

# PSC Consumer Connection



*Informed Consumers, Quality Utility Services, and a Dedicated Organization for Missourians in the 21st Century*

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## **Public Service Commission Recognizes 95 Years Of Service**

Missouri Governor Elliott Major supported creation of the Missouri Public Service Commission. In 1913, the 47<sup>th</sup> General Assembly passed legislation sponsored by Carroll County Senator William Busby creating the PSC. On April 15, 2008, the commission celebrates 95 years of service to the State of Missouri.

The PSC replaced the Board of Railroad and Warehouse Commissioners which was established in 1875 to regulate railroads operating in Missouri. With the creation of the Public Service Commission, the General Assembly no longer set rates of public utilities.

When established in 1913, the PSC was given general supervision over all railroads, street railroads, express companies, all kinds of car companies, steamboat companies operating on the waters in Missouri and all other common carriers. The commission was also given jurisdiction over all gas corporations, electric, heating, telephone, telegraph, water corporations and municipalities.

At the close of the year, December 31, 1913, there were 877 corporations, municipalities and individuals engaged in serving the public in some capacity that, by operation of PSC law, placed them under the supervision and jurisdiction of the commission. In 1913, the commission regulated approximately 426 telephone corporations.

Today, the PSC regulates more than 600 investor-owned electric, natural gas, steam, telephone, and water and sewer utilities in Missouri. In addition, the PSC regulates the operational safety of the state's rural electric cooperatives and 40 municipally owned natural gas utilities. The commission also regulates the manufacturers and dealers of manufactured homes and modular units.

Virtually every Missouri citizen receives some form of utility service from an investor-owned public utility company. Utility services and infrastructure are essential to the economy of Missouri. They provide

heating and cooling during extreme temperatures. They offer access to emergency services and vital information systems. They provide safe drinking water and assure the environmentally sound disposal of wastewater. Because these utilities fulfill these essential needs, the PSC must assure the ratepaying public that quality services will be available on a nondiscriminatory basis at just and reasonable rates.

John Atkinson, a former Assistant Attorney General and Speaker of the Missouri House from Doniphan, Missouri, was named the commission's first chairman in 1913. John Kennish, an attorney from Kansas City, was also named to the first commission. Kennish, a former Missouri Supreme Court judge and state senator, served on the commission from 1913 to 1917. He returned to the commission in 1920 to fill the unexpired term of David Blair, when Blair left the PSC to serve on the Missouri Supreme Court.

Frank Wightman, a railroad expert from Monett, Missouri was also named to the first commission. He was also a former member of the Board of Railroad and Warehouse Commissioners. The fourth member of the PSC was Howard Shaw, an electrical engineer. At the time of his appointment to the PSC, Shaw was the Dean of the School of Engineering at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

A fifth member of the commission was named in July of 1913. St. Louis attorney William Woerner was named approximately three months after the other four commissioners had been appointed.

Under the law creating the PSC, the commission was to hold its sessions in the State Capitol in Jefferson City. However due to the 1911 fire which destroyed a good portion of the Capitol, the commission held its first session in the temporary State Capitol which was built between the State Capitol and the Missouri Highway and Transportation Department Building. Today, commission offices are located in the Governor Office Building on Madison Street in Jefferson City.

*References: Missouri Public Service Commission Annual Reports*

## **SUMMER HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION**

- Vacuum the coils of your refrigerator and check for frost buildup in refrigerators and freezers which causes an appliance to work harder.
- Don't constantly move the thermostat up or down throughout the day because this wastes energy and money.
- Use ceiling fans to assist in cooling. In the summer, blades should rotate counter-clockwise when viewed from below.
- Consider using a programmable thermostat to raise the temperature when the home is unoccupied.
- Close drapes, shades and blinds during the day to keep passive solar energy from heating up your home.
- Make sure furniture and draperies are not blocking cooling outlets. Blocked outlets restrict air circulation, overwork the cooling equipment and increase operating costs.
- Close off rooms that are not used directly for cooling, so rooms most used by the household will remain cool.
- Shift the use of heat-producing and major appliances such as ovens, dishwashers, clothes dryers and irons from mid-day to early in the morning or later at night when possible.
- Turn off lights when they are not needed. Consider replacing burned out light bulbs with new energy efficient fluorescent bulbs, fluorescent bulbs generate less heat so the energy is used more effectively to light an area. Consider using task lighting, which focuses light where you will need it, instead of brightly lighting an entire room.
- Make sure your air conditioner filter is clean. Clean or replace filters as needed. Clogged filters cause the unit to use more energy (replacing them takes just seconds and will save you money). Also consider letting a professional tune-up of your air conditioner to maximize its efficiency.
- Turn off computers, monitors, printers and televisions during periods of non-use. These devices use energy even when in stand-by mode.
- Wash clothes in cold water with a cold water detergent. Wash full loads of laundry for maximum efficiency. If less than full, set the water level in the washing machine to suit the size of the load, you'll save energy and water.
- Dry laundry on a line to avoid using clothes dryers. You can put laundry in the dryer when it's almost dry; add a fabric softener sheet and it will take the stiffness out of the clothes. Clean the lint filter in the dryer after each use.
- Use your microwave, toaster oven, slow cooker, broiler oven or other energy saving appliances for cooking food. They use half the energy of a regular oven and keep your kitchen cooler. Using your outdoor grill to cook dinner also avoids heating up the kitchen.
- Take short showers instead of baths.
- Turn down the temperature on your water heater to 120 degrees.

- Defrost food in your refrigerator, this helps cool the refrigerator, easing energy requirements, and it is better for the food than defrosting in room temperature. Keep refrigerator full so that it is cooling less open space (water jugs make good fillers).
- Cover pans when cooking on a stove top and use exhaust fans periodically, as required, to reduce indoor humidity.
- Avoid using extension cords with appliances. This cuts the efficiency of the equipment.
- Plan ahead before taking food from the refrigerator - don't leave door open any longer than necessary.
- Try to wash full loads in the dishwasher, and use the short cycle. Except for very dirty dishes, short cycles work just as well as longer ones. If possible, let dishes air-dry. These measures not only cut the dishwasher's energy usage - they also cut down on the amount of heat being released in your kitchen.
- Keep storm windows and doors in place to reduce the air conditioning load.
- Caulk and weather strip doors and windows that leak air.
- Adding insulation and sealing air leaks will help keep the cool air inside.
- Don't overload an electric circuit with high-wattage appliances. The normal limit for an electric circuit of 15 amps is 1600 watts. Overloaded circuits can blow fuses or trip circuit breakers as well as make any appliances on the circuit operate inefficiently.

*Source: U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Savers Tips*

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**The Missouri Public Service Commission reminds you to call before you dig in your yard or for any excavation activity**

**Dig Safe -- Dig Smart  
Know Missouri's  
Ground Rules  
1-800-DIG-RITE (344-7483)  
or DIAL 811**

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**For printed materials** regarding a number of consumer issues or copies of this newsletter, please call 573-751-7491 or email [joyce.neuner@psc.mo.gov](mailto:joyce.neuner@psc.mo.gov)

**Who to Contact:**

Missouri Public Service Commission  
Consumer Hotline **1-800-392-4211**  
or email: [pscinfo@psc.mo.gov](mailto:pscinfo@psc.mo.gov)

**Mail your inquiry or complaint to:**

Missouri Public Service Commission  
Consumer Services Department  
P.O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

