

October 13, 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



***Make Cybersecurity A Priority
at Your Business (and Home)***

In addition to October being Energy Awareness Month, October is also recognized as Cybersecurity Awareness Month. While protecting the physical, operational and software systems of the utility sectors should be a 24/7/365 focus, I wish to take this opportunity to remind businesses and utility operators that implementing and maintaining cybersecurity protection measures should be at the forefront of any risk management framework.

Over the last few decades, rapid advancements in technology have transformed the energy sector, especially electricity, and the pace of the change is not slowing down. Cybercriminals don't just target personal data anymore. They now pursue the ability to disrupt critical national infrastructure and essential services and create physical and economic consequences for utilities and customers. Just as critical infrastructure operations are becoming more integrated, cyberattacks are increasingly advanced and more widespread than they have ever been.

I am proud to be a member the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioner's Critical Infrastructure Committee. This Committee makes cybersecurity within the energy and utility sectors one of its top priorities. Businesses, operators and regulators of all types and sizes, must understand cyber-based risks and how to defend against them. Furthermore, consumers must also understand and have confidence that their utility service providers are proactive in the protection of critical infrastructure and implement cybersecurity functions that maintain a safe, secure and reliable energy network.

While we do not have a cybersecurity division within the Mississippi Public Service Commission (MPSC), this office has conducted in-person sessions with managers of regulatory, technology, security and more of the major rate regulated utilities that provide electric and natural gas service in Mississippi. Through these interactions, I am confident that these utilities have strong cybersecurity programs that meet or exceed industry standards, have established internal processes that can identify and mitigate vulnerabilities, and collaborate with others in the industry to understand the latest tactics, techniques, and procedures used by cyberattackers. You can be confident that utility companies will continue to put resources into understanding cyber risks and how to defend against them.

While the general mission of the MPSC is to ensure safe, reliable, and adequate utility service at a fair and equitable cost to ratepayers, the evolving threat of cyber-based incidents exposes the potential need for information on cybersecurity risk management, preparedness, and mitigation programs within the MPSC. One of my past newsletters — [Cybersecurity and State Regulatory Commissions](#) — explores how state regulatory commissioners can implement cybersecurity in their work programs to complement existing regulatory functions.

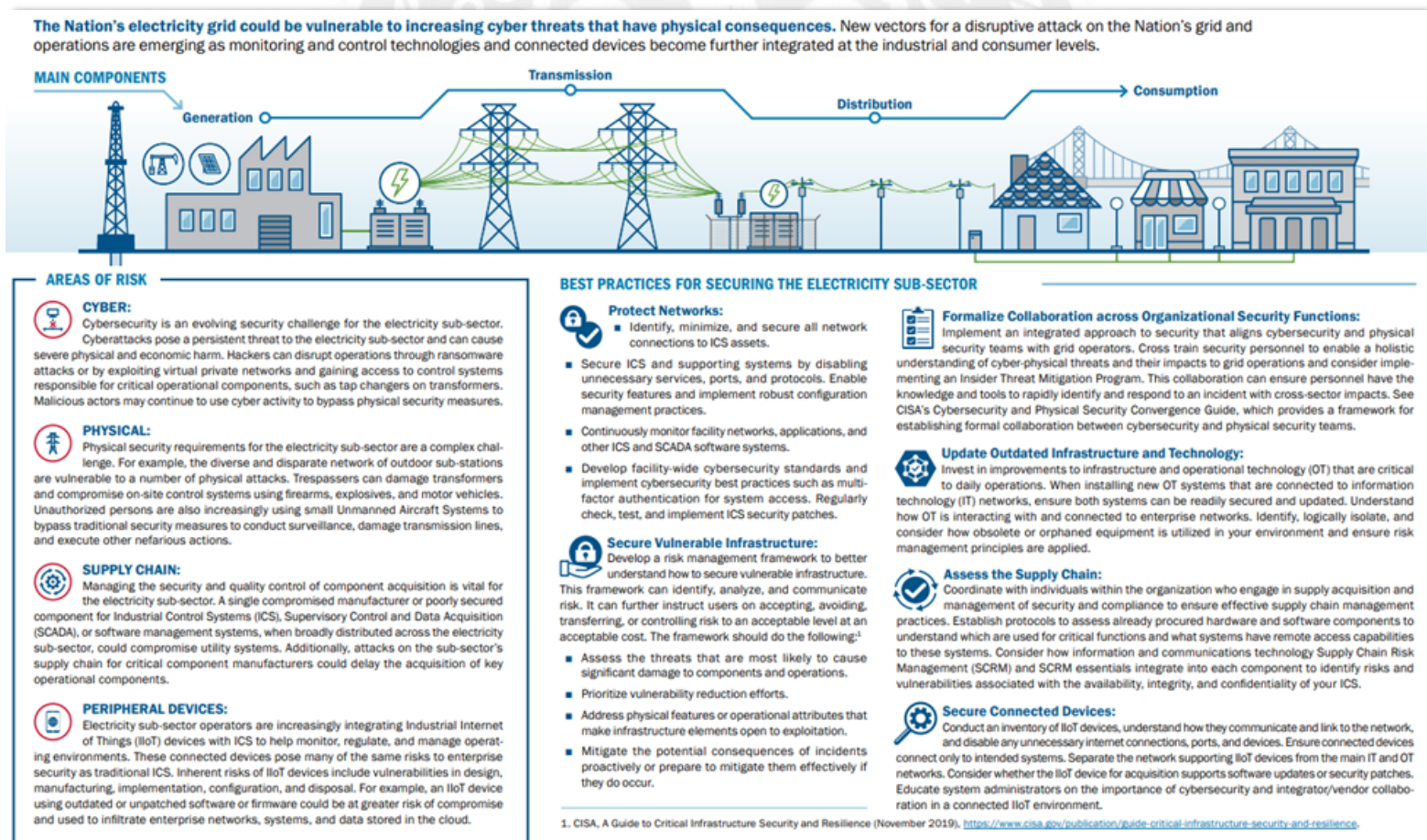


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This week I completed in-house cybersecurity training and MPSC staff may receive random “phishing simulation emails” to see if employees can spot the typical malicious content used by groups that wish to hack into and take control of systems. I just hope the simulation emails don’t include anything about SEC football. I am not sure how we would fare! But that is exactly what these “phishing” emails are designed to do: Distract you and hope you act impulsively.

As we work internally to beef up our protection systems and reduce our cyber vulnerabilities, you should also evaluate your own business’s cyber risks. This should include conducting a cyber-risk analysis, evaluate your cyber readiness, and create and implement a response plan. Simply ask yourself if you can run your business in “manual” mode? If you think that you don’t have any risks to be concerned about, just remember Murphy’s Law!

Below, the DHS’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the DOE’s Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER) have put together an infographic describing key areas of risk and best practices for protection systems within the electricity sector. However, these basic principles can be adopted and applied across most business and industry sectors. Protecting one’s information, operation or infrastructure in today’s digitally connected world requires understanding and diligence. Don’t wait until after an unfortunate event to take action.





Community Built for Resiliency Survived Ultimate Test

Hurricane Ian exerted a huge toll on Southwest Florida. Thousands are still without power and/or water and the human losses break our hearts. But like so many areas of the country hit by major storm events, Southwest Florida will eventually rebuild. And when they do, perhaps they will look to Babcock Ranch for storm resilient technologies and construction standards.

[Babcock Ranch](#) is located about 12 miles northeast of Fort Myers, FL. The neighborhood currently consists of about 2,000 homes and is powered by a combination of 650,000 photovoltaic panels (150 MW capacity), battery energy storage system, and natural gas backup system within its own microgrid. All powerlines are underground. Streets, retention ponds and landscaping control storm water to prevent flooding. All structures are built to robust building codes.



Other than some knocked over street signs and palm trees, little else in the neighborhood was damaged and they never lost power. Unfortunately, many in the surrounding communities did not have the same experience.

Last Week at the MPSC

- 📁 On October 11, 2022, at 6 pm, the Central District Commissioner and representatives from the **Commission** attended and presented at a meeting that took place at the Gibson Memorial Church in Vicksburg, regarding **Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC**'s proposed rate for three wastewater systems in the area. The meeting was hosted by Representative Kevin Ford in collaboration with three local homeowner's associations (Openwood, Brentwood, and Fairways) at the request of the HOAs. The **Commission** and **Great River Utility** were invited to present, provide information, discuss concerns, and answer questions. The **Commission** provided [handouts](#) and a [presentation](#) about the **MPSC**'s overall role, the **MPSC**'s process and proceedings, conditions of each of the wastewater systems, current rates, proposed rates, and how new rates will ultimately be established. As the night progressed, the meeting evolved into a more casual back-and-forth between those in attendance and the presenters as numerous points were made and addressed. The **MPSC** concluded with a reminder that **Great River** has filed a request for the **Commission** to approve these [proposed](#) new rates, and the request is undergoing a full review by the **Commission** and the Staff. **The Commission** has 120 days to render a decision on the matter, but it is highly likely these proceedings will take longer than 120 days and could stretch into 2023.
- 📁 **Entergy Mississippi, LLC (EML)** filed its required annual adjustment to their Middle South Energy ("MSE") Riders. Pursuant to FERC Docket Nos. ER82-616-000 and ER82-483-000, **EML** was allocated a 33% interest of System Energy Resource Inc.'s ("SERI") 90% interest in Grand Gulf Nuclear Station. MSE-3 provides for **EML**'s recovery of its allocated share of Grand Gulf costs as a fixed percentage of **EML**'s base rates. The MSE rate factor provides cost recovery of the projected level of SERI demand charges for the succeeding fiscal year, plus any over or under recovery associated with collection of the prior year's MSE Riders. Both riders are formula rates, previously approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the **Commission**, and do not require **Commission** action to become effective. The impact of the **EML**'s proposed factor on an average residential customer's bill, using 1,000 kWh, is an increase of \$3.00. The increase is attributable to one-time tax credits rolling off and an increase in demand charges.

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- ✎ **Lumen Technologies, Inc.** and **Connect Holding LLC** filed their joint application with **Lumen's** operating subsidiaries, **CenturyTel of Adamsville, Inc.**; **CenturyTel of North Mississippi**; and **CenturyTel Broadband Services, LLC** for transfer of control of the subsidiaries to **Connect Holding, LLC** and, after approval, were directed to notify the **Commission** of the consummation of the transaction. Collectively they filed their [Post-Closing Notice](#) notifying the **Commission** that on October 3, 2022 their transaction was consummated and **Connect Holding d/b/a Brightspeed** is now the parent of the acquired companies.
- ✎ **The Commission** issued an [Order](#) certifying **DE Fastlink, LLC** as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC) for purposes of the continued receipt and utilization of high-cost RDOF support for the 2023 universal support funding year for broadband deployment.
- ✎ **The Commission** issued a [Notice of Hearing](#) in regard to the Petition of **Harvest Gold Solar Power, LLC**, for a Facilities Certificate to Construct and Operate a Solar Electric Generating facility in **Sunflower County**. The hearing will be held on October 25, 2022, at the **Sunflower County** Circuit Court Room, 200 Main St, Indianola, MS beginning at 5:30 p.m.
- ✎ **Entergy Mississippi, LLC** filed its Interim Adjustments [Compliance Filing](#) in regard to its Notice of Intent to Implement a Routine Change in Rates. This filing was made in compliance with the **Commission's** [Order](#) issued October 4, 2022. The net impact of both the Energy Cost Factor and Power Management Cost Factor Interim Adjustments for the typical residential customer using 1,000 kWh per month will see an increase of \$2.01 per month incrementally over six months until the total of \$12.02 is reached in April 2023. **The Commission** also issued an [Order Approving](#) **Entergy Mississippi, LLC's** Compliance filing and Tariffs.
- ✎ **Intrado Corporation**, together with **Intrado Corporation's** wholly owned indirect subsidiary **Intrado Safety Communications, Inc.**, and **Guardian US Holdco LLC** filed a [Joint Application](#) requesting **Commission** approval to transfer indirect control in which they will consummate via a stock purchase transaction resulting in **Guardian US Holdco LLC** acquiring ultimate control of **Intrado Safety Communications, Inc.**
- ✎ **BCM One, Inc.** and **Wholesale Carrier Services, Inc.** filed a [Joint Application](#) for Approval of a Pro Forma Intermediate Transfer of Control. The Pro Forma Restructuring involves an internal corporate reorganization of the indirect upstream ownership, in which ultimate control of **BCM One, Inc.** and **Wholesale Carrier Services, Inc.** does not change as a result. The Restructuring will not discontinue, reduce, or impair service to customers or change rates, terms, or conditions of service.

**CENTRAL
DISTRICT
SNAPS**



Last week, I had the opportunity make a double trip up to Supertalk MS to join Gerard on MidDays with

Gerard Gibert to discuss the updated Distributed Generation Rules. The following morning, I joined Mary on the Mary Wieden & You Show regarding the anticipation of rising costs of natural gas and how to be more energy efficient to help save money on utility bills this coming winter.

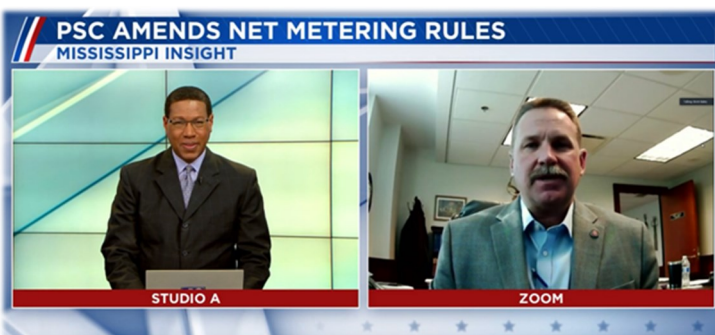


Scott Larsen, Senior Pastor at Brandon First United Methodist Church, joined us for the Commission's October Docket meeting.

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ICYMI: I joined Byron Brown on WJTV'S Mississippi Insight this past Sunday. Check out the segment: <https://www.wjtv.com/mississippi-insight/>



Thanks to the members of the MS Underground Utility Damage Prevention Committee for continuing to review and refine the laws and rules governing excavation activities near utilities. Everyone has a role in protecting these critical systems.

We joined Atmos Energy last week at the new Jackson Fire Department Station on Medgar Evers Boulevard to present a \$29,600 rebate check to the Department through Atmos Energy's Innovations Program and the Atmos Energy SmartChoice Program for the installation of a 125KW natural gas backup generator, energy efficient natural gas appliances, including tankless water heaters, 90% AFUE natural gas furnaces, smart thermostats, and cooking equipment. The installations will save the Department over \$2,000 a year in utility costs.



On Tuesday night I attended a meeting that took place at Gibson Memorial Church in Vicksburg. The meeting was hosted by State Rep. Kevin Ford in cooperation with

three local homeowner's associations (Openwood, Brentwood, and Fairways) at the request of the HOAs. The MPSC and Great River Utility Operating Company, LLC. were invited to present, provide information, discuss concerns, and answer questions. We appreciate Rep. Ford for the opportunity to participate in the meeting and share information on the role of the MPSC in ensuring just and reasonable rates for essential utility services.

It was my pleasure to speak at the International Right of Way Association's Mississippi Chapter Symposium and Region 6 Fall Forum in Pearl this morning. I appreciate Greg Thompson for inviting me to participate and I was followed by my good friend, MDOT Commissioner Willie Simmons. We must support those who work in this industry as they remain committed to improving quality of life through infrastructure development.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **26** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	15
Telecommunications	7
Natural Gas	3
Water/Sewer	1

Last week, the Central District received a total of **162** 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.