

March 16, 2022



**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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COVID Introduced to Mississippi Two Years Ago

Two years ago this week, the Mississippi State Department of Health confirmed the first presumptive case of the novel coronavirus in Mississippi. In the days that followed, President Trump declared a national state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic and Governor Reeves recognized that COVID-19 within Mississippi constituted a public emergency and declared a State of Emergency.

Over the next 12 months, Governor Reeves issued Executive Orders directing Mississippians to shelter in place, close certain businesses, and cease access to certain public areas. Eventually, businesses were allowed to resume operations and state-imposed mask mandates and restrictions on business practices were removed.

The first vaccines began to roll out during December of 2020. The administration of vaccine doses ramped up significantly throughout the first quarter of 2021. During the summer of 2021, the Delta coronavirus variant swept across Mississippi. The voracity of the Delta variant sent cases, hospitalizations and deaths to new heights.

Just when we thought it would be safe to venture back out, the Omicron variant surged around the world beginning in December 2021, faster than any previously known form of the coronavirus. The Omicron variant was much more contagious than previous variants, but the severity of the symptoms have been milder than the other variants.

Since mid-January, the number of new daily Covid cases has dropped more than 95 percent. However, the Omicron variant is still flaring up in parts of Europe and Asia, including China, where officials are implementing stringent lockdowns. And now we are told that there appears to be an even more contagious version of Omicron, known as BA.2, beginning to take hold. Where does it end? In Mississippi, 793,105 total cases of COVID-19 and 12,288 total deaths have been recorded. Approximately half the population of Mississippi is fully vaccinated.

The pundits will argue for years about the adequacy of the measures taken by the state and federal governments in response to COVID-19. It has been over 100 years since the last major pandemic hit U.S. soil. So, the CDC, FEMA, FDA, DHHS and others may be a bit out of practice. But one thing is likely certain: science and politics don't always play well together.

At the start of the COVID-19 emergency, the Mississippi Public Service Commission (MPSC) placed a moratorium on the disconnection of any water, sewer, natural gas and electric service to any customer for non-payment for such services. The MPSC took this action to help protect people's personal health and safety during mandated lockdowns and help protect customers' financial well-being as the economy ground to a crawl and jobs losses piled up.



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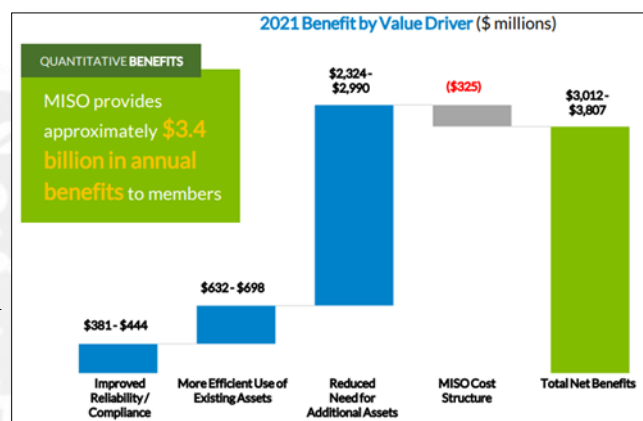
Although the MPSC lifted its moratorium on utility service disconnections approximately 10 weeks after it was put into place, many utility providers voluntarily continued temporary moratoriums on disconnections. While these actions likely helped to reduce certain infections and deaths and provided temporary relief from utility bills, many households soon found themselves with high utility arrearages and utilities were accruing large sums of debt due to unpaid customers' bills.

The MPSC has been and will continue to work with individual customers and utilities to find ways to alleviate the financial toll. We encourage customers to explore all options of financial assistance and support through utilities and state and federal programs. That said, we are still not quite in the clear when it comes to COVID-19. Although many sectors of the economy are "back to business," we are still not quite back to normal.

MISO Value Analysis

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based organization responsible for operating the power grid across 15 U.S. states (including Mississippi) and the Canadian province of Manitoba. Each year, MISO conducts a [study to quantify the value](#) created for the region, market participants, and customers during the prior calendar year.

The [2021 Value Proposition](#) study shows that MISO provided between \$3.0 billion and \$3.8 billion in regional benefits driven by enhanced reliability, more efficient use of the region's existing assets, and a reduced need for new assets. The benefits information is not broken down by state or utility.



It's Fix A Leak Week; Help Reduce Treated Water Loss

Water is a finite resource - even though about 70 percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water, less than 1 percent is available for human use. Even with certain challenges faced by many communities across the US, each American uses an average of 82 gallons of water each day at home. However, the average U.S. household also leaks nearly 10,000 gallons of water per year, or the amount of water it takes to wash 300 loads.

Therefore, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) and its member state utility commissions support the Fix a Leak Week campaign to encourage Americans to help put a stop to the nearly 1 trillion gallons of water wasted from household leaks each year. By fixing leaks, tightening pipe connections and replacing certain fixtures, you are reducing water loss, making water accessible for others, and reducing the amount of electricity used by water treatment facilities. Use the materials and tips at <https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week> to find and fix leaks to help save water.

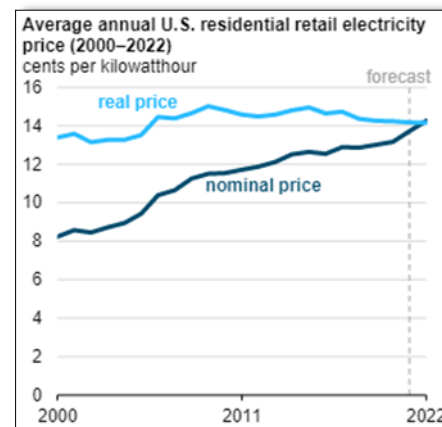


During 2021, U.S. Retail Electricity Prices Rose at Fastest Rate Since 2008

In a prelude to what may come in 2022, data compiled by the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) found that the average nominal retail electricity price paid by U.S. residential electric customers in 2021 rose at the fastest rate since 2008. Average retail electricity prices increased 4.3% from 2020 to 13.72 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh). The increase is similar to the change in the U.S. Consumer Price Index which was 4.7% over the same time period.

Several factors contributed to the rise in electricity price. Most notably is the increase in fuels used to generate electricity, especially natural gas which more than doubled in price from \$2.32/MMBtu average in 2020 to \$4.98/MMBtu average in 2021. Severe weather events in 2021 also contributed to higher electricity prices. These included the February 2021 winter storms, Hurricane Ida, western wildfires, and more.

The EIA's latest Short-Term Energy Outlook predicts that that residential retail electricity prices will continue to rise in 2022 to an average nominal price of 14.26 cents/kWh, an increase of 3.9%. If there is some good news to be gleaned from the EIA data, it's that future prices will rise at slower rate and that retail electricity prices, when adjusted for inflation, have been slowly declining over time.



Fun Facts: The Largest Power Plant in Each State

In 2020, roughly 10,000 power plants in the United States produced about 4 trillion megawatt-hours (MWh) of electricity. The generating plants constitute a wide variety of technologies and capabilities, from nuclear to hydropower, from fossil fueled to renewables. So, what is the largest power plant in each state, what fuel is used, how old are they, and what is each's contribution to its state's total electricity production?

Based on 2020 data, the largest power plants in each state were fueled by nuclear (20), coal (14), natural gas (9), hydro (5), oil (1) and wood (1). The single-largest power-producing plant in the U.S. is the Palo Verde nuclear plant in Maricopa County, Arizona. The oldest facility is Washington State's Grand Coulee Dam operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, where the first unit came online in 1942.

For Mississippi, again based on 2020 data, the Victor J. Daniel Electric Generating Plant in Jackson County and owned by Mississippi Power Co., generated the most electricity of any power plant in Mississippi. The facility generated 10.8 million Megawatt-hours (MMh) and represented 16.2% of the state's total electricity production. Plant Daniel utilizes both coal and natural gas with first coal unit going online in 1977. See the 2020 rankings in the chart below.

The ranking should change when the 2021 rankings are published as Grand Gulf Nuclear Station near Port Gibson set all-time station records for both gross generation and net generation in megawatt-hours. In 2021, Grand Gulf's net generation was 11.7 MMh, with gross generation of 12.2 MMh.

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Plant State	Plant County	Plant Operator Holding Company Name	Plant Name	Primary Fuel	First unit online	MWh (millions)	% of state total
Alabama	Limestone	Tennessee Valley Authority	Browns Ferry	Nuclear	1974	28.8	20.5%
Alaska	Anchorage Borough	Chugach Electric Association	Southcentral Power Project	Gas	2013	0.8	13.4%
Arizona	Maricopa	Pinnacle West Capital Corp	Palo Verde	Nuclear	1986	31.8	28.9%
Arkansas	Pope	Entergy Corp	Arkansas Nuclear One	Nuclear	1974	15.1	27.6%
California	San Luis Obispo	PG&E Corp	Diablo Canyon	Nuclear	1985	16.3	8.4%
Colorado	Moffat	Tri-State G&T	Craig	Coal	1979	7.0	13.0%
Connecticut	New London	Dominion Energy Inc	Millstone	Nuclear	1986	15.7	38.2%
Delaware	New Castle	Energy Capital Partners	Hay Road	Gas	1993	1.7	32.6%
Florida	Palm Beach	NextEra Energy Inc	West County Energy Center	Gas	2009	19.8	7.9%
Georgia	Burke	Southern Co	Vogtle	Nuclear	1987	18.9	15.6%
Hawaii	Honolulu	Hawaiian Electric Industries	Kahe	Oil	1963	2.4	26.2%
Idaho	Washington	IDACORP Inc	Brownlee	Hydro	1958	2.1	11.7%
Illinois	Will	Exelon Corp	Braidwood Station	Nuclear	1988	20.4	11.7%
Indiana	Gibson	Duke Energy Corp	Gibson Station	Coal	1975	11.8	13.1%
Iowa	Pottawattamie	Berkshire Hathaway Inc	Walter Scott Jr Energy Center	Coal	1978	5.0	8.5%
Kansas	Coffey	Entergy Inc	Wolf Creek Station	Nuclear	1985	10.8	19.4%
Kentucky	Carroll	PPL Corp	Ghent	Coal	1974	9.9	15.6%
Louisiana	Jefferson Parish	Entergy Corp	Nine Mile Point LA	Gas	1973	9.5	9.4%
Maine	Cumberland	Energy Capital Partners	Westbrook Energy Center	Gas	2001	1.0	10.1%
Maryland	Calvert	Exelon Corp	Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Plant	Nuclear	1975	15.1	41.9%
Massachusetts	Norfolk	Energy Capital Partners	Fore River	Gas	2003	3.3	18.2%
Michigan	Berrien	American Electric Power	Donald C Cook	Nuclear	1975	18.3	17.1%
Minnesota	Goodhue	Xcel Energy	Prairie Island	Nuclear	1974	9.1	16.1%
Mississippi	Jackson	Southern Company	Victor J Daniel Jr	Coal	1977	10.8	16.2%
Missouri	Franklin	Ameren Corp	Labadie	Coal	1970	16.5	22.7%
Montana	Rosebud	Riverstone Holdings LLC	Colstrip	Coal	1984	7.9	34.0%
Nebraska	Otoe	Omaha Public Power District	Nebraska City	Coal	1979	7.7	20.8%
Nevada	Clark	Berkshire Hathaway Inc	Chuck Lenzie Station	Gas	2006	6.1	15.2%
New Hampshire	Rockingham	NextEra Energy Inc	NextEra Energy Seabrook	Nuclear	1990	9.9	60.3%
New Jersey	Salem	PSEG Inc	Salem Generating Station	Nuclear	1977	16.1	26.4%
New Mexico	San Juan	Pinnacle West Capital Corp	Four Corners	Coal	1969	7.6	22.3%
New York	Niagara	New York Power Authority	Robert Moses Niagara	Hydro	1961	17.5	13.5%
North Carolina	Mecklenburg	Duke Energy Corp	McGuire	Nuclear	1981	19.0	15.3%
North Dakota	Molean	Great River Energy	Coal Creek	Coal	1979	8.2	19.5%
Ohio	Gallia	ArcLight Capital Partners LLC	Gavin	Coal	1974	13.1	10.8%
Oklahoma	Wagoner	LS Power Group	Oneta Energy Center	Gas	2002	6.3	7.7%
Oregon	Sherman	US Army Corps of Engineers	John Day	Hydro	1968	8.5	13.3%
Pennsylvania	York	Exelon Corp	Peach Bottom	Nuclear	1974	21.8	9.5%
Rhode Island	Providence	Carlyle Group (The)	Rhode Island State Energy	Gas	2002	3.6	40.8%
South Carolina	Oconee	Duke Energy Corp	Oconee	Nuclear	1973	21.5	21.9%
South Dakota	Hughes	US Army Corps of Engineers	Oahe	Hydro	1962	2.8	19.8%
Tennessee	Hamilton	Tennessee Valley Authority	Sequoyah	Nuclear	1981	19.1	23.7%
Texas	Matagorda	NRG Energy Inc	South Texas	Nuclear	1988	22.0	4.6%
Utah	Emery	Berkshire Hathaway Inc	Hunter	Coal	1978	8.0	21.6%
Vermont	Chittenden	Burlington VT (City of)	J C McNeil	Wood	1984	0.2	10.8%
Virginia	Louisa	Dominion Energy Inc	North Anna	Nuclear	1978	15.8	15.3%
Washington	Grant	US Bureau of Reclamation	Grand Coulee	Hydro	1942	20.3	17.5%
West Virginia	Harrison	FirstEnergy Corp	Harrison	Coal	1972	10.9	19.2%
Wisconsin	Manitowish	NextEra Energy Inc	Point Beach	Nuclear	1969	9.8	16.2%
Wyoming	Sweetwater	Berkshire Hathaway Inc	Jim Bridger	Coal	1974	10.5	24.9%

Hitachi Energy Velocity Suite



Legislation Tracker



Yesterday was the deadline for floor action on appropriation and revenue bills originating in the other chamber. Both the PSC and the PUS appropriation bills, HB 1609 and HB 1610, will go to conference. Conference reports containing compromises of bills that passed the two chambers in differing forms are due March 26 for appropriation and revenue bills and March 28 for general bills. April 3rd is the scheduled end of the 2022 Session. The **Commission** continues watching numerous bills that could impact customers, certain utilities, or the MPSC.

- [HB 1029](#): Mississippi Broadband Accessibility Act; create. *Senate Returned for Concurrence; Decline to Concur/Invite Conference by House.*
- [HB 1031](#): Capital City Water/Sewer Projects Fund; create and require DFA to develop plan for improvements projects. *Senate Returned for Concurrence; Decline to Concur/Invite Conference by House.*
- [HB 1421](#): Establish ARPA Rural Water Associations Infrastructure Grant Programs under Department of Health. *Senate Returned for Concurrence; Decline to Concur/Invite Conference by House.*
- [HB 1425](#): Establish ARPA Wastewater and Drinking Water Infrastructure Grant Programs under DEQ and Department of Health. *Senate Returned for Concurrence; Decline to Concur/Invite Conference by House.*
- [HB 1538](#): Appropriation to the MS State Department of Health for the purpose of funding the ARPA Drinking Water Infrastructure Grant Program. *Passed House as Amended; Passed Senate as Amended.*
- [HB 1607](#): Approving expenditure of special funds to defray expenses of the Mississippi Broadband Commission. *Passed The House; Passed Senate as Amended.*
- [HB 1609](#): Mississippi Public Service Commission Annual Appropriation. *Passed The House; Passed Senate as Amended.*
- [SB 2822](#): Establish the Mississippi Water and Wastewater Transformation Infrastructure Grant Program to be administered by the MSDH and MDEQ. *Returned for Concurrence by House; Decline to Concur/Invite Conference by Senate.*
- [SB 2898](#): Certain municipalities allowed to establish overdue water/sewer payment programs; extend repealer on code section. *Passed by Senate; Passed House as Amended/Returned for Concurrence by House.*

Please note that identification of a bill in this newsletter does not indicate support or opposition to a measure. Each bill is simply identified as an example of legislation that has been assigned to Energy, Public Utilities or other committees with oversight of these matters. Bills being tracked could change from week to week.



Last Week at the MPSC

-  **MS Solar 4, LLC** filed its [Supplemental Petition](#) for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity authorizing the construction and operation of a portion of an approximate 96 MWac Solar Electric Generating Facility in **Covington County** and a portion in **Lamar County**. Due to environmental and other reasons affecting MS Solar 4's ability to locate all of the Facility in **Covington County**, **MS Solar 4** may be required to shift the location, resulting in a portion of the Facility being located on an adjacent +/- 315 acres in **Lamar County** currently under option by **MS Solar 4**. **MS Solar 4** will sell the entire electric generation output of the Facility, at wholesale, into the interstate electricity market of **Midcontinent Independent System Operator ("MISO")** through an interconnection with **Cooperative Energy**, a MISO member.
-  **MS Solar 7, LLC** filed its [Petition](#) for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity authorizing the Construction and Operation of a Solar Electric Generating and Storage Facility in **Clay County**. The Facility will be constructed to sell wholesale energy and storage services to the **Tennessee Valley Authority ("TVA")** under a long-term power purchase agreement ("PPA"). The facility is a 200 MWac single axis tracker solar photovoltaic generating station coupled with a 50 MWac Battery Energy Storage System. The Facility will interconnect at TVA's **West Point 500/161 kV substation**.

Remember: The deadline to file written comments in the Docket to Review Community Solar Proposals is March 22.



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

Electric Companies	27
Telecommunications	5

Last week, the Central District received a total of **200** 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.