

June 23, 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

Pearl Businesses are Lighting the Way to Energy Savings

Improving energy efficiency is one of the easiest ways for business owners to reduce operating costs and increase profits. The [Entergy Mississippi Small Business Solutions Program](#) provides financial incentives and technical assistance to help in the replacement of old, inefficient lighting systems with new, energy-efficient LED lighting technologies. Small Business Solutions Program participants can receive an onsite lighting assessment from a Program Auditor and work with a [Program Trade Ally](#) to determine the proper lighting technology and equipment and project execution schedule. The financial incentives offered through the Small Business Solutions Program are designed to cover up to 70% of the total installed project costs (excluding sales tax), capped at \$10,000 per account.



Blake Hamel of the Glass Doctor is looking to improve lighting on the company's shop floor.



Mason & Overstreet Welding and Machine Works plans to replace high-pressure sodium lighting in the production area with high efficient LEDs that provide better quality lighting at much lower wattages.



This week, I followed a Small Business Solutions Program Auditor and local Trade Ally as they conducted lighting audits at various businesses in Pearl, MS. Many of these businesses utilized old, out-of-date lighting appliances and were just now learning of the Small Business Solutions Program incentives and advanced

lighting options. The

combination of the Program incentives and energy-savings from LED lighting means that most lighting projects would pay for themselves in less than 2 years with some breaking even in less than one year.

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HEAVYQUIP Heavy Equipment Parts & Service is seeking modern, efficient lighting solutions for the office environment as well as in the repair shop and parts storage areas.

energy efficiency and increase saving at your business, call 844-523-9979 or email at entergybusinesssolutions@icf.com. A program representative will contact you within three business days. Please

note that there are also incentives through the [Entergy Solutions for Business](#) available for energy-efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, food service equipment and more. Just recently, Entergy Mississippi has introduced its [Agricultural Energy Solutions Program](#) that provides incentives of up to



SignMark is a third-generation business. Derek Harris talks about the evolution of the stamp, sign and placard production technologies. In many ways, the evolution of lighting systems parallels the efficiencies of sign and stamp productions systems that SignMark has adopted. I wish to thank Small Business Solutions Account Manager Angelica Rawls and Commercial Account Manager Dorothy Ellis for letting me accompany them on these lighting audits.



75% of project costs to replace aging, inefficient equipment and systems with new, energy-efficient technologies. Visit the link above to learn what measures, technologies and agricultural operations are eligible.

What About Pearl's Residential Customers? We are Bringing the Savings to You as Well!

Throughout the months of February and March of this year following the historic winter storms that brought us snow, ice and bitterly cold temperatures that lasted for several days, our office heard from many Pearl residents who were upset and concerned with the high electrical usage and corresponding charges that were appearing on their electric utility bills. Although the Mississippi Public Service Commission investigated many billing discrepancies, technical anomalies and metering irregularities, it was generally found that the combined factors of extremely cold weather, an extended billing period due to the holidays and AMI meter exchanges, and changes in customer behavior due to the pandemic and the holidays led to higher than normal energy bills for many residents.



During my conversations with customers, I learned that most were not aware of the programs that Entergy Mississippi offers that can help lower electric utility costs by making homes more energy-efficient and more comfortable.

In response, I asked Entergy Mississippi to develop and target an outreach program for the residents of the City of Pearl to learn more about the various energy-efficient services available through the Entergy Residential Solutions programs. In many ways, the causes for the high bills in winter will also be a factor in driving up bills in the summer. The Entergy Residential Solutions programs are designed to educate customers on how they can reduce home energy consumption as well as provide energy-efficient products and services in the home at low or no cost to customers.

Over the next couple of months, Entergy Solutions representatives will conduct various forms of outreach to schedule and perform [Residential Energy Audits and Direct Install](#) (READI) activities that inspect insulation levels, air leaks, HVAC systems, window and door sealing, lighting and appliances, and water heating equipment. After the inspection, you will receive a report summarizing the findings and recommendations to reduce energy costs, increase efficiency, improve comfort and save money. You are also eligible to have installed up to 14 LED light bulbs and other energy efficiency products and services. READI visits cost nothing for Entergy customers. [Request an appointment today!](#)

Other [Residential Solutions](#) include the A/C Tune-up Program, HVAC Incentive Program, Residential Appliances Program and the Entergy Solutions Marketplace. Don't let these savings opportunities go unused. These programs exist for you!

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, Mississippians pay the 5th highest average monthly residential electricity bill in the nation. This despite Mississippi's average electricity price per kilowatt-hour is nearly two cents below the national average. Creating an energy-efficient home does not happen overnight. But utilizing the Residential Solutions programs will put you on the path to eliminating as much energy waste as possible. All Entergy customers, regardless of where you live, are encouraged to take advantage of these programs.



OTHER NEWS

New Cybersecurity Requirements for Pipelines Owners and Operators

Recently, the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration (DHS-TSA) [announced a new Security Directive for pipeline owners and operators](#). The Security Directive, which comes on the heels of the Colonial pipeline ransomware attack, is intended to "better identify, protect against, and respond to threats to critical companies in the pipeline sector." The new directive requires cybersecurity incidents to be reported to the DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, designate a Cybersecurity Coordinator, and enhance cybersecurity measures to better protect against cyber-attacks.

Solar Panels Installed at North Forrest High School

When school starts in the fall, [North Forrest High School](#) will be harnessing the sun to power the school. 369 panels have been installed on the roof of the school's Performing Arts Center. The solar panels will generate \$25,000 in annual savings for the Forrest County School District. The school will be including solar into the school curriculum so that students can learn more about solar energy technologies. A regional grant program covered the costs of the project.



3 Essential Elements Governments Need to Expand Broadband




According to a [new study](#) by Pew Charitable Trusts, there are critical steps that a state should take to establish a successful broadband expansion program. First, a state should create and staff a dedicated broadband office with a full-time focus on expanding high-speed internet access across the state. Second, the broadband office should provide comprehensive planning and technical assistance for local entities that defines goals, identifies existing assets, and provides network planning and design. Third, a competitive grants program that leverages investments in rural and unserved areas can help attract services to areas that the market has ignored. While Mississippi lacks a central broadband office and has not developed a statewide “broadband plan,” the Legislature did create the Mississippi Electric Cooperatives Broadband COVID-19 Grant Program in 2020 and funded it to the tune of \$75 million.

NARUC News

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners have [announced](#) the formation of a joint federal-state task force on electric transmission. Members of this first-of-its-kind task force will explore transmission-related issues to identify and realize the benefits that transmission can provide, while ensuring that the costs are allocated efficiently and fairly. Federal and state regulators will be called upon to address numerous issues, including how to plan and pay for new transmission infrastructure and how to navigate shared federal-state regulatory authority and processes. Per the [FERC Order](#), NARUC will nominate up to 10 state regulators to join the five FERC commissioners on the task force.



Last Week at the MPSC

-  The Public Utilities Staff prepared and filed Purchased Gas Adjustment audit reports for the month of March 2021 for the following utilities: [Atmos Energy](#); [CenterPoint Energy](#); [Spire Mississippi Inc.](#)
-  **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC**, pursuant to the Commission’s Order issued in Docket No. 2020-UA-143 and 2020-UA-144, [filed](#) customer notice letters.
-  **Southern Renewable Energy Association (SREA)** [filed](#) a change in its address requesting an update to the service list contact information in Docket No. 2019-UA-231, **Mississippi Power Company’s** IRP.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **20** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	12
Telecommunications	5
Natural Gas	2
Water/Sewer	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **250** 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.