

Florida Public Service Commission

Consumer E-Newsletter

April 2007

Chairman



Lisa Polak Edgar

Our world and our country have changed dramatically during the last 20 years. We see the changes in our homes, our stores and of course at the gas pump.

As one of the fastest growing states in America, Florida has also seen a great boom in its economy, population and energy consumption. With more than 17 million citizens and nearly 1,000 new residents arriving daily, the demand for electricity alone is expected to increase by close to 30 percent over the next decade.

To promote greater energy and economic security in the state, the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) is encouraging the growth of renewable generation. Recently adopted rules provide developers of renewable energy a greater variety of pricing

Report Shows Florida's Electric Transmission System Reliable

The Florida Public Service Commission (Commission) has found that Florida's electric transmission system is adequate to provide reliable service to retail customers. The [Report on Transmission System Reliability and Response to Emergency Contingency Conditions in the State of Florida](#) states that, in order to keep up with population growth, Peninsular Florida's electric utilities plan to add an additional 1,109 miles of transmission lines to the system over the next five years.

The report also covered coordinating electric transmission in the region surrounding Orlando and fairly allocating the cost of new transmission lines needed to transmit power from new generation facilities in Polk County. The Commission will continue to actively participate in [Florida Reliability Coordinating Council](#) meetings to monitor the utilities' progress toward achieving those goals.

The report is available online in .pdf format at: <http://www.floridapsc.com/publications/pdf/electricgas/transmissionreport2007.pdf>

Are You Being Charged the Correct Taxes on Your Telephone Bill?

In October 2001, the [Communications Services Tax Simplification Law](#) took effect. This law replaced several state and local taxes with the Communications Services Tax (tax). The tax appears on your telephone bill as:

- Local Communications Services Tax - This tax replaces what used to be billed as city/local taxes and franchise fees, and
- State Communications Services Tax - This tax replaces what used to be billed as the Florida Gross Receipts Tax, state sales tax, and the local option tax.

In order to determine the correct tax rate, the customer can go on-line at: <http://geotax.state.fl.us/dorPubldx.jsp>, insert his/her address and find out the proper Communications Services Tax rate.

For more information about the Communications Services Tax, visit the Florida Department of Revenue's Web site at: <http://dor.myflorida.com/dor/taxes/cst.html>.

What Does The Public Service Commission Do?

The Florida Public Service Commission oversees telephone service in Florida and also sets the rates utility companies may charge for natural gas and electricity. The PSC sets the price consumers pay for water and wastewater service in 36 Florida counties.

Need Discounted Phone Service?



Learn More About Lifeline Assistance & Link-Up Florida

Utility Problems?

File An Online Complaint



Have Questions?

Visit our FAQ's



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options, making agreements to sell energy to Florida's five investor-owned utilities more attractive to renewable generators. The greater flexibility will help existing and potential renewable energy providers finance new projects and strengthen the position of established facilities.

In January, the PSC welcomed experts from across the nation for an informational workshop to help guide the growth of Florida's renewable energy market. Commissioners listened to presentations from the owners of renewable generating companies, potential developers, and representatives from Florida's investor-owned utilities. A second workshop is scheduled for the spring on increased energy efficiency, with a specific focus on how to encourage conservation of energy resources. The PSC will use both workshops to guide future rule development and policy discussions.

The PSC will also continue to educate Florida's citizens about the benefits of renewable generation. Many are already aware of the significance of renewables as a tool to improve the environment, and growing numbers are opting to purchase a percentage of their electric power from "green energy" sources.

The development and expansion of renewable energy will serve to diversify Florida's fuel mix, reduce our reliance on imported oil, and stimulate further capital investment.

Facts and Figures of the Florida Utility Industry

Would you like to compare electric and local telephone rates between Florida companies? Do you want to compare Florida's electric rates to other states? Maybe you want to know how much of Florida's electricity is generated by coal, oil, natural gas, or nuclear power. There is a new source for this information.

The Florida Public Service Commission (Commission) has published its 2007 issue of [Facts and Figures of the Florida Utility Industry](#). This publication is intended to be a reference manual for people needing quick information about the electric, natural gas, telephone, and water and wastewater industries in Florida.

Download [Facts and Figures of the Florida Utility Industry](#) from the Commission's Web page at:
<http://www.floridapsc.com/publications/reports.aspx>.

Commission Service Quality Evaluation Results in Refunds for Verizon Customers

A recent Florida Public Service Commission (Commission) service quality evaluation found that a number of [Verizon](#) customers had been incorrectly billed for some telephone calls using the company's calling cards. At the Commission's direction, Verizon refunded \$89,708 to 3,322 customers.

"The Commission closely monitors Florida's regulated telecommunications carriers to ensure that established service quality standards are being met," said PSC Chairman Lisa Polak Edgar.

The Commission's Division of Competitive Markets and Enforcement conducts field evaluations of the services provided by Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs). The service evaluation objectives for the ILECs are:

1. To evaluate a company's performance based on service standards and rules.
2. To verify the service results the companies reported to the Commission on a periodic basis.
3. To determine if the company has corrected, or is in the process of correcting, all deficiencies found in previous evaluations.
4. To determine compliance with tariffs.
5. To determine compliance with applicable Service Guarantee programs.

Service quality evaluations for all ILEC's may be seen on the Commission's Web page at:
<http://www.floridapsc.com/utilities/telecomm/servicequality/index2.aspx>

Drinking Water Quality – Who Regulates It?

The [Florida Public Service Commission](#) (Commission) regulates the price we pay for water and wastewater service in the [36 Florida counties](#) that have chosen to give the Commission jurisdiction. While the Commission does not regulate water quality or safety, it monitors com-

By planning ahead to meet the needs of tomorrow, the PSC will continue to work to ensure Floridians are equipped to meet the needs of an evolving state with a changing landscape and growing economy.

plaints dealing with the quality of service provided to customers.

The Florida [Department of Environmental Protection](#) (DEP) has the primary role of regulating public water systems in Florida. Its rules are found in the [Florida Administrative Code](#). A public water system is one that provides water to 25 or more people for at least 60 days each year or serves 15 or more service connections. These public water systems may be publicly or privately owned and operated.

Very small water systems which provide water for public consumption, but which do not fall under the above definition, are regulated by the [Department of Health](#) and the county health departments. Bottled water and water vending machines are regulated by the [Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Food Safety](#). The digging of water wells, both public and private, and the quantities of water that may be extracted, are regulated by the [Water Management Districts](#).