

September 28, 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



Hey Mississippi, It's Clean Energy Week!

National Clean Energy Week (September 26-30) is a celebration of the policies, industries, and innovations that power our daily lives while producing little to no emissions. Clean energy technologies and clean energy jobs will be key parts of a growing U.S. economy and preparing for a lower-carbon energy future. Technologies such as nuclear, solar, wind, wave, hydropower, geothermal, natural gas, biomass, carbon capture, batteries, energy efficiency and waste-to-energy continue to improve and overcome political and technological challenges. As they do, we make tremendous strides in becoming more energy independent, expanding economic prosperity and strengthening our national security.

Although nearly 45% of U.S. utility-scale electricity generation comes from clean, non-emitting resources, clean energy is not just a national issue. Local businesses, policymakers, consumers, and advocates all have a role in growing the clean energy economy through smart policy, innovation and utilization. We can harness the power of markets and collaboration to discover new ways to take advantage of clean energy opportunities and create new energy-based jobs in our own backyard.

In fact, Governor Tate Reeves also recognizes the growing importance of clean energy. On September 14, 2022, Governor Reeves signed a [Proclamation](#) recognizing National Clean Energy Week and proclaiming October 2022 as Energy Awareness Month in the state of Mississippi. In the Proclamation, Governor Reeves states, "Mississippi provides innovative statewide programs encouraging energy infrastructure development, energy efficiency, and renewable energy within state government, throughout its local governments, and among its citizens, businesses, industries, and educational institutions."

I appreciate Governor Reeves for public acknowledging National Clean Energy Week and the role of diverse energy resources in economic development, natural resource conservation and strong, prosperous communities. In fact, the Mississippi Public Service Commission (MPSC) is currently evaluating next steps for its recently revised [Mississippi Distributed Generator Interconnection and Net Renewable Generation Rules](#) upon being challenged by the state's for-profit electric utilities. See the Summary on Rehearing later in this newsletter.





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Despite some naysayers, the validation, demand for, and deployment of clean energy continues to grow in Mississippi. At least 30 utility-scale solar projects have been approved by the Commission, are pending or have been announced. These projects have a combined generation capacity of 2,324 MW and a combined energy storage capacity of 155 MW. Total value of these projects is over \$2.5 billion. This does not include the recent renewable energy requests for proposals put forth by Entergy MS and MS Power Co. that could potentially add another 1,200 MW of clean energy capacity to the state. My office has had discussions with companies that are pursuing hydroelectric projects within the Mississippi River and at the reservoirs operated by the Corps of Engineers. New biomass facilities are coming online, and hydrogen production, transport and storage is the focus of other companies that visualize Mississippi as an economic hub. TVA and Entergy MS are both exploring applications for advanced, small modular nuclear reactors. The MS Department of Transportation's plan for deployment of electric vehicle charging infrastructure was approved by federal authorities. And I have received reports that the state's first wind farm project is still on track.

Every energy resource has its costs and benefits. But I do know that clean energy can create jobs, expand our economy, strengthen energy security, and conserve our environment. We must work together to advance the deployment of a diverse, cost-competitive and resilient energy portfolio that creates the greatest benefits for now and the next generations of Mississippians.



Mississippi Utilities Begin Mobilizing to Assist in Hurricane Ian Recovery/Restoration

Hurricane Ian pushed toward Florida on Tuesday with a likely landfall on the southwest coast late Wednesday, putting metro Orlando under a hurricane warning and bringing potentially "catastrophic" flooding and hurricane-force gusts to Central Florida, forecasters said. Ian is expected to strengthen to a category 4 before moving ashore south of Tampa Bay. Severe storm surge, sustained winds of 135 mph and up to 20 inches of rain can be expected across Florida.

Utilities across Florida, Georgia and other potentially impacted states have put out requests for mutual aid assistance. In response, crews from across the country are headed south and east to help in the restoration process. Mississippi utilities are answering the call as well. Mississippi Power Co. (MPC) will be sending over 200 people into Georgia to assist Georgia Power Co. The personnel include a 100-person MPC distribution storm team (75 line, 25 support), a 48-person distribution line contractor team, a 64-person vegetation management team, a 12-person MPC management team, and a 6-person MPC logistics team.



Entergy Mississippi will initially send much of its contract line resources and contract vegetation resources to Florida. Should Entergy Mississippi receive a request to send additional resources, the response will likely include a mix of Entergy Mississippi and contract personnel. All Entergy operating companies are sending personnel and resources. Collectively, Entergy companies are sending an initial wave of more than 820 restoration workers to support a safe restoration effort, including vegetation and line crews.



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This morning, the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi are coordinating approximately 37 crews (190 personnel). This is the first wave of personnel and resources and more will likely go later as storm restoration needs are further defined. All personnel are initially going to Peace River Electric, which is the region Southeast of Tampa and stretches from coast to coast.

Please note that there could be delays in local customer construction commitments as our dedicated Mississippi utility workers restore power as quickly and safely as possible back to customers in the areas impacted by Hurricane Ian. Mississippi knows all too well what out of state utilities have done to help restore services over the years. Sending crews to help is part of a long-standing mutual assistance agreement by which utilities support one another in times of need.



MPSC Work Session on Electric Vehicles (EVs)

On September 26, 2022, the MPSC held a Work Session to receive a high-level overview of the potential impacts of the growth of EV adoption in Mississippi and evaluate certain regulatory actions that may be needed to address consumer concerns. The goal of the session was to better understand the electric vehicle market, infrastructure needs and consumer habits. The **Commission** heard from several individuals representing various entities and stakeholders. Those who presented included: **Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)**; **Alliance for Transportation Electrification**; **Partners in Performance**; **Southern Company**; **Entergy Mississippi, LLC**; **ChargePoint**; and **Mississippi Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Stores Association**.

MDOT kicked things off by outlining where they were in the process as it pertained to the [Mississippi Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan](#), as well as its next steps in the coming years. MDOT and the **Commission** recognized that communication and collaboration is vital between the agencies as the EV market continues to grow and develop. This segued perfectly into the comments presented by the **Alliance for Transportation Electrification (ATE)** which sought to outline goals, give guidance, and provide a potential policy road map. ATE placed an emphasis on rate design for public and private EV charging and explained the delicate balance that public utility commissions must strike in approving rates based on cost causation principles while allowing for incentives that assist the market transformation for EVs. Additionally, in considering demand charge alternatives, it is also important to point out that different utility commissions may have differences in the legal precedent and in the application of rate design principles, which may affect their capability and/or willingness to adopt different rate designs.

Partners in Performance highlighted that electrification (particularly EVs) will accelerate with improving economics and increasing stakeholder pressure. Mississippi's market competitiveness may require a policy/regulatory solution that meets demand in a fair way to ratepayers. With the aim to support customer EV charging needs, it is vital to ensure grid resiliency, maintain competitive rates, and have a clear plan to address load on the electrical network as EV penetration grows. Further, the market will not solve certain problems, utilities will have to play an essential role, and consumer habits will dictate the market in certain capacities.





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Southern Company and **Entergy Mississippi, LLC** recognized the growth and inevitability of the EV market noting that the industry and various levels of government and corporations have announced planned investments in EV fleets. Both companies cited infrastructure requirements and indicated their willingness to play a role in the coming years, even if that requires working with a third party such as **ChargePoint**. In **ChargePoint**'s comments, they identified its goal of making going electric easy for businesses and drivers. Issues to address include pricing of charging services, utility make-ready programs, and the importance of rate design.

The **Mississippi Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Stores Association** wrapped things up by noting that while transitioning from the current gasoline vehicle market to the EV market for gas stations and convenience stores throughout the state will be challenging, members will be ready to adapt to changing market conditions.

Each presenter contributed by providing their insight on the different factors contributing to the future of EVs in Mississippi. The session brought forth ideas pertaining to the various sectors that will be involved in the deployment of infrastructure needed to facilitate EV growth, including but not limited to: rural partners, charging behaviors, grid demand, charging options and technologies, corporate goals, and state/federal policy initiatives that need to be addressed. While electric utilities will be vital stakeholders in the process, the **Commission** will be working with all stakeholders to respond appropriately to EV market development in Mississippi.

Highlights from the September 27, 2022, Special Meeting

The Mississippi Public Service Commission met on September 27, 2022, at 10:00 am CT to consider the following agenda items:

- ☑ The **Commission** tabled agenda item pertaining to the discussion and possible action regarding the proposed order in Docket No. 2013-UN-178, **Entergy Mississippi, LLC's** Interim Adjustments to Energy Cost Recovery Factor and Power Management Cost Adjustment Factor until the October 4, 2022, Open Docket Meeting.
- ☑ The **Commission** held a public rehearing on the recently adopted [Mississippi Distributed Generator Interconnection and Net Renewable Generation Rule](#) (Docket No. 2021-AD-19, the Docket to Review the Efficacy and Fairness of the Net Metering and Interconnection Rules). The new rule sought to increase adoption of distributed generation, enhance grid reliability and economic development, in addition to improving access to solar for low- and middle-income residents. While most stakeholders believed the **Commission** created a well-balanced rule that creates opportunities for individuals, schools, and businesses to invest in distributed energy resources, the state's two investor-owned electric utilities, **Entergy Mississippi, LLC**, and **Mississippi Power Company** filed Motions for Rehearing, raising several issues with the **Commission's** revisions. To further understand the issues raised by the utilities in their respective Motions for Rehearing, the **Commission** felt it would be proper and prudent to grant those Motions and conduct a rehearing in this proceeding with the goal to produce a meaningful rule that will achieve the **Commission's** desired policy outcomes identified above. Several entities made comments at the public rehearing. These intervenors and members of the public included: **Audubon Delta**; **Scenic Hill Solar**; **Sierra Club**; **PosiGen, Inc.**; **Sundial Solar Power Developers**; **Entergy Mississippi, LLC**; **Mississippi Power Company**; **Universal Solar Enterprises, LLC**; **Steps Coalition**; **NAACP**; **Efficient Power and Light**; **Gulf States Renewable Energy Industry Association**; **Entegrity Energy Partners**; **Dimension Renewable Energy, LLC**; the superintendents of **Lauderdale County School District** and **Union School District**, among others. **The Commission** took the comments made at the rehearing under advisement for further consideration.



Federal News and Reports

Clean Hydrogen Funding Opportunity Announcement

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) opened the application process for the \$7 billion program to create regional clean hydrogen hubs (H2Hubs) across the country, which could form a critical arm of America's future clean energy economy. As part of a larger \$8 billion hydrogen hub program, the H2Hubs will be a central driver in helping communities across the country benefit from clean energy investments, good-paying jobs, and improved energy security. For this initial [funding opportunity](#) launch, DOE is aiming to select six to ten hubs for a combined total of up to \$7 billion in federal funding. Concept papers are due by November 7, 2022, and full applications are due by April 7, 2023.

DOE also released a draft of the [National Clean Hydrogen Strategy and Roadmap](#) for public feedback. The Roadmap provides a comprehensive overview of the potential for hydrogen production, transport, storage, and use in the United States.

Capabilities of Solar and Battery Storage for Backup Power

Berkeley Lawrence National Laboratory and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory have released a new report, entitled [Evaluating the Capabilities of Behind-the-Meter Solar-plus-Storage for Providing Backup Power during Long-Duration Power Interruptions](#), to evaluate the backup power capabilities of behind-the-meter solar-plus-energy storage systems (or PVESS). The study simulates PVESS performance in providing critical-load or whole-building backup power across a wide range of geographies, building types, and power interruption conditions. The study also considers a set of 10 historical long-duration (greater than 24-hour) power outages and evaluates how PVESS could have performed in providing backup power during those events. Check out the [Narrative Summary](#) and [Slide-deck Report](#) formats for more information on the findings.



Last Week at the MPSC

- ✉ **Connect Everyone, LLC** filed its [Motion](#) to Withdraw its Application for Designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier to Receive Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I Auction Support.
- ✉ **CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp.** filed its [Compliance Tariff](#) in regard to its Supplemental Growth Rider.
- ✉ **CenterPoint Energy** also filed its [Supplemental 2023 Annual Energy Delivery Plan](#) under **CenterPoint Energy's** Rate Schedule RRA for the 12 months ended December 31, 2021. Since the **Commission** issued certain disallowances in its August 2, 2022 Order in this Docket pertaining to **CenterPoint Energy's** Rate Schedule RRA for the 12 months ended December 31, 2021, **CenterPoint** seeks to supplement its 2022 filing with its Energy Efficiency Cost Recovery (EECR) calculations, schedules, and workpapers showing what it believes to be the effects of these disallowances supporting the following rate adjustments to be effective January 1, 2023: Increase per Ccf of \$0.0059 for residential and \$0.009 for commercial; Increase per Mcf of \$.021 for large volume and transportation service.
- ✉ **Spire Mississippi** filed its [2022 Annual Report](#) of its Natural Gas Expansion projects. Some of **Spire's** ongoing/planned projects include the first subdivision expansion project along the West Hattiesburg Pipeline located north of U.S. Highway 98. **Spire** has surveyed residential premises in Lake Serene subdivision located south of U.S. Highway 98 ("Lake Serene South") and received sufficient customer interest to proceed with this project.



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After referral for hearing, report, and recommendation of an appropriate Order to the Central District Commissioner, the **Commissioner** issued Orders certifying the following entities as Eligible Telecommunications Carriers (ETCs) for purposes of the continued receipt and utilization of high-cost RDOF support for the 2023 funding year: [Belzoni Cable, LLC](#); [TecInfo Communications, LLC](#).

CENTRAL DISTRICT SNAPS



Thanks to the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation for the invitation to participate in their Region 6 Policy Development Meeting last Thursday evening. I shared thoughts on landowner considerations as it relates to utility-scale solar development and other matters of concern to the Commission and ratepayers.

I appreciate the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) for having me speak during their State and Regional Policy Committee last Thursday.

We had a good conversation focusing on energy issues in Mississippi and my role on the NARUC Energy Resources and the Environment Committee.

I look forward to meeting members of the BCSE at the upcoming NARUC conference in New Orleans.



We were proud to have Dr. Phillip Burchfield,

Executive Director of MASS, Dr. John-Mark Cain, Lauderdale County School District Superintendent, and Dr. Tyler Hansford, Union Public School District Superintendent, attend the rehearing Tuesday, providing comments and support from school districts across the state for the Commission's "Solar for Schools" initiative, which will give public schools an opportunity to capture energy savings, reinvest in academic programs, and make students aware of these new technologies.

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The next Regular Docket Meeting of the MPSC is scheduled for October 4, 2022, at 10:00 am.



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

Electric Companies	22
Telecommunications	5
Water/Sewer	2

Last week, the Central District received a total of **157** 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.