

July 2, 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*

## Diamond Dawgs Win It All!!!

I apologize for the tardiness of this week's newsletter. Aside from traveling to and from Arkansas this week, I have been slightly distracted by the MSU Bulldogs' run through the College World Series. It has been a challenge to focus on finishing the newsletter the last several evenings while watching with intense

anticipation virtually every pitch over the final three game series with Vandy.

This is a proud moment for my alma mater (Class of 1994). This should also be a proud moment for Mississippi. Our 'never give up' attitude was on full display and we did it with grit and class. MSU Baseball has always been a respected program and now is our time to bask in the National Championship limelight. And deservedly so! MSU has gotten close in



Mississippi State on the national stage. And thanks to the legion of fans for making MSU's presence known in Omaha!

## Speaking to the Pearl Kiwanis Club

Just before embarking to Arkansas, I was given the opportunity to speak to the Kiwanis Club of Pearl, MS and provided its members with an update on several ongoing matters at the MS Public Service Commission. Information on



broadband expansion efforts in Rankin County, impacts of the American Rescue Plan, our investigation into the resiliency of the state's utility infrastructure, and continuous efforts to reduce robocalls were among the issues discussed. I also shared information on targeted efforts within the City of Pearl to educate residential and business consumers on how they can reduce energy consumption and reduce their utility bills. See our [June 23, 2021 newsletter](#) for more information on these programs.



## Talking Shop with the Commissioners of the Arkansas PSC

While in Arkansas, I stopped in at the offices of the Arkansas Public Service Commission to visit with Commissioner Kimberly O'Guinn, Chairman Ted Thomas and Commissioner Justin Tate. Much like the Mississippi PSC, the Arkansas PSC was created by the Arkansas General Assembly to regulate the service and rates of those utilities subject to its jurisdiction and ensure that the service is safe and adequate and that rates are just and reasonable. However, there are some notable differences. Arkansas Commissioners are appointed by the Governor, not elected by the voters. Rural electric cooperatives are subject to APSC rate review under certain circumstances whereas that is not the case in Mississippi.



Furthermore, the Utilities Division of the General Staff is not a

separate agency, unlike Mississippi Public Utilities Staff, but is part of the APSC and managed by the Executive Director.



During our visit, we compared how key issues such as resource planning, demand side management programs, rate cases, economic development, transmission planning and numerous other matters are considered and acted upon in each state. This was the first time since February 2020 that I have been able to personally interact with my colleagues from Arkansas. Our states have so much in common and I know that I can learn from their work and leadership. There is more than 14 years of combined Commissioner experience between the sitting Commissioners. I look forward to working with all three to help inform my work in Mississippi on behalf of consumers.

## Tour of the MISO South Operations Center

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is an independent, non-profit organization responsible for maintaining reliable and cost-effective delivery of power in 15 states (including Mississippi) and one Canadian province. [Please see page 2 of the [April 14, 2021 newsletter](#) to learn more about MISO] While MISO's headquarters is located in Carmel, IN, MISO operations are shared between the Carmel, Eagan, MN and [Little Rock, AR](#) offices. Each office is capable of monitoring and responding to issues across the entire MISO footprint to ensure the reliable, efficient and sustainable delivery of electricity. The Little Rock facility is the newest operations center and was commissioned in 2015.

MISO conducts day-ahead and real-time energy market management to ensure least cost economic dispatch of electric generation units across the service area. MISO also coordinates energy transfers across regions and into and out of neighboring regional transmission operators. MISO staff in Little Rock conducts comprehensive regional transmission planning for the purposes of increasing reliability, supporting state and federal policy objectives and expanding economic opportunities in the states.





Other MISO staff manages the Generator Interconnection Process Queue to evaluate the infrastructure needs and capacity concerns in order to facilitate the execution of interconnection agreements. In MISO South, solar, wind and storage makes up approximately 75% of the projects currently being assessed in the region. Among other technical support functions at MISO South, staff reviews the impact of large-scale renewable energy integration, coordinates generator and transmission outages, mitigates transmission congestion, issues emergency actions and supports client/customer relations.



MISO by-the-numbers	
High Voltage Transmission	65,800 miles
Generation Capacity	184,287 MW
Peak System Demand	127,125 MW
Customers Served	42 million

The main control room at the Little Rock Operations Center is an impressive work area. The facility encourages collaboration and the public areas can host community meetings and events. I look forward to working with MISO leaders and technical staff through my appointment with the [Organization of MISO States](#).

## Chicot Solar Energy Center

During our return from Little Rock, we stopped by the [Chicot Solar Energy Center](#), located between Lake Village and McGehee, AR. The facility went online in October 2020 and has a peak generation capacity of 100 megawatts, enough to power 18,000 homes. The solar project is owned by NextEra Energy Resources and sells its production to Entergy Arkansas through a 20-year power purchase agreement. The facility sits on 825 acres and consists of 350,000 solar panels.



## Other News

### Condolences to the Family of Cayce Seal

Bay St. Louis, MS native Cayce Seal, a lineman for Entergy, suffered an electrical shock while on the job in New Orleans last week. The 28-year-old died from his injuries this past Saturday. [Cayce is donating his organs so that others can benefit from this tragic loss.](#) A procession honoring his life was held in Hancock County on Wednesday.

### Delta Residents, Businesses and Farmers Impacted by Flash Floods

The MPSC Central District wishes for a speedy recovery by those impacted by the early June rains. As much as 20 inches of rain fell during the second week of June, primarily north of U.S. Highway 82. Nearly 600 homes, dozens of businesses and hundreds of public roads and buildings were impacted. Furthermore, agricultural losses may exceed the \$617 million in crop damage from the Yazoo backwater flooding in 2019. MEMA and USDA-FSA continue to conduct assessments to determine the level of federal resources for which the state can apply.



## STIR/SHAKEN Caller Authentication Technology Requirement Goes into Effect

A technology that should help considerably reduce the number of unwanted calls from reaching your phone went into effect on June 30. Scammers and robocallers have been able to “spoof,” or fake, the number that shows up on your Caller ID, increasing the chances you’ll answer or tricking you into thinking the caller is legitimate. The STIR/SHAKEN technology ensures that calls traveling through phone networks would have their caller ID “signed” as legitimate by originating carriers and validated by other carriers before reaching you. Once fully implemented, people should see a dramatic decline in the number of spoofed phone calls – assuming all telecommunication companies implement the technology.

Robocall tracking services estimate **234.5 million** robocalls were placed to Mississippi so far in 2021, equaling roughly 80.8 calls per person affected. Over 40 million of those calls happened in June.

## New Report Details Status of Broadband Internet Access in MS and LA

The Pelican Center for Technology and Innovation, a division of the Pelican Institute, and the [Mississippi Technology Institute](#), a division of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy, have released a [comprehensive joint report](#) on the status of broadband internet access in Mississippi and Louisiana. Using FCC and NTIA data, the report finds that less than half of Mississippi’s rural population has access to 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds. For faster deployment of broadband internet, the report recommends the following: Work with the federal government on broadband mapping; Reduce costs and applications times for 5G Infrastructure; Reduce fees and related costs for government right of ways; Open state infrastructure for deployment; Pass “Dig Once” and “One-touch Make Ready” policies; Standardize taxes and recurring fees; Increase education and adoption of broadband.

## Perry Central High School Breaks Ground on Solar Power Project

Perry Central High School leaders broke ground on their [upcoming solar panel project](#) that will be located in front of the school with production directed to power the cafeteria with excess capacity diverted throughout the school. The solar project will also serve as an educational tool to teach students about alternative energy resources. The project is funded by a regional grant program.



## Last Week at the MPSC

- ☞ The following entities have filed intervenor comments in the Mississippi Public Service Commission’s **Docket No. 2021-AD-52** Order Establishing Docket to Investigate the Membership of Entergy Mississippi, LLC in Midcontinent Independent System Operator: [MISO](#); [350 New Orleans Comments](#); [Flora Real Estate and Development](#); [Southern Renewable Energy Association](#); [Sustainable FERC Project](#); [Clean Grid Alliance](#); [Entergy MS, LLC](#).
- ☞ The Commission established new Administrative Dockets for **Great River Utility Operating Company** to accommodate the filing of additional documents and information in order to continue the effectiveness of authorizations and approvals due to documentation volume: [LLC 2021-AD-115](#); [LLC 2021-AD-116](#).



# Be safe this July 4th!

The Central District wishes everyone a fun, safe July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday weekend. This is the 245<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Celebrate the greatness that is America!



The MPSC's July Regular Docket Meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Thursday, July 8. The meeting is open to the public and will be streamed online.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **29** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	13
Telecommunications	10
Water/Sewer	4
Natural Gas	2

Last week, the Central District received a total of **311** 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.*