

August 11, 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

**Celebrate *National Safe Digging Day* with
the MPSC and the Mississippi 811 Team**

An underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the United States, meaning that ten times an hour, a potentially dangerous and quite costly incident causes a utility outage for anywhere from one customer to an entire neighborhood, business park or factory.



Commissioner Bailey with Sam Johnson, President of MS 811 and Roger Cox, MS Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Board.

National Safe Digging Day is Aug. 11 (also known as 811 Day) and serves as an important reminder that everyone, whether a homeowner with a shovel or a professional excavator with an earthmover, must “Call Before You Dig.” It is not just a slogan, it is the law. Contact the [Mississippi 811 One-Call Center](#) at least two working days in advance of a digging project. Then wait the required time for utilities to respond to your request before putting a shovel in the ground.

Since January 2021, Mississippi 811 agents have received 281,043 calls (a 14.15% increase over 2020) and processed 291,165 tickets, including virtual locate requests which resulted in nearly 1,367,944 utility locates being disbursed to the respective Mississippi 811 Member Utility Companies. Mississippi 811 currently has 1,053 utility members.

Don't make a judgment call, make a phone call. Know what's below. Every time you plan to dig, dial 8-1-1 (when calling within the state of Mississippi) or 800-227-6477 at least two working days before you plan to begin any excavation activity. You can also send an email to Tickets@ms811.org. It's free, it's easy, and it's the law. In 2019, an estimated 532,000 excavation-related damages to underground facilities occurred in the U.S. costing approximately \$30 billion in damage and losses. Also, underground utility damage can cost lives due to electrocution, explosion and other. Don't be a statistic.

Make the call!



Sam Johnson, MS 811 Operations; Bill Rutledge, MS 811 Damage Prevention Coord.; Commissioner Bailey; Jerry Kennemur, MS 811 Damage Prevention Coord.; George Lewis, 811 Governmental Liaison.



Natural Gas Utilities Provide Funds for Energy Efficiency and Philanthropy

Tuesday was a busy day for the staff of the MPSC Central District and our regulated natural gas partners, Atmos Energy and CenterPoint Energy (CNP).

We started the morning off by joining CenterPoint Energy at the Mississippi Children's Museum (MCM) to present a \$5,000



Take a trip over to the Mississippi Children's Museum in Jackson to check out their newest WonderBox gallery.

program and family nights. This was my first trip to the museum and I was very

impressed with all of the learning stations, varied galleries and activities! Their newest WonderBox gallery is designed for visitors of all ages to explore various types of crafts— giving participants access to a 3-D printer, robotics, circuitry, building activities and crafting materials. We appreciate CenterPoint's efforts and contributions to this institution to continue their goal of helping children grow into healthy and productive learners.



Commissioner Bailey with MCM's Lindsey Harris, Jay Reber— CenterPoint Energy's MS District Director, Kimberly Blasingame and James Richardson, also with CenterPoint Energy.

In the afternoon, we joined Atmos Energy for a \$5,050 check presentation to Sal & Mookie's New York Pizza & Ice Cream Joint's co-owner, Jeff Good, for the installation of energy-efficient natural gas heating, water heating and cooking equipment at the restaurant's new location in The District in Jackson.

Small, locally-owned businesses like Sal and Mookie's are an important contributor to the



Jeff Good provided a quick tour of the kitchen to show us some of the energy efficient equipment purchased through the SmartChoice Program.

resiliency of our state's economy. I'm proud that energy efficient programs, such as the

SmartChoice Program offered by Atmos Energy, can provide critical technical and financial resources to customers and encourage the installment of energy efficient equipment, resulting in smarter energy use, cuts in utility costs, and reductions in the amount of energy needed to effectively operate businesses.



Commissioner Bailey and Matt Davidson of Atmos present rebate check to Jeff Good for purchase of energy efficiency equipment.



At the same time, I was at Sal & Mookie's, other members of the Mississippi Public Service Commission team were at Jackson State University as the CenterPoint Energy Foundation presented JSU with a grant for \$30,000 to fund the purchase of computers in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology. Through its education support platform, CenterPoint Energy focuses on expanding access to STEM programs and workforce development.



Front row, left to right— MS House Rep. Chris Bell, Jay Reber- CenterPoint Energy's MS District Director, JSU President Thomas Hudson, Kimberly Blasingame- CNP, MS Senator Derrick Simmons, James Richardson- CNP. Back row, left to right— George Butler- MPSC Central District (JSU Alum), Rickey Cotton- MPSC Pipeline Safety Division (JSU Alum), Debra McGee- BankPlus, Brad Ferguson- Field Rep. for Central MS representing US Senator Roger Wicker, Mary Benson- CNP, Dr. Ramzi Kafoury- JSU CSET Associate Dean and Dr. Jacqueline Jackson- JSU Associate Professor of Computer Science.



Other News

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021

The U.S. Senate passed the \$1.2 trillion [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021](#) by a vote of 69 to 30 on Tuesday morning. Among the many measures included in the bill: funding major expansion of high-speed internet (\$65 B); spending for roads, bridges, and public transit (\$149 B); investing in railroads (\$66 B), ports and airports (\$42 B); and funding for clean drinking water (\$55 B). It includes new measures to combat climate change, like money for electric vehicles and charging networks (\$14 B) and modernizing the power grid (\$28 B). The measure now goes to the U.S. House for consideration.

IPCC Releases Latest Report on Climate Change

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released the first part of the Sixth Assessment Report, [Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis](#). The report's core writing team says the report is the most up-to-date physical understanding of the climate system and climate change, bringing together the latest advances in climate science, and combining multiple lines of evidence from paleoclimate, observations, process understanding, and global and regional climate simulations. The 3,000-plus-page report claims warming is already accelerating sea level rise and worsening extremes such as heat waves, droughts, floods and storms. Tropical cyclones are getting stronger and wetter, while Arctic sea ice is dwindling in the summer and permafrost is thawing. All of these trends will get worse, the report said. The report also claims that nearly all of the warming that has happened on Earth can be associated with emissions of heat-trapping gases such as carbon dioxide and methane.

EIA Expects 7% Increase in U.S. Energy-Sector Carbon Dioxide Emissions in 2021

Increased economic activity and a changing fuel mix in the electric power sector in 2021 will lead to a significant increase in energy-related carbon dioxide emissions this year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) August [Short-Term Energy Outlook](#) (STEO). After decreasing by 11% in 2020, U.S. energy-related CO2 emissions will increase by 7% to reach 4.9 billion metric tons this year. However, CO2 is not expected to reach pre-pandemic levels.









NOAA Expects 2021 Hurricane Season to be More Active than Previously Forecast

The [2021 Atlantic hurricane season](#) is likely to be busier than National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) meteorologists previously predicted. In an update to its seasonal outlook, NOAA increased the number of hurricanes and named storms expected in another "above-normal" year. NOAA predicts 15 to 21 named storms, seven to 10 hurricanes, and three to five major hurricanes.

U.S. Solar Market Exceeds 100 Gigawatts

The U.S. solar market surpassed 100 gigawatts (GWdc) of installed electric generating capacity, doubling the size of the industry over the last 3.5 years, according to the [U.S. Solar Market Insight Q2 2021 report](#), released by the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) and Wood Mackenzie. Other [solar facts](#) include: 102.8 GW of solar installed in U.S.; 2,934,377 solar installations in U.S.; 231,474 people employed in the solar industry; currently enough solar energy installed to power 18.6 million households.

Last Week at the MPSC

-  Supplemental Direct [Testimony](#) of William Brown was filed in regards to **Entergy Mississippi, LLC's** petition for a certificate of public convenience and necessity to acquire, construct, own, operate, and maintain a substation and related transmission and distribution lines and other facilities in **Desoto County**. Also, an [Appearance for Counsel](#) was entered on behalf of **Entergy Mississippi, LLC** in the matter.
-  **Town of Flora** filed its [Notice of Intent to Establish Rates](#) for its sewer service in its certificated area in **Madison County**.
-  **The Commission** issued Suspension Orders in regard to the Notice of the Town of Flora of its Intent to Establish Rates for its water service and sewer service in its certificated area in **Madison County** in Docket No. [2021-UN-129](#) and [2021-UN-130](#).
-  **T&J Utility Company Inc.** filed a [Notice to Adjacent Utility](#) to **Culkin Utility Co.** and a [Notice to Adjacent Utility](#) to **H&B Corporation** that **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC** is currently in the process of acquiring the assets and taking over responsibility for the operations of **T&J Utility Company Inc.** and **Quality Utility Inc.**
-  **T&J Utility Company Inc.** filed a [Rough Service Area Map](#) in **Vicksburg**.
-  **The Public Utility Staff** prepared and filed monthly Purchased Gas Adjustment (PGA) audit reports for the month ended April 30, 2021 for the following: [Atmos](#); [CenterPoint](#); [Spire](#)



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

Electric Companies	19
Telecommunications	7
Water/Sewer	2
Natural Gas	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **321** 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.