

September 1, 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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## ***Hurricane Ida Impacted More than Electricity Infrastructure***

**O**n the 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Ida roared ashore south-central Louisiana as a Category 4 hurricane with sustained winds of 150 mph and an officially recorded gust of 172 mph. We watch the news and we note the damage to coastlines, homes, buildings, roads, and electricity infrastructure – especially the 400-foot-tall transmission tower that collapsed along the Mississippi River west of New Orleans.

At its peak, Mississippi had approximately 160,000 power outages across the state on Monday, August 30. As of this writing, outages are down to just 32,000. Full restoration is anticipated to occur before the end of the week. Utilities worked fast to secure resources and personnel in preparation of the storm. Linemen crews from approximately 32 states have made their way to Mississippi and Louisiana to aid in the recovery. While no one likes to be without power for any extended period of time, I am pleased with the speed and efficiency of the restoration of power to customers – especially within the Central District.

More than 1 million customers lost power in Louisiana and many could go weeks before stable electricity supplies are restored. Our prayers go out to those that will be working to recover and rebuild in the storm's aftermath.

In addition to the electricity delivery system, other energy sectors were affected that could impact consumers far beyond the destructive path of Ida. Nine refineries in Louisiana shut operations before the storm arrived. Post-storm damage assessments are being conducted. Many cannot restart operations until power and other essential services are restored. These refineries account for about 2.3 million b/d of refinery capacity, or approximately 13% of the total U.S. operable refining capacity.



COURTESY:  
BRIAN EMFINGER  
LIVE STORMS MEDIA

*This 400-foot transmission tower supported powerlines that spanned 3,800 feet across the Mississippi River. You can see its sister tower across the river in the background.*



*Continued...*

The storm also shut-in 95% of the oil production and 94% of the natural gas production in the federally administered areas of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico. Platforms and rigs will have to be inspected for any damage. The ports of Baton Rouge, Gramercy, Morgan City, New Orleans, and Pascagoula were or remain closed. The Louisiana Offshore Oil Loop terminal suspended operations. Several pipelines that move crude and finished petroleum products across the country also shut down operations as a precaution, including two lines operated by Colonial Pipeline that send fuel to the East Coast.

While we are certainly aware and concerned with the human and environmental toll along the path of Hurricane Ida, we also continue to watch how Ida could impact overall energy supply and demand. The Energy Information Administration provides links to many useful data resources that aid in the evaluation of energy markets and operations. This includes [energy infrastructure and resource maps](#), [nuclear production status](#), the [electric grid monitor](#), [Short-Term Energy Outlooks](#), and more.

Could more hurricanes be in our immediate future? As this newsletter reported on August 11, the [2021 Atlantic hurricane season](#) is likely to be busier than the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration meteorologists previously predicted. Ida was another reminder of the force of Mother Nature. Get ready and stay prepared.



## Other News

### **DOE Releases New Reports Highlighting Record Growth, Declining Costs of Wind Power**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has released [three reports](#) showing record growth in land-based wind energy, significant expansion of the pipeline for offshore wind projects, and continued decline in the cost of wind energy generation. Wind turbines continue to grow in size while turbine costs decline, leading to more energy produced at lower costs. 16,836 megawatts (MW) of new utility-scale land-based wind power capacity was added in the U.S. in 2020 representing \$24.6 billion of investment. See the [press release](#).

### **Large-Scale Battery System Growth Continues in U.S.**

Energy storage will likely play a more pivotal role in power grid flexibility and resilience as the number and capacity of large-scale battery storage systems continue to grow in the U.S. According to EIA's report, [Battery Storage in the United States: An Update on Market Trends](#), battery power capacity reached 1,650 MW at the end of 2020. However, utilities have reported plans to install over 10,000 MW of additional large-scale battery power capacity from 2021 through 2023. Much of the recent increase in new storage capacity comes from battery energy systems co-located with or connected to solar projects.



## U.S. Solar Capacity Surpasses 100,000 MW

The U.S. installed 5,000 MWdc of solar PV capacity in Q1 2021 to reach 102,800 MWdc of total installed capacity, enough to power 18.6 million American homes. Nearly 3 million solar energy systems have been installed in the U.S. Texas led all states in new solar capacity installed in Q1 2021, three times more than any other state. **Mississippi** ranked 47<sup>th</sup> in solar capacity installed in Q1 2021. See the [Solar Market Report](#) and [Solar Data Fact Sheet](#).

## Last Week at the MPSC

- ✎ The **Commission** filed a [Notice of Hearing](#) for **Pearl River Solar Park LLC**'s certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing construction, ownership, and operation of a 175 MW solar electric generating facility in **Scott County**. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, September 15, 2021, at the **Scott County Courthouse** at 4:00 pm.
- ✎ **Rankin County** filed its [Motion to Intervene](#) in **Entergy Mississippi, LLC**'s changes in rates through the revised MSE rider adjustments. **Entergy Mississippi, LLC** also filed its [Response](#) in opposition to **Rankin County**'s Motion to Intervene.
- ✎ **Spire Mississippi Inc.** made its [Rate Stabilization Adjustment Rider](#) (RSA) filing for its 2021 operations during the twelve (12) month period ending June 30, 2021.
- ✎ The **Commission** issued a [Suspension Order](#) in regards to the Notice of **Prime Developers Inc.** of its intent to establish rates for its sewer service in its certificated area in **Lauderdale County**.
- ✎ The **Commission** issued an [Order](#) approving the petition of **Sprint Communications Company L.P.** to discontinue telecommunications services within the state.
- ✎ **Mobilitie Management, LLC** filed its [Application](#) to Discontinue Telecommunication Services within the state.
- ✎ The **Public Utilities Staff** filed a [Shortage Letter](#) with **South Central Water Association, Inc.** regarding its Petition to expand its service area in **Hinds County**.
- ✎ **Airus, Inc.** filed [Revised Tariff Pages](#) to reduce the toll free database query rate.



The MPSC's September Regular Docket Meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Thursday, September 9. The meeting is open to the public and will be streamed online.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **32** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	20
Telecommunications	8
Water/Sewer	4

Last week, the Central District received a total of **247** 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.*