

December 28, 2022



**FROM THE DESK OF
COMMISSIONER
BRENT BAILEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE**

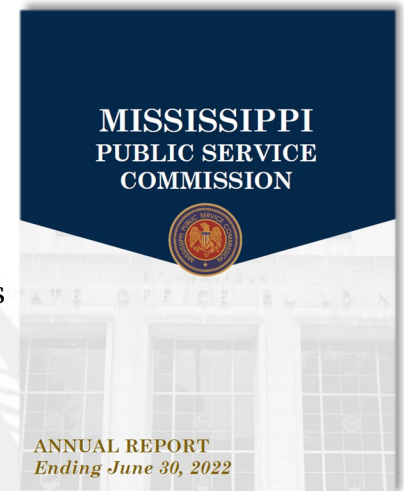


The Central District is pleased to bring you the latest information concerning utility rates, project developments, Public Service Commission actions and other news you can use. I hope you will find this information to be a useful resource to learn about the Public Service Commission, consumer issues 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

MS Public Service Commission Submits Its Annual Report to MS Legislature

Mississippi Code § 27-101-1 requires that each and every board, agency, commission and department of government of the State of Mississippi (with a few exceptions) shall prepare, on or before December 31 of each year, a detailed report covering the annual fiscal period ending the preceding June 30. Mississippi Code § 77-3-90 goes further to state that the annual reports shall be provided to the governor and the legislature and shall contain information about activities of the Commission, including copies of its general orders and regulations, comparative statistical data on the operation of the various public utilities in the state, comparison of rates in Mississippi with rates elsewhere, a detailed report of its investigative division, a report of pending matters before the commission, a digest of the principal decisions of the commission, and the Mississippi courts affecting public utilities.



Last week, the Commission submitted its [Annual Report](#) for the period beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. In compiling the report, the Commission staff strived to present a record of the official acts of the Commission. In addition to official acts, the report also contains an overview of the history and composition of the Commission and a description of the agency organization.

All formal notices, petitions, investigations, designations, etc. (applications) are required to be recorded and assigned a docket number prior to the initiation of any formal proceeding. During fiscal year 2022 (FY22), the Commission took action on 78 original applications. Most frequently before the Commission were applications for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) for facilities, notice of change of rates, and transfers of control. Overall, the Commission issued 168 Orders in FY22. No final Orders were appealed to a higher court. At the end of FY22, electric, water, sewer, natural gas, and telecommunication utilities held 1,256 CPCNs. Rural water associations held the largest number of CPCNs at 491.

The Commission's Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Division performs safety inspections including operation, maintenance, design, construction, installation, testing, and accident investigations. In FY22, this department performed 1,105 inspections identifying 196 violations. The Pipeline Safety Division also works with the Mississippi Natural Gas Division and Mississippi 811 to provide numerous training opportunities for system operators across the state. There were no incidents of death, injury requiring hospitalization, or property damage over \$50,000 in FY22.



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It is the responsibility of the Commission to monitor the quality and adequacy of service provided by the jurisdictional utilities including the implementation of approved rates and charges. During FY22, the Commission received 6,151 consumer complaints against utility companies. This breaks down as: Electric - 2,115; Telecommunications - 1,744; Water - 1,486; Sewer - 545; Natural Gas - 261. Most of these complaints were settled informally to the satisfaction of the complainant.

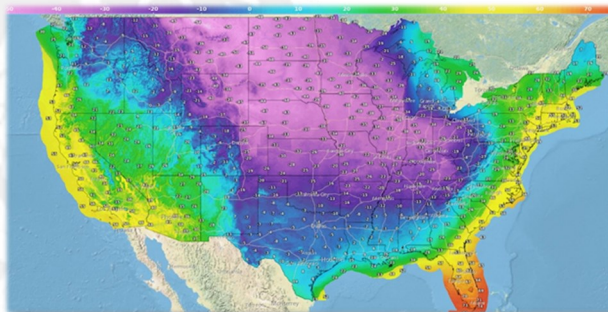
The Commission's "No Call" specialists registered nine (9) new telemarketers in FY22 bringing the total number of telemarketers registered to conduct business in the state to 178. There are a total of 1,756,182 Mississippi consumers on the state and federal "No Call" list. During FY22, the Commission received 65,568 complaints against telemarketers, robocalls and spam calls for violating the Mississippi Telephone Solicitation Act and the Caller ID Anti-Spoofing Act. The Commission assessed \$1,800,000 in fines and penalties.

For FY22, the Mississippi Legislature provided the Commission a General Fund Appropriation of \$4,355,157. The Commission also receives an annual federal grant from the USDOT Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration to support the functions of our Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Division. Including that federal grant of \$493,431, the Commission had a total budget of \$4,848,588 for FY22. The Commission's total operating expenses and expenditures for FY22 was \$4,744,647.

I invite you to review the [Commission's Annual Report Ending June 30, 2022.](#)

Pre-Christmas Arctic Blast Had Impact on Holidays

Cold arctic air gripped much of the United States late last week, combining with snow, ice and howling winds from a major winter storm roaring out of the Great Lakes to disrupt energy distribution and interrupt travel for millions of Americans ahead of the holiday weekend. Winter Storm Elliott impacted some 240 million people - more than two-thirds of the U.S. population - place them under winter weather warnings and advisories according to the National Weather Service. Record low temperatures across the Midwest, East Coast and parts of the South when combined with brutal winds drove down the real feel temperatures even further. Dozens of fatalities were caused by the storm, thousands of flights were cancelled, and hundreds of thousands lost power.



The extreme weather also drove energy demand higher and caused wholesale prices to spike. In many parts of the U.S., demand exceeded forecasted loads and load had to be managed through several means, including in the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) region. TVA began by appealing to businesses and the public to immediately reduce electric power use as much as possible. However, TVA eventually ordered rolling brief, intermittent outages from 15 - 60 minutes throughout its service area to reduce stress and power on its grid. Mississippi Power Co. also experienced a historic demand for power.

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the grid operator for Entergy Mississippi and Cooperative Energy, went as far as declaring a Maximum Generation Emergency Event Step 2a because of unplanned generation outages and higher than forecasted loads. The Step 2 called for automatic implementation of demand management programs, purchase of emergency power, public appeals for energy conservation and more. Thankfully, no rolling brownouts or blackouts were ordered.



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Due to the high winds that accompanied the cold front that moved into the state last Thursday night, Entergy Mississippi experienced a peak outage of 9,860 customers at 8:30pm on December 22. Entergy identified 14 broken poles, 77 spans of downed wire, 15 damaged transformers as well as other minor damages to the system. Except for a few single, scattered customers, the majority of customers were restored by 10 pm on December 23. Electric utilities continued to battle through outages on Christmas Eve driven by high loads and equipment failures. Natural gas utilities reported record gas demand and yet only one or two isolated issues with low pressure was reported that was resolved quickly.

TVA News

On December 21, the U.S. Senate approved six nominees to the Tennessee Valley Authority's board, restoring it to its full nine-member size for the first time in more than 20 months. One of the new board members is William Renick Sr., a former mayor of Pontotoc, Mississippi, who was backed by both of Mississippi's senators. Other new board members include: Robert Klein, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Vice President; Michelle Moore, a sustainability team leader in the Obama administration; Beth Geer, a chief of staff to then Vice President Al Gore Jr.; Adam "Wade" White, a county judge in Lyon County, Kentucky; Joe Ritch, a Huntsville, Alabama, attorney and former TVA Chairman.

NARUC News

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' (NARUC) Regulatory Training Initiative, [*Best Practices for Sustainable Commercial EV Rates and PURPA 111\(d\) Implementation*](#) looks at the 2022 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act amendments to PURPA Section 111d, requiring regulators and nonregulated utilities to consider new rates to support transportation electrification. The paper explores elements of commercial EV rate design and provides several examples of recently adopted commercial EV rates that could serve as helpful models for designing long-term, sustainable solutions for improving the economics of commercial EV charging, without subsidizing EV charging or shifting costs to other customers.

A new report from NARUC's Center for Partnerships and Innovation offers essential information to aid policymakers and regulators in navigating decarbonization goals. [*Potential State Regulatory Pathways to Facilitate Low-Carbon Fuels*](#) provides informational context for state utility regulators to understand the impacts and challenges of broader integration of low-carbon fuels such as hydrogen and renewable natural gas. State public utility commissions will play an integral role in establishing regulatory frameworks for low-carbon fuels and make decisions about these emerging technologies while keeping safety, reliability, and affordability top-of-mind.

Entergy Strengthens Emission Reduction Commitments

Entergy Corporation [*plans to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions*](#) from all electric and natural gas operations across its businesses by 2050. In doing so, it established interim benchmarks on its path to net-zero. Entergy aims to reduce owned and purchased emissions 50% from 2000 levels by 2030 and to have 50% carbon-free power generation capacity by 2030. The utility said its 2030 carbon-free capacity will be supplied by nuclear, solar, wind, hydropower and energy storage. Reaching the goal could be challenged as growth in demand due to increased electrification of systems traditionally powered by fossil fuels could lead to 60% more electricity production by 2050. Entergy is also counting on new technologies to become commercially viable by 2035.



Last Week at the MPSC

- ✎ **Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC** filed its [Response](#) to the 1st Set of Data Requests made by the **Public Utilities Staff** in regards to the Approval of the Sale and Transfer of Certain Assets, Facilities, Property, and Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity for the Provision of Wastewater Disposal Service in **Claiborne**, **Forrest**, **Harrison**, **Oktibbeha**, and **Rankin Counties**.
- ✎ **The Commission** issued an [Order](#) approving the Petition of **Mississippi Power Company** for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Authorizing the Acquisition, Construction, and Operation of Transmission Substations and Related Facilities and Rights-Of-Way in **Perry** and **Lamar Counties**.
- ✎ **The Commission** published the [Recommended Order](#) of the Hearing Examiner approving **Mississippi Power Company's** Petition for a Facilities Certificate Authorizing the Construction, Acquisition, Extension, Operation and Maintenance of Transmission Substations and Related Facilities and Rights-Of-Way in **Clarke** and **Hancock Counties**. **Mississippi Power Company's** seeks to construct a new 115kV switching substation, associated 115kV line facilities, and all related equipment and facilities needed to provide transmission interconnection to the **Cane Creek Solar** generating facility on **Mississippi Power Company's** Laurel North - Pachuta 115kV transmission line; and A new 115kV switching substation, associated 115kV line facilities, and all related equipment and facilities needed to provide transmission interconnection to the **Moonshot Solar** generating facility on **Mississippi Power Company's** Kiln - Nasa North SS 115kV transmission line. For **Cane Creek**, the total estimated projected cost of constructing the facilities is \$5,315,000 and for **Moonshot**, the total estimated cost of constructing the facilities is \$5,340,000. Each individual entity will be responsible for reimbursing **Mississippi Power Company** for all actual construction costs, along with monthly interconnection O&M and administrative costs.
- ✎ **Atmos Energy Corporation** filed its [Revised System Integrity Rider](#). **Atmos Energy Corporation** requests that the **Commission** accept this revised version of the previously approved tariff due to inadvertently omitted Rate Schedules, which accurately reflects the rates to customers taking service under these Rate Schedules, and that this be reflected in the **Commission's** records as the current approved version of the tariff.
- ✎ **Atmos Energy Corporation** filed its [Application](#) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to expand its natural gas service in **Grenada** and **Montgomery Counties** and to abandon an existing certificated area in **Grenada County**.
- ✎ **CenterPoint Energy** made its [Compliance Filing](#) in accordance with the **Commission's** directive requiring certain gas utilities to notify their customers of the various organizations or programs which are available to assist customers with payment of natural gas bills this winter.

REMINDER: *The MPSC offices will be closed on January 2 in observation of the New Year's Day holiday.*



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



CENTRAL DISTRICT SNAPS



I hope you all had a very Merry Christmas! Rhonda and I traveled to Scott County to be with her family on Christmas Eve (pictured above) and we then traveled to Oktibbeha County to be with my family on Christmas Day (pictured left). Be safe as you head into the New Year, and we look forward to reconnecting with you in 2023! It is going to be a busy one!!

Happy New Year

*From Commissioner Brent Bailey
and staff members of the Central District*

2023



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **19** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	12
Natural Gas	3
Water/Sewer	2
Telecommunications	2

Last week, the Central District received a total of **83** 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.