

Mississippi Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Update

MPSC Regular Meeting and Docket Call – September 12

At the September 12, 2017, MPSC Regular Meeting ([see agenda](#)), the Commission acted on the following items of interest to clean energy stakeholders:

Docket No. 2010-AD-2: Energy Efficiency Programs – On July 5, 2016, the MPSC adopted an [Order](#) stating that the Commission would adopt specific numerical energy savings targets for programs in Comprehensive Portfolio Plans on or before September 30, 2017. April 4, 2017, the MPSC adopted an [Order Requesting Comments](#) to inform and guide the Commission in its selection and adoption of savings targets. Numerous stakeholders, including [Entergy](#) and [25x'25](#), submitted comments.

On August 31, 2017, Entergy filed a [Motion for Commission Consideration of Additional Information for Energy Efficiency Comprehensive Phase Policy](#). The motion asks the MPSC to delay the setting of energy savings targets and/or implementation of Phase II energy efficiency programs (Comprehensive Portfolio) until the beginning of the year 2020. [25x'25](#) and [Sierra Club](#) filed responses opposing the motion and urged the MPSC to maintain the timelines as outlined in the Order dated July 5, 2016. Disappointingly, the Public Utilities Staff [joined with Entergy](#) in support of the motion.

Instead of sticking with timelines established over a year ago, the MPSC moved on September 12, 2017, to open a public comment period ([Order Seeking Comments on Proposed Rule Modification](#)) and allow stakeholders to respond to the MPSC's proposed amendments to Rule 29 (Conservation and Energy Efficiency Programs) that effectively **permanently delay** the setting of energy savings targets or the implementation of the Comprehensive Portfolio of energy efficiency programs. According to MPSC's Rule 29, Comprehensive Portfolio programs would provide "significant cost-effective energy-efficiency improvements in all categories of retail customers."

The September 12, 2017 Order also suspends the July 5, 2016 Order that established Comprehensive Portfolio energy efficiency program adoption timelines. In 25x'25's view, delaying the implementation will prevent many homeowners and businesses from accessing technical and financial resources that will further increase energy savings, lower energy use, and significantly reduce customers' bills.

Public comments are due on October 26, 2017. All stakeholders are encouraged to file comments, remind Commissioners about the value of energy efficiency programs to all customer classes, and urge the Commission to ditch this misguided effort to roll back energy efficiency and establish energy savings targets before the end of the year.

Next Meeting of the MPSC – The [next regular meeting](#) of the MPSC will take place on **October 5, 2017, at 10 am** in the MPSC Hearing Room to consider the Docket and other matters.

Hattiesburg Solar Energy Facility Dedicated

Silicon Ranch and Mississippi Power, and in partnership with Area Development Partnership, Forrest County and the City of Hattiesburg, held [a dedication event for the Hattiesburg Solar Energy Facility](#) on Friday, September 15. The 50-MW Hattiesburg Solar Energy Facility – which can produce enough energy to supply power to approximately 6,500 homes – features approximately 200,000 panels and is located on 450 acres. At its peak, the project's construction supported 350 jobs, many of which were filled by local labor and local subcontractors.



Gov. Bryant to Serve as Chairman of the Southern States Energy Board

Governor Phil Bryant was recently selected to serve as Chairman of the Southern State Energy Board (SSEB). The SSEB is an interstate compact, composed of governors and state legislators from sixteen southern states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as a presidential appointee. Learn more about the SSEB [HERE](#). This will be Gov. Bryant's second time to Chair the SSEB. He also was Chairman in 2013 and hosted the [SSEB Annual Meeting](#) in Biloxi, MS.

Profiles in American Solar Manufacturing

Attala Steel in Kosciusko, MS was recently highlighted in a new report call [Profiles in American Solar Manufacturing](#). The company buys American steel and produces steel I-beams for mounting and racking systems for close to a dozen American solar racking, engineering, procurement and construction companies. Among the community's largest employers, Attala Steel's fortunes are tied directly to the success of the solar industry, said company president and CEO Billy Atwood.

Energy Star Fact Sheet for Mississippi

For more than 20 years, EPA's ENERGY STAR program has been America's resource for saving energy and protecting the environment. ENERGY STAR has provided a [Mississippi Fact Sheet](#) highlighting the organizations and businesses that are participating in the program.

Celebrate Energy Awareness Day with MDA Energy and Natural Resources Division

Mississippi celebrates Energy Awareness Day on October 5, 2017, as part of Energy Awareness Month. This annual event features innovative and interactive exhibits focused on energy resources, science, environmental awareness, and technology for students, educators, and consumers. Join MDA and others at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum in Jackson starting at 9 am. Contact [Lisa Campbell](#) at 601.359.6641 to sponsor or volunteer.

ICF Seeks Lead Energy Efficiency Account Manager

ICF is currently seeking a Lead Account Manager for its Commercial Energy Division to provide leadership and support ICF's energy efficiency programs in Jackson, Mississippi. ICF is the energy efficiency program administrator for Entergy. A link to the job posting is [here](#). This is a very good opportunity to do a lot of good in Mississippi.

Accelerating Energy Efficiency Workshop

The MDA's Energy and Natural Resources Division along with the University of Southern Mississippi hosted an Energy Efficiency Workshop in Hattiesburg on September 28, 2017. This was the first of a series of EE Workshops that is planned to be conducted around the state. Watch for more workshop announcements in the future.

At the Hattiesburg workshop, participants heard from USM Sustainability Coordinator Melissa Covington-Olsen; Energy consultants Donnie Thompson and Wally Majors; Hattiesburg Mayor Toby Baker; MS Power Energy Efficiency Team Leader Jason Moak; and MDA-ENRD Energy Efficiency Project Manager Terrence Spears. Participants were also treated to a tour of the [MS Polymer Institute](#) and [The Accelerator](#).

EE Spotlight: Atmos Energy SmartChoice – Large Commercial and Industrial Program

For [Large Commercial and Industrial](#) customers with Atmos Energy, they offer prescriptive rebates up to \$3500 for commercial cooking, water heating, heating, and boiler components. Also, Atmos offers a custom program that helps pay for up to 50% of project costs. These projects include steam traps, pipe insulation, linkless controls on boilers, etc. Atmos will have an engineer come in to help identify projects and see them through to completion. Many of these projects are quick paybacks with Atmos Energy covering up to 50% of the project cost.

Case Study: Broadway Laundry – Greenville, Mississippi. Broadway Laundry was able to replace 30 failed open steam traps that were blowing wet steam through their system, and not utilizing latent heat in the drying process. Also, this site contained 600 feet of bare steam pipe that was insulated in order to prevent heat loss. This project was incentivized by Atmos Energy and covered 50% of the project cost and saved the customer an estimated 96,000 therms per year. The payback was realized in just over 1 month of the project completion.

Greenwood Utilities to Close Henderson Generation Station in May 2018

Demand for the [50-year-old Henderson Station's](#) electricity fell after many Mississippi utilities joined the multi-state grid manager Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). Other power plants that sell power through MISO offer cheaper electricity. Revenues from the Henderson Station no longer

covers costs and maintenance is difficult because many machines are so old that they require custom-made parts. Check out the latest [Mississippi Energy Profile](#) and [statistics](#) on the Henderson Station.

Kemper Update

On July 6, The Commission adopted an [Order](#) that requires all parties to expeditiously work to settle all outstanding matters associated with the Kemper Project. The Commission gave all parties 45 days (on or about August 21) to [agree to and file a settlement](#) of rates and others issues with the Commission.

On August 21, Mississippi Power submitted a [Settlement Rate Filing](#) to the Public Utilities Staff (PUS) and all interveners in the Kemper Settlement Docket (2017-AD-112). However, a settlement was not reached. The MPSC reviewed the filings and [ordered an extension of the deadline](#) to September 5 while encouraging the parties to continue negotiations. After no settlement was reached, the MPSC again extended the negotiations deadline to September 9. The PUS, interveners and Mississippi Power Co. again failed to agree on how much money customers should pay for existing Kemper assets.

Southern Company (MS Power's parent company) has already absorbed almost \$6 billion in losses on the \$7.5 billion plant, after suspending efforts to complete the gasifier. The commission allowed the company to raise rates by 15 percent in 2015 to recover about \$840 million for part of the plant that has been burning natural gas since 2014. But that leaves hundreds of millions on the table to be resolved in a settlement.

At the MPSC regular meeting on September 12, the Commission went into executive session to further discuss the status of negotiations. The MPSC then unanimously decided to start the hearing process that could decide the fate of the plant by January 2018. An [Order](#) outlining a series of filing dates for the parties to submit testimonies and evidence for their cases was issued. The process will allow commissioners to ask questions, witnesses to testify, and cross examination to occur so commissioners will have factual evidence for the terms that the company and Public Utilities Staff have proposed. Hearings on this matter shall be held before the Commission beginning at 9:00 a.m. on December 4, 2017.

The MPSC also approved its update report to the state legislature required under the base load act relating to the Kemper Project. The report is a high level review of the facts to date.

In addition, the [June 2017 Independent Monitor Report](#) is now online for review.

Regional Issues

Report Examines Wind Energy Potential in the Southeast

ScottMadden, Inc. and the Southeastern Wind Coalition (SEWC) have partnered in an effort to better understand the opportunities and barriers facing wind energy in the Southeast. The report, "[Understanding Wind Energy Potential in the Southeast](#)," provides an overview of the approach and key findings from the Opportunities and Barriers analysis, and assesses why the Southeast is different than the rest of the country in adopting wind energy and what might cause wind energy to take off in the Southeast in the future.

AR Energy Office Issues RFP for Statewide Energy Efficiency Financing Program

The Arkansas Energy Office (AEO) is seeking a contractor to oversee the design and ongoing implementation of a third-party statewide energy efficiency financing program. The AEO issues this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit program designs as well as the capacity and experience needed to develop and implement an energy efficiency financing program (“Financing Program”) to serve residential customers of Arkansas’ seven investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities (IOUs).

Please See the Documents Below for Full Details:

[Request For Proposals Bid Solicitation: Third Party Financing Program](#)

[Attachment A: Order No. 7 of Docket 13-002-U of the Arkansas Public Service Commission](#)

[Attachment B: Order No. 22 of Docket 13-002-U of the Arkansas Public Service Commission](#)

Arkansas Net Metering Working Group Offers Dueling Recommendations

The Net Metering Working Group was created by the AR Public Service Commission (at the request of the General Assembly) to examine net metering and make recommendations to the three-member commission on what changes to make (if any) to the net-metering rate structure going forward. However, the pro-net metering stakeholders and the stakeholders that want to rework how net metering credits are calculated filed [two separate, competing recommendations](#). A hearing before the Public Service Commission is scheduled for Nov. 30.

\$4M Solar Farm Donated to Univ. of Louisiana-Lafayette

Louisiana Generating LLC, a subsidiary of NRG, is contributing \$4 million to build the solar research farm and donating \$1 million to the UL Foundation to maintain and operate the project for 25 years. The 1.1-MW solar farm will cover 6 acres and consist of 5,000 panels that will test three types of commercial-grade solar panels under Louisiana weather conditions. While being a research and teaching tool, the solar farm will also generate power for the university offsetting about 3% of power needs.

Univ. of Florida and Others Push SPARC

The USDA-NIFA has [announced](#) a \$15 million dollar award to support the Southeast Partnership for Advanced Renewables from Carinata (SPARC) project. The project aims to develop a resilient Brassica carinata (carinata) based biofuel and bioproduct supply chain in the Southeast. The military and commercial aviation industries are interested in the fuel products from carinata.

50-MW Biomass CHP Plant Completed in Georgia

Constellation owns and operates the [biomass-fueled plant](#), which supplies steam to Proctor & Gamble’s Albany, Georgia, paper manufacturing facility and generates electricity to supply the local utility, Georgia Power. Additionally, steam from the plant will be used to power an 8.5-MW steam-to-electricity generator at the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany. P&G has made a corporate commitment to obtain 30% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020. The plant’s fuel supply will come from locally abundant biomass.

GA Power Continues Work on Vogtle Nuclear Project

The Georgia PSC has [voted unanimously](#) to accept a scheduling order on the troubled Plant Vogtle 3 & 4 nuclear generation expansion. The project has been plagued by delays and cost overruns capped by the bankruptcy of its main contractor, Westinghouse. A similar project in South Carolina has been abandoned. An analyses by the GA PSC staff shows the Vogtle project may never be economically viable, but the commissioners have now signaled they want the project to move forward - as has

Georgia Power. The GA PSC will decide next February [whether or not to continue](#) with the nuclear plant expansion project.

GA Power Offers Renewable Energy Program for C&I Customers

The new [Renewable Energy Development Initiative](#) (REDI) allows participating customers to receive hourly credits matching actual production as well as the solar Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) from up to 200 MW of renewable resources procured under REDI. The program is designed to help commercial and industrial customers to meet their sustainability goals. GA Power expects to add up to 1,600 MW of additional renewable energy by 2021 through REDI and other programs. GA Power now has 846 MW of solar energy resources in operation

TVA Opens New Solar Farm at Pending Nat Gas Plant Site

TVA threw the switch on a new \$1.3 million, 1 MW [solar installation](#) comprised of 3,116 panels — enough renewable energy to power about 120 homes. The farm represents the TVA's first foray into sizable solar production, as it has primarily only purchased solar power from third parties.

Wood Pellets as a Substitute for Coal in Power Stations

This short paper discusses a renewable biomass-based strategy for the power sector that is good for the environment and offers a low-cost method of reducing CO2 emissions while providing essential baseload power to the grid. The white paper is [HERE](#). Another report out of Georgia found that the use of wood pellets for domestic power production is feasible if provided the same tax credits and other incentives needed to make solar and wind energy competitive.

General Motors Going 100% Green at Ohio, Indiana Manufacturing Plants

The four General Motors plants in Ohio and three plants in Indiana will be supplied with 100% green electricity by the end of 2018. GM has signed long-term, fixed price contracts for all of the power from two new wind farms for a total of 200 MWs. GM has [set a target](#) of meeting all its electricity needs for its global operations with renewable energy by 2050.

National Issues

Corporate Renewable Energy Buyers Look Beyond Price

Apex Clean Energy partnered with GreenBiz Group to produce an [in-depth study](#) on the state of the corporate renewable energy purchasing market. Corporations increasingly see renewable energy as an opportunity to generate additional revenue, mitigate risks, manage energy costs and differentiate themselves from other companies.

EPA Proposes Further Reduction of Renewable Fuel Blending

The EPA shocked the U.S. biofuels industry on Sept. 26 when it published a [notice of data availability](#) (NODA) concerning potential reductions in renewable volume obligations (RVOs) for 2018 and 2019 under the Renewable Fuel Standard. Stakeholders just submitted comments to EPA in July and August in response to its [proposed rule](#) to set 2018 RVOs. Biofuels stakeholders across the board [criticized EPA's action](#).

Energy Efficiency Standards for Appliances, Lighting and Equipment

The Environmental and Energy Study Institute have developed a new [Fact Sheet](#) that discusses the role and benefits of efficiency standards. More than 40 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States is used for operating buildings, and most of that energy goes toward appliances and building-related equipment. Efficiency standards cover more than 60 categories of products, from dishwashers to vending machines to lighting technologies. Implementing these standards reduced our national energy bill by about \$80 billion in 2015, the equivalent of the electricity needs of nearly one in three American households.

New Paper Models Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency could serve as an inexpensive way to meet future electricity demand and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The more costly electricity is, the more important energy efficiency becomes. A Nicholas Institute [working paper](#) offers a new approach to energy efficiency modeling, one that allows for comparisons of investments in energy efficiency with investments in power plants.

There are Over 341,000 Wind Turbines on the Planet

According to the [Global Wind Energy Council](#) (GWEC), at the end of 2016 more than 341,000 wind turbines were spinning and generating energy. The 2016 market was global installed capacity at nearly 487,000 MWs led by China, the US, Germany, and India. The US capacity total is more than 82,000 MWs. The US industry now employs more than 100,000 people and has more than 18,000 MWs under construction or in advanced stages of development.

Record Quarter for US Behind-the-Meter Energy Storage

In the second quarter of 2017, 443 residential and commercial energy storage systems were deployed across the United States. Lithium-ion batteries dominated the energy storage market. The behind-the-meter segment represented 19% of the 2016 market. This will grow to 26% in 2017 and 52% by 2022.



DOE SunShot Initiative Achieves Solar Cost Goal

Through research and other programs that contributed to the rapid cost declines in solar photovoltaic (PV) hardware, the average price of utility-scale solar is now 6 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh). According to a new [report](#) from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, prices of utility-scale solar photovoltaic systems have fallen by about 30% over the past year and have been the primary driver of

cost reductions for solar energy. The more stubborn “soft” costs like labor, permitting, interconnection, customer acquisition, financing, and grid integration, remain challenges.

"Utility-Scale Solar 2016" Finds Solar Power Increasingly Competitive

This [report](#) provides data-driven analysis of the utility-scale solar project fleet in the United States. [Key finding include](#): The utility-scale PV market continues to expand geographically across the U.S., with 29 states home to one or more utility-scale (>5 MW) solar projects at the end of 2016; Nearly 80% of all new utility-scale PV employ single-axis tracking; Median installed PV project prices have fallen by two-thirds since the 2007-2009 period, to \$2.2/WAC (or \$1.7/WDC) for projects completed in 2016; The cumulative net AC capacity factors of individual PV projects is 26.3%. A webinar about the report will be held on October 11th at 12:00 noon CT. Register for the webinar at: <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/v4bk0dmmveen&eom> (link is external).

Berkeley Lab has also announce the 10th edition of its annual [Tracking the Sun](#) report. This year's report summarizes installed price trends for residential and non-residential photovoltaic (PV) systems installed in the United States through year-end 2016, with additional data for the first half of 2017. See the [report summary here](#).

ITC Rules Solar Imports are Hurting Manufacturers; Tariffs Likely

Just as the U.S. is hitting its stride in the solar market and achieving new solar pricing and utilization goals, the U.S. International Trade Commission voted 4-0 on Sept. 22 to find that imports of cheap solar panels have caused injury to domestic solar manufacturers, setting up a high-stakes tariff decision for President Trump. If President Trump approves the petitioners' tariff request, the solar industry says impacts on new solar deployment would be immense and could put 88,000 solar jobs at risk. Learn more about the decision [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

Pro Football and Energy Efficiency – How Stadiums Stack Up

Sport teams are using cutting-edge energy efficiency technologies and strategies to minimize their energy usage. NFL stadiums are some of the largest sport venues in America and require large amounts of energy to operate. But also provide plenty of opportunities for savings. For example:

MetLife Stadium - Home to the New York Giants and Jets: Despite being twice as large as the old Giants Stadium it replaced in 2010, MetLife Stadium consumes 30% less energy.

CenturyLink Field - Home of the Seattle Seahawks: The facility implemented a robust sustainability program, resulting in a 21% reduction in annual energy costs—even in the face of rising visitor attendance.

Lincoln Financial Field - Home of the Philadelphia Eagles. This facility is considered one of the “greenest” stadiums in the world. Through a variety of conservation programs and the addition of more than 11,000 solar panels and 14 wind turbines, the team was able to reduce its energy bills by 33%.

Mercedes-Benz Stadium - The new home of the Atlanta Falcons.

Learn more in the report [Taking the Field: Advancing Energy and Water Efficiency in Sports Venues](#).