



Proposed legislation raises unanswered questions

Last month I promised to provide an update regarding our visits to Washington and discussions with our Congressmen about proposed legislation to address climate change. The process is still being developed and is highly controversial. It appears that House leaders may have the votes to pass one version of a plan. The Senate will prepare its own plan later this summer.

We have been monitoring this legislation closely because we are concerned that it could severely impact the cost of electricity. Several steps still remain before anything becomes law, and there are many unanswered questions at this point.

Does the science call for this kind of response?

The concept behind the legislation is to reduce man's effect on global warming, now referred to as climate change. We still believe that the rationale for attempting any of the complicated and expensive proposals is questionable and perhaps flawed. There is wide disagreement on the science of climate change, and many noted scientists contend that manmade emissions have little, if any,

effect on the planet's naturally occurring warming and cooling trends.

Congress' plan would have us stop burning coal and other fossil fuels to generate electricity. Carbon dioxide emissions from the U.S. electric industry contribute fewer than five parts per million to the Earth's global atmosphere. The overall beneficial effect of the plan would be minimal, but it will cost Americans billions of dollars on their electric bills.

Coal is relatively affordable and plentiful in the U.S. Removing coal from America's fuel options will undoubtedly raise costs to electric consumers in Mississippi. If the proposed legislation goes into effect, it could easily cause American coal to be exported to developing nations such as China and India, countries which do not plan to adopt emissions reductions. Nearly every week, China adds one coal-burning power plant with few emissions controls to its electric system.

Can our economy withstand cap-and-trade legislation?

The proposed legislation calls for a speculative cap-and-trade program over-

seen by Wall Street traders.

The purpose is to cap and then steadily reduce U.S. carbon dioxide emissions. We estimate that the average electric customer in Mississippi will see a dollar-for-dollar increase on his or her monthly bill for every dollar charged for a carbon emission credit or allowance. Early indications are that the cost of a carbon credit could start at \$15-20

and the price could go as high as \$100. Congressional leaders have referred to such "sticker shock" as a necessary consequence of their proposals.

Unfortunately, the costs will not be spread equally throughout the country—our region will be hit harder than others, such as the Northeast and West Coast.

Will a renewables mandate work in the Southeast?

Under parts of the proposed legislation, Americans will be expected to switch to much more expensive renewable resources for generating electricity. Renewable resources provide less than 2 percent of the country's overall electricity



By Don Jordan
General Manager

needs today (excluding hydro facilities), and must be backed up by conventional (fossil fuel) sources because of their intermittent output. The proposed plan calls for that number to increase to 20 percent by 2020.

Renewables are certainly worthy of development, but reaching 20 percent of our overall output in Mississippi within this period is not realistic, because the potential for development of solar and wind power in this region is insufficient for large-scale electricity production.

To be honest, the current proposals just do not make sense. On your behalf, we told our Congressmen that they run the risk of making electric service less affordable and less reliable for Mississippi's electric cooperative members.

It may be sometime later this summer before we really know what proposals will pass, but all of us should be watching these developments closely.

Southern Pine's service area vulnerable to storm-related outages

Southern Pine Electric Power Association's 11-county service area (at right) makes it especially vulnerable to powerful storm systems that sweep the southern half of Mississippi this time of year.

"Some part of our service area usually will be affected by high winds and lightning strikes when storms come through," said Penny McAlpin, director of Member Services.

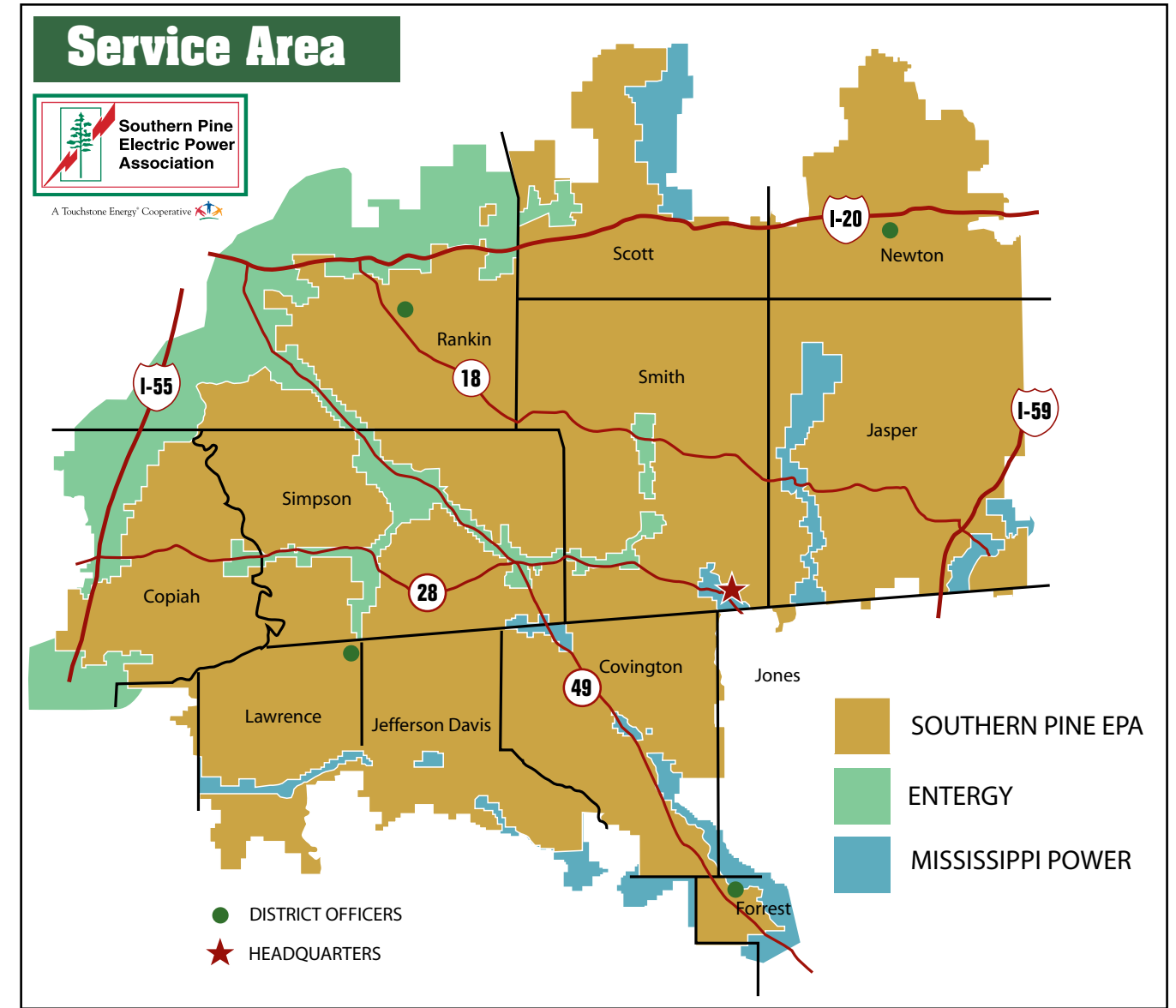
"This spring, we had a lot of damage due to straight-line winds, thunderstorms and tornadoes throughout our service area," McAlpin added.

Power outages during storms are most often caused by trees or limbs falling onto power lines and lightning damage to electrical equipment on poles or in substations. Southern Pine dispatches emergency work crews immediately when power outages are reported to the cooperative, and a dispatcher is on duty at all times.

"If you see a downed power line, please call our office immediately," McAlpin said. "If the line is busy, keep trying and know that we are working hard to repair lines as quickly and as safely as possible."

If you experience a power outage or see damage to a power line or substation, please call the Southern Pine district office that serves you:

- Brandon: (601) 824-7070, (800) 698-9574
- Newton: (601) 683-2200, (800) 698-9573
- New Hebron: (601) 694-2711, (800) 698-9571
- Taylorsville: (601) 785-6511, (800) 231-5240
- Hattiesburg branch: (601) 264-0185



We're ready for any emergency; are you?



Southern Pine Electric Power Association has an emergency plan and materials ready for quick response to storm-related power outages. Is

your family as well prepared?

With hurricane season upon us, we strongly encourage you to take action today to prepare an emergency kit for your family. It should contain enough disaster supplies to sustain every one in your household for two weeks. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Replace stored food and water every six months. Rethink your kit and family needs at least once a year. (Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.) And ask your physician or pharmacist about stocking up on prescription medications.

This checklist will help you plan.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency food and drinking water | <input type="checkbox"/> Charcoal and lighter fluid, or full propane tank for gas grill | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At least one change of clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> Clock (non-electric) | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone numbers of places you could go |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baby food, diapers and formula | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooler (with ice) | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic trash bags |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Duct and masking tape | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio (battery-operated or TV) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bleach (without lemon or additives) | <input type="checkbox"/> Extension cords | <input type="checkbox"/> Rope |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books, magazines, cards and games | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguisher | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bags, pillows and blankets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Butane lighters | <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit | <input type="checkbox"/> Soap and shampoo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cash and credit cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlights | <input type="checkbox"/> Sturdy shoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camera and film | <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy plastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper and towelettes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Car keys | <input type="checkbox"/> Lanterns with extra fuel | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool kit including hammer, crowbar, nails, saw, gloves, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grill or camp stove | <input type="checkbox"/> Manual can opener | <input type="checkbox"/> Water purification tablets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal identification | <input type="checkbox"/> Matches | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicines, glasses or contact supplies | |



Crystal Springs Tomato Festival, June 26-27

Crystal Springs will celebrate its heritage as a major tomato producer June 26-27. Friday events start at 6 p.m. with the crowning of the new Tomato Queen. The Junior Auxilliary will host a barbecue and a street dance will be held downtown. On Saturday, there will be a 5K run/walk and 1-mile fun run, kid's parade, live entertainment, bike rally poker run, farmers market, flea market and other events and attractions. A sesquicentennial cemetery tour will start at 6:30 p.m. For details, call the Crystal Springs Chamber of Commerce at (601) 892-2711 or e-mail crystalspringschamber@gmail.com.

Mississippi Watermelon Festival, July 17-18

The 31st Annual Mississippi Watermelon Festival is set for July 17-18 at Mize City Park. Gates open Friday at 5 p.m. with arts and crafts, food, a carnival, free watermelon and, at 6 p.m., a gospel sing featuring Hosanna. Saturday's events kick off at 9 a.m. with arts and crafts, a motorcycle rally, car show, carnival and all-day entertainment with bluegrass and country music. Watermelon games will include a seed-spitting contest and a greased watermelon team relay race. Farmers are invited to compete in the biggest watermelon contest. Shenandoah will perform at 8 p.m.

Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children under 10, both days. All proceeds will go to the Mize Volunteer Fire Department. For more information, visit www.mswatermelonfestival.com or call (601) 733-5647.



Happy Independence Day!

Southern Pine's offices will be closed Friday, July 3, for Independence Day.

A dispatcher will remain on duty to respond to emergency calls.