

April 28, 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.

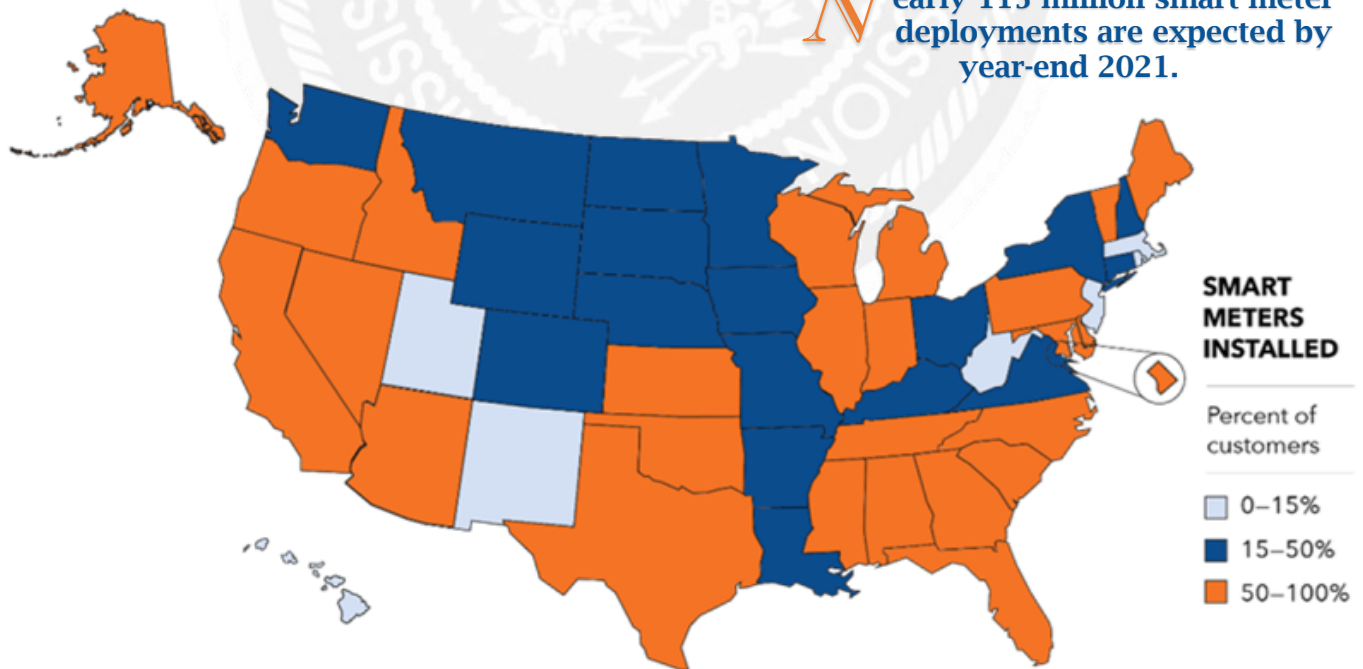
Brent Bailey

Advanced Metering Infrastructure: Smarter Grid, More Informed Customers

Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) is an integrated system of meters, communications networks and data management systems that allow two-way interaction between a utility and its customers. AMI allows a utility company to capture real-time or near real-time energy consumption, usage patterns, demand and other related information. In turn, customers can access and utilize that data to manage consumption, track energy efficiency improvements, choose rate and pricing options that best suit in-home habits, and much more. Utilities can also more quickly find and respond to outages, identify damaged equipment, and greatly speed up disconnects/reconnects.

Mass deployment of AMI - also known as smart meters - began more than a decade ago. As of year-end 2019, electric companies around the nation had installed 99 million smart meters. Based on survey results and approved plans, it is estimated that 107 million smart meters were deployed by year-end 2020, covering 75 percent of U.S. households.

Nearly 115 million smart meter deployments are expected by year-end 2021.



SMART METER DEPLOYMENTS BY STATE, 2019



Continued...

In the United States, 58 investor-owned electric companies have fully deployed smart meters. **That figure includes Mississippi Power Company (MPCo) who recently completed deployment of smart meters to its approximately 187,000 customers.** The Mississippi Public Service Commission (Commission) approved MPCo's Petition for Facilities Certificate to deploy and operate AMI equipment on April 10, 2018. MPCo completed the \$39 million project in the third quarter of 2020. By reducing the number of field personnel and fleet resources needed to physically read meters, increasing operational efficiencies, and improving customer value through new services, it is projected that annual savings of over \$3.6 million will be gained over the initial 17-year period (2-year deployment plus 15-year useful life of meter).



MPCo customers who choose to opt-out of AMI must pay an upfront fee of \$286 as well as an additional monthly fee of \$44. The upfront fee will cover programming costs, opt-out processing costs, and other expenses and the monthly fee will cover the employee labor and vehicle costs for the manual meter reads. To date, only 11 customers have chosen to opt-out.

Entergy Mississippi LLC (EML) was given

approval by the Commission to proceed with the deployment of its AMI network and meters on May 4, 2017. The deployment and installation of 453,000 advanced meters on customers' premises was projected to take approximately three years to complete at a total project cost of \$136 million. **As of EML's most recent quarterly update (March 2021), 371,756 (318,180 residential and 53,576 commercial) AMI meters have been installed.** Completion of all meter installations is expected by the end of the year. The AMI system is projected to provide EML customers a net benefit of \$52 million over the 15-year life of the AMI assets.

EML residential customers who choose to opt-out will incur a one-time service and administration fee in the amount of \$91.78 (or \$98.60 if you choose to opt-out after your advanced meter has already been installed), in addition to a monthly manual meter-reading fee of \$26.73, which will be added to your monthly bill. Less than 200 EML customers have executed the opt-out agreement.

Some form of AMI or automated meter reading (AMR) has been utilized by electric utilities in Mississippi since 2003 when Tombigbee Electric Power Association installed Landis+Gyr (PLC) technology meters. Since then, most electric power associations in the state have completed AMI projects.



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Although its use continues to evolve, AMI is unlocking ways for utilities to deliver safe, reliable and affordable electricity, and for customers to take a more active role in managing and navigating their energy usage. I urge customers to take advantage of the full range of programs, services and benefits that AMI offers. These include:

- ***New online tools to help you better manage your energy usage and potentially save money on your bills;***
- ***Improved customer service due to the deeper level of insight into your energy usage;***
- ***More payment options and pricing structures;***
- ***Enhanced reliability due to quicker and more accurate detection of outages;***
- ***Reduced operating costs due to the elimination of on-site meter reading;***
- ***Faster detection of electricity theft;***
- ***Faster connection and disconnection of service.***

Like any new technology platform, there will be early adopters and late bloomers. I encourage the investor-owned electric utilities to provide customers with easy-to-use, self-guided access to the information they need to confidently utilize the full suite of services and have a positive experience. A customer education program that focuses on ease of customer participation and greatest savings potential should be a winning combination. [Entergy Mississippi](#) and [Mississippi Power Company](#) provide detailed FAQs on their website for customers to learn more about the smart meters installed at their homes.



OTHER NEWS

President Biden Commits to Cutting GHG Emissions 50% by 2030 Under the Paris Agreement

As part of a two-day virtual climate summit hosted by the United States, President Biden committed the U.S. to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 50%-52% below its 2005 emissions levels by 2030. The previous U.S. pledge for the Paris Agreement, set by President Obama before President Trump withdrew the U.S. from the deal, was a cut of 26 percent to 28 percent by 2025. As part of the Paris accord, which is not legally binding, countries are supposed to regularly update their pledges. After President Biden entered office in January 2021, he immediately moved to reenter the U.S. in the Paris Agreement.

The Biden administration is still in the process of developing a plan for achieving the stated reductions and plans to release those details in a future report. Depending on the regulatory directives or statutory ambitions outlined in the plan, Mississippi's electricity generation resource mix could be influenced by those federal actions.

DOE Kicks Off 100-Day Plan to Address Cybersecurity Risks to the U.S. Electric System

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) launched an initiative to enhance the cybersecurity of electric utilities' industrial control systems (ICS) and secure the energy sector supply chain. This 100-day plan—a coordinated effort between DOE, the electricity industry, and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)—represents swift, aggressive actions to confront cyber threats from adversaries who seek to compromise critical systems that are essential to U.S. national and economic security.



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Over the next 100 days, DOE's Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)—in partnership with electric utilities—will continue to advance technologies and install systems that will provide cyber visibility, detection, and response capabilities for industrial control systems of electric utilities.

In addition, DOE released a new Request for Information (RFI) to seek input from electric utilities, energy companies, academia, research laboratories, government agencies, and other stakeholders to inform future recommendations for supply chain security in U.S. energy systems. The RFI is available on the Office of Electricity's web page, www.energy.gov/oe/securing-critical-electric-infrastructure, and responses will be due by Monday, June 7, 2021.

Census Releases House Apportionment for Next Decade

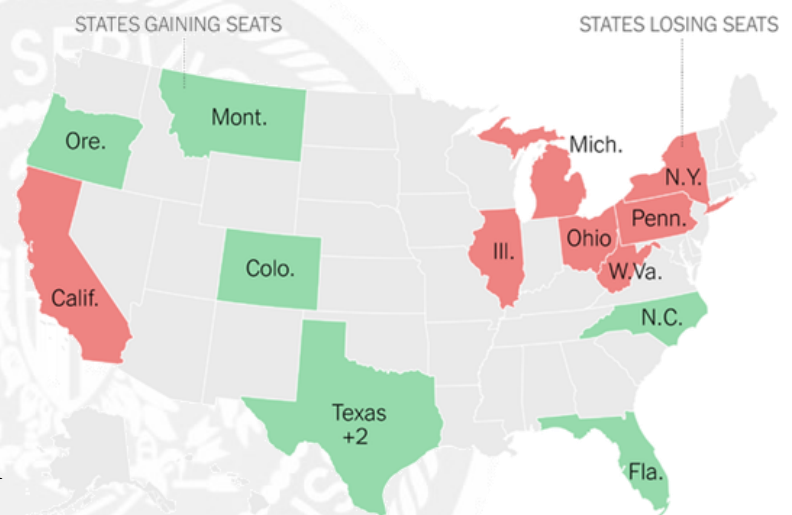
Texas will gain two congressional seats, while a number of Northeast and Midwest states will see their delegations shrink slightly, according to the new apportionment figures released Monday by the Census Bureau.

Texas, which had 36 congressional seats for the past decade, will elect two additional members of the House in next year's midterm elections. Other states that will add a single House seat: Colorado, Florida, Montana, North Carolina and Oregon. Meanwhile, seven states each lost a seat. Other than California, they were all east of the Mississippi River: Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Although Mississippi will retain its four congressional seats in the U.S. House, Mississippi had a decline in population by 0.2% to 2,967,297. Only Illinois, West Virginia and Mississippi recorded population declines. Furthermore, the South as a region saw an overall growth in population of 10.2%. The U.S. population now stands at 331,449,281. Another interesting matter will be how the population has shifted within and across Mississippi counties. Those figures will be released in August.

U.S. House Representation Changes Based on the 2020 Census

Change of one seat in all highlighted states except Texas



CENTRAL DISTRICT OUTREACH

George and Tina, two of our Central District team members in our Division of Consumer Services, handed out some information from our office at the Spring Break-Out Health and Wellness Fair in Vicksburg last Friday.





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Let us know of any upcoming events in your area that would be a great opportunity for us to come share some good info from the Central District!



Last week at the MPSC

- ✉ The Commission issued an [Order](#) permitting reply comments for an additional seven days for Docket No. 2021-AD-19, the Order Establishing Docket to Review the Efficacy and Fairness of the Net Metering and Interconnection Rules.
- ✉ The following entities have filed a motion to intervene in the Mississippi Public Service Commission's Docket Number 2021-AD-52 Order Establishing Docket to Investigate the Membership of Entergy Mississippi, LLC in Midcontinent Independent System Operator: [Entergy MS, LLC](#); [Cooperative Energy](#).
- ✉ The following entities have made their informational lifeline tariff filing: [Delta Fiber, LLC](#); [4-County Fiber LLC](#).
- ✉ **Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC** [filed](#) its Supplemental Petition for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity authorizing them to operate as a public utility for the provision of water service in certain counties in the state of Mississippi. **Great River Utility Operating Co., LLC** also filed a [Supplemental Petition for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity](#) authorizing them to operate as a public utility for the provision of wastewater disposal service in certain counties (including **Hinds, Lauderdale and Warren**) in the state of Mississippi. The filings seek to clarify the rate treatment of certain assets being acquired by Great River Utility.
- ✉ **Mississippi Power Company** [filed](#) its Second Motion for Extension of Time regarding its 2021 System Restoration Rider. **Mississippi Power Company** filed a [Petition for Facilities Certificate](#) for the construction, acquisition, extension, operation and maintenance of transmission and related facilities and rights-of-way in South Mississippi in support of the [repowering project](#) at Cooperative Energy's Plant Morrow to facilitate the MISO [interconnection and maintain](#) NERC compliance standards.
- ✉ The Northern Commissioner, after hearing and review, [granted the Certificate](#) for the 200 MW solar pv + 50 MW battery storage facility, also known as the **MS Solar 5 LLC**, to be located in Lowndes County.



Last week, our Consumer Complaint Specialists handled a total of **30** complaints in the Central District.

Electric Companies	22
Telecommunications	3
Natural Gas	3
Water/Sewer	2

Last week, the Central District received a total of **225** 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.