

December 22, 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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**W**hile we have been wearing short sleeved shirts for most of December, it just hasn't felt like the 2021 holiday season would soon be upon us. But here it is! It is that time for office parties, family gatherings, Santa and his reindeer, wide-eyed kids, classic Christmas-themed movies, Christmas music, Christmas lights and decorations, eggnog, and so much more. While the end-of-year holidays can be fun, relaxing and stressful all at the same time, let's not forget the reason for the season – the birth of Jesus!

*The staff of the MPSC Central District wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas! Please be safe in your travels.*

*Please note that most state offices, including the MPSC, will be closed on December 23, 24 and 31.*

## **Utilities**

# **Join Forces to Build Out US Electric Vehicle Charging Networks**

Over the past couple of months, we have seen automakers pledge tens of billions of dollars for the construction of new manufacturing facilities to build electric vehicles and battery components. Many of these new facilities will be built in the Southern U.S. lured in with healthy incentives from state governments. Most recently, Rivian announced it will build a \$5 billion facility just east of Atlanta, GA. Toyota selected an area near Greensboro, NC, for its \$1.3 billion electric vehicle battery plant. Tesla outlined plans for its \$1+ billion "Gigafactory" near Austin, TX. This is just the tip of the iceberg as each of the "Big Three" domestic automakers have also announced major projects in the region.

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## *Continued...*

Today, less than 600,000 electric vehicles (EV) annually are purchased by Americans. The federal government has a goal of 9 million in annual new EV sales by 2030. Not only will a new supply chain system need to be built to support the materials and components of EVs, but a whole network of fast, flexible EV charging infrastructure will be needed while still maintaining the reliability of the overall electric grid.

Some believe that we should let the grid experts lead the way on the electric charging station buildout. Therefore, more than 50 electric companies have joined together to form the [National Electric Highway Coalition](#), which has an aggressive goal to make sure that fast-charging ports are available to drivers of electric vehicles along major roadways by 2023. [Among those electric companies](#) are Entergy Corp. (Entergy MS), Southern Company (MS Power Co.) and Tennessee Valley Authority (14 rural electric cooperatives in MS).



It is projected that nearly 22 million EVs will be on U.S. roads in 2030. More than 100,000 EV fast charging ports will be needed to support the growing number of EVs and allow the general public to drive EVs with confidence along major U.S. corridors. While the member companies of the National Electric Highway Coalition have already begun investing sizeable sums in charging infrastructure deployment and consumer-focused programs, billions of dollars more will be needed.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill) signed into law will provide \$7.5 billion for deployment of EV chargers. States will receive \$5 billion (Mississippi is estimated to receive \$51 million), while the U.S. Department of Transportation will distribute the other \$2.5 billion through competitive grants. Last week, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) signed an agreement to work together to support and accelerate the deployment of the \$7.5 billion. The DOE and DOT will provide technical assistance to States and localities so that they can strategically build electric vehicle charging stations and help states develop comprehensive plans for charging station networks.

There remain many unknowns as the U.S. continues to inch its way into electric transportation. Will the supply chain respond? Can charging infrastructure be robust and integrate into the overall electric system? Will Americans buy EVs and make the shift from gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines? The next few years will certainly be interesting, and you can bet that the Mississippi Public Service Commission will be evaluating any rates, costs or programs related to EVs and how the electric delivery system responds to a growing number of EV charging types and preferred charging times and durations.

## **Penny Culpepper Retires from MPSC**

After 21 years of dedicated service to the people of Mississippi, Penny Culpepper has announced her retirement from the Mississippi Public Service Commission. As a Consumer Complaint Specialist in the Central District, Penny has interacted with thousands of Mississippians as she has worked with them to resolve billing issues, service issues, utility access issues, and many more challenges that consumers have brought forward to the MPSC. Penny was tough and fair in her work. She would push hard on utilities to make sure a customer was treated fairly and with respect. But she would also make sure customers were informed of their responsibilities and obligations. ***We will miss you, Penny!! Enjoy your retirement!!***



*Commissioner Bailey with Penny and Scooter Culpepper*





## Traveling the Central District

Over the past week, I have had the opportunity to meet and visit with many good people and see and tour some interesting sites in the Central District. Below are a few photos that capture some of the special people and places of Mississippi.



*Site visit to Plant Ratcliffe power station near DeKalb, MS*



*Toured the campus of East Mississippi Community College in Scooba, MS*



*Atmos Energy donated state-of-the-art gas leak detection equipment to the Jackson Fire Department*



*Inspecting the equipment that delivers wireless internet service to customers of North Lauderdale Water Association*



*Joined Wanda Evers for her Coffee & Conversations Radio Show on 90.1 WMPR*



*Joined the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors, other local officials and members of the community to discuss the challenges of deploying rural broadband internet, stopping robocalls and the regulatory reach of the MPSC.*



*Toured the headquarters of Southwest Mississippi Electric Power Association and visited the site of the former town of Rodney, MS. Hard to believe this was once a town thriving in art, culture, and commerce. A cannonball is still embedded in the front wall of the church.*



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## Last Week at the MPSC

- ✎ **CenterPoint Energy** filed its [Compliance Filing](#) for Notification of Customer Assistance Organizations and Programs. **CenterPoint Energy** enclosed bill inserts as evidence of compliance with the **Commission's** directive requiring certain gas utilities to notify customers of various organizations or programs which are available to assist customers with payment of natural gas bills this winter.
- ✎ **Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC** filed a [Revised tariff](#) in regards to its Notice of Intent of to Establish Initial and Temporary Rates for Wastewater Disposal Service for the **Lake Forest Subdivision in Warren County**. Sewer service is available under this rate schedule for the Initial Rate of \$27.00 per month. **The Commission** also issued a [Suspension Order](#) in regards to its Notice of Intent of to Establish Initial and Temporary Rates for Wastewater Disposal Service for the **Lake Forest Subdivision in Warren County**.
- ✎ **Mississippi Power Company** filed its [Verification of Notice](#) to Customers in regards to **Mississippi Power Company's** Notice of Filing the Fuel Cost Recovery and Energy Cost Management Factors for February 2022 through January 2023. **Mississippi Power Company** submitted its verification that all of **Mississippi Power Company's** customers, including special contract customers, have been provided a notice of **Mississippi Power Company's** proposed changes in rates.
- ✎ **Waste Water Solutions, LLC** filed its [Map](#) of Customers outside of its certificated area.
- ✎ **Millry Telephone Company, Inc.** filed its [Application](#) for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Operate as a Provider of Local and Interexchange Telecommunication Services in the State. **Millry Telephone Company, Inc.** will provide services via extensions of its existing telephone network in **Alabama** when economically feasible, and it anticipates such service and facility extensions will initially occur on the southern **Mississippi Alabama** line pursuant to service requests from residential or business customers, or in other areas deemed underserved in **Wayne, Green, and Clark Counties**. **Millry Telephone Company, Inc.** will also provide transmission capacity to other communication providers.
- ✎ **BCM One, Inc., Wholesale Carrier Services, Inc., and BCM One Group Holdings, Inc.,** as joint applicants, filed their [Notice of Consummation](#) denoting intermediate transfer of control transaction was consummated on December 16, 2021.



Last week, our  
Consumer Complaint  
Specialists handled a  
total of **24** complaints  
in the Central District.

Electric Companies	21
Telecommunications	1
Natural Gas	1
Water/Sewer	1

Last week, the Central District received a  
total of **295** 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/](http://www.donotcall.gov/) in addition to filing  
complaints with the  
Mississippi Public Service Commission.*