last year marked the largest annual decrease in U.S. energy consumption in both percentage and absolute terms in EIA's consumption data series that dates back to 1949.

Much of the 2020 decrease in energy use is attributable to economic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic that began in the United States during the spring of 2020.

Transportation energy consumption fell due to decreased travel. Jet fuel use fell by 38% while motor gasoline fell by 13%. Residential energy consumption fell by only 1%. As people spent more time at home, electricity use increased by 2%. But because 2020 was a relatively warm year, consumption of home heating energy resources fell significantly.



## Last week at the MPSC

- ☞ The following interveners filed comments in Docket No. 2021-AD-19, Order Establishing Docket to Review the Efficacy and Fairness of the Net Metering and Interconnection Rules: [Newton County School District](#)
- ☞ The Commission issued an [Order](#) Approving the Petition for Facility Certificate for **Mississippi Power Company** for a certificate to construct, own and operate a solar generation and battery storage demonstration project in Leake County. The project will be a 1.285 MW AC solar photovoltaic energy generating facility and a 5.14 MWh capacity battery storage system with a maximum capacity of 1.5 MW capable of providing power to approximately 300 homes.
- ☞ **Newton County, Mississippi** [filed](#) a motion to intervene in **Mississippi Power Company's** Notice of 2021 PEP Evaluation Report Pursuant to Its Performance Evaluation Plan (Including 2021 Rate Adjustment).
- ☞ The Commission issued an [Order](#) Canceling the **Tunica Windpower LLC** Hearing and then reissued an [Order](#) noticing a new date of April 21 for the Hearing for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Construct and Operate an Electric Generating Facility in Tunica County.
- ☞ The Commission [filed](#) an Agreement to Engage in Resolution Discussions signed by several parties regarding a property in Hidden Hills (Rankin County) being impacted by a sinkhole.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **15** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	8
Telecommunications	4
Water/Sewer	2
Natural Gas	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **329** complaints from consumers against potential telemarketers through our no call app, website and mail-ins.

*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.*