



# GPSC News

*Making Business and Safety Decisions Affecting Tomorrow*

Volume 2 Issue 1

Summer 2002

## Commissioner Sizemore Takes Office

### Sizemore Facts

- \*Educator
- \*Superintendent, Worth County Schools, 1989-93
- \*State Representative, 1974-88
- \*Director, Tifton Campus, Moultrie Technical College

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Commissioner Earleen W. Sizemore took part in her first Administrative Session on July 2, 2002 just two weeks after being sworn into office by Governor Roy Barnes. The Commission's newest member brings a wealth of experience in education and public service to the office. Governor Roy Barnes appointed Sizemore in June following the death of Commissioner Bob Durden, putting her name in the history books as the first woman to ever serve on the five-member utility regulating body. Governor Roy Barnes said, "Earleen Sizemore has spent the



Commissioner Sizemore On The Bench During Session

majority of her professional career working on behalf of the people of this state—as a member of the House of Representatives, as an administra-

tor and as an educator. She will be a true voice for Georgia's consumers." Sizemore most recently was director of the Tifton Campus of Moultrie Technical College, a post she has held since 1995. She was the Democratic nominee for the PSC in 1994. She served as Worth County School Superintendent from

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Commission Approves Southern Company Gas Marketer Application

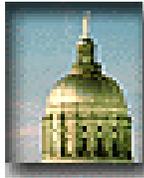
The Commission on July 19 approved Southern Company Gas LLC as the state's newest natural gas marketer. Southern Company Gas is a subsidiary of the Southern Company, one of the South's largest energy holding companies. The Commission also approved the transfer of New

regulated environment." Chairman Burgess went on to praise Commission staff in preparing Southern Company Gas's application. "The staff has done a tremendous job in turning around this application." Commissioner Stan Wise called it "a new

Power's customers to Southern Gas as part of the application process. Commission Chairman David L. Burgess noted, "This decision brings another meaningful player into the marketplace and will give natural gas customers in Georgia another choice in the de-

## Long Legislative Session Ends; Commission Gains

The longest Georgia General Assembly session since 1885 ended in the early afternoon on April 12, 2002, ending a lengthy but successful session from the Commission's viewpoint. The long session kept many Commission staffers working long days and nights keeping up with legislative developments. The Fiscal Year 2003 State Budget includes an extra \$262,589 in funding for new staff positions and additional staff compensation. Of course, the major accomplishment as far as the Commission is concerned was the passage



of House Bill 1568, "The Natural Gas Consumer Bill of Rights" that strengthened the Commission's role in directing the deregulated natural gas industry in Georgia. The legislation provides for increased standards of customer service and billing, sets up a regulated provider of last resort and allows the Commission to direct more money for low-income energy assistance. "Particularly gratifying was the lawmakers' recognition of the Commission's technical

expertise in working out the details of the legislation," said Executive Director Deborah Flannagan. Utility Director Tom Bond and Natural Gas Analyst Jim Bottone worked closely with key committee members in revising portions of HB 1568 as the legislation wound its way through the legislative maze. Their work also resulted in the extra funding to enable the Commission to enforce the new legislation.

If you have a story for the next GPSC News, please send to Bill Edge, [bille@psc.state.ga.us](mailto:bille@psc.state.ga.us). Next issue deadline is Oct. 15, 2002.

## Sizemore Takes Seat On Commission

1989 to 1993. During her term as Superintendent, she began a five-year building program, added ROTC programs and organized the accreditation process for each school. The Sylvester, Georgia native served in the Georgia House of Representatives from Worth County from 1974 to 1988 where she chaired the Interstate Com-



Commissioner Earleen Sizemore

merce Committee and was Vice-chair of the Ways and Means Committee. She also served on the Appropriations, Education and State Institutions and Properties Committees.

Sizemore will run for a full six-year term in this fall's election. She has two daughters and three grandchildren and is a member of the First Baptist Church of Sylvester.

## Southern Company Gas Decision

*(Continued from page 1)*

day in the life of natural gas deregulation in Georgia." Southern Company is paying about \$60 million for New Power's customers and will serve more than 210,000 customers or about 15 percent of the natural gas market in Georgia. The Commission held



Dan Walsh questions Southern Company executives

hearings in this docket on July 16, 2002. Southern Company Gas customer service can be reached at 1-866-762-6427. Southern Company Gas says it will honor all contractual terms and conditions of New Power for all current fixed rate contracts. Southern Company also owns Georgia Power and Savannah Electric and Power.

## Commission Begins Work On Implementing HB 1568



The Commission is in the process of implementing several parts of HB 1568, known as the "The Natural Gas Consumer's Bill of Rights", as mandated by the legislation, through several rulemaking procedures. The Commission is expected to give final approval to these rules at its August 28, 2002 Special Administrative Session in order to meet the legislatively mandated deadline of September 1. All interested parties have been



given the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed rules prior to their adoption. The rules relate to service

quality standards for Atlanta Gas Light Company and natural gas marketers, gas marketer billing practices and the Universal Service Funds. The rules will set performance measures for customer service, billing and collections. The proposed rules will also require enhanced standards for the accuracy and contents of gas marketer bills. In addition, the rules would provide for disbursements to the regulated provider for bad debt arising from low-income customers. These rules will take effect 20 days following final adoption.

## Commission Represented At NARUC Summer Meetings

Several Commission staff members represented The Commission at the NARUC Summer meeting in Portland, Oregon July 28-31. Jamie Barber and Bolin Killings from Natural Gas; Pandora Epps, Lillian Johnson and Dan Cearfoss from Electric; and de-



Lancey Todd and Chairman David L. Burgess also attended. The 2002 Annual NARUC Convention will be in Chicago, Illinois at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers November 10-13, 2002. Commissioners Stan Wise, Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, and



## Burgess Named Influential Atlantan

Congratulations to Commission Chairman David L. Burgess on being named in the Atlanta Business Chronicle's June 28, 2002 edition as one of At-



lanta's 100 influential leaders. Burgess is in his 4th year on the Commission and is serving as Chairman for 2002. He has served on the Commission since 1999. He is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology. Before his appointment to the Commission, he has served on the PSC staff for 17 years.



## In Memoriam: Commissioner Bob Durden

On May 2, 2002, Bob Durden, the longest current serving member of Georgia's Public Service Commission, died at age 54. following a long battle with cancer.

Durden, elected in 1991, was in his 12<sup>th</sup> year of service, making him the Dean of the five-member PSC Board. He was honored by his fellow Commissioners at an Administrative Session of the Commission for his long service and efforts on behalf of Georgia ratepayers. Georgia ratepayers have saved over \$1.34 billion



during his tenure at the PSC. "He brought a lot to the table, and he'll be sorely missed at this Commission," said Chairman David Burgess. Durden had already announced his candidacy for re-election this year as a Republican from the Southern District (District 1), under Georgia's new district system. "My service on the PSC has been a great personal privilege and high honor," Durden said in his announcement.

"The opportunity for service to residential and small business

## Commissioner Durden Remembered

ratepayers has never been greater," Durden said, "and I look forward to playing a large role in that continuing effort." Bob Durden was well respected by his colleagues and will be missed by all who had an opportunity to know him and work with him. Those who watched him fight his "battle with the enemy" will forever

view cancer differently, because of the defiant and open way he faced his illness. Commissioner Robert Baker noted that Durden was best known for his efforts to expand the Atlanta area's toll-free calling area that now includes 300 communities. Baker also noted that Durden very conscious of making sure small ratepayers were protected in

rate case proceedings.

Durden was born November 2, 1947 in Statesboro, Georgia. After graduating from Statesboro High School, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History, a Masters of Arts in Political Science and a Law Degree, all from Emory University. Following

## Bob Durden (1947-2002)

military service in the U.S. Marine Corps, he taught courses in Economics, International Relations and American Government at Emory. Prior to his election to the Commission, Durden was an attorney in private practice. He was a member of MENSA and was named to "Who's Who

in the South and Southeast", "Who's Who in American Law", "Who's Who in America" and Georgia Trend's "100 Most Influential Georgians." He served as Commission Chairman in 1991, 1992, 1995, and 2000. He

is survived by a brother, Ray, of Statesboro and two daughters, Courtney Thomas of McDonough, Georgia and Kathleen Durden of Athens and his birth mother, Mary Guthrie of Enterprise, Alabama. His funeral was held May 6 at Statesboro First Baptist Church.

## Commission Selects Regulated Provider



The Commission June 18 selected SCANA to be the Regulated Natural Gas Provider to further implement provisions contained in the recently enacted Natural Gas Consumers' Relief Act of 2002. SCANA was one of three marketers to bid to become the Regulated Natural Gas Provider, which is responsible for serving two groups of customers: consumers who meet the definition of low income as established by the Department of Human Resources and consumers who are unable to receive service



from a marketer. The Commission approved the most advantageous pricing plan of several alternatives proposed by SCANA. The approved plan has the lowest prices for consumers and a special rate for senior citizens. Low-income customers will pay about \$0.22 per therm over the wholesale

price of natural gas with a \$4.95 monthly customer charge; low-income seniors will pay about \$0.20 over wholesale with a \$4.95 monthly customer charge; and high risk customers will pay around \$0.36 over wholesale with a \$11.95 monthly customer charge. In addition, SCANA will set up a strong notification and customer education program to ensure that those who qualify to use the Regulated Provider will be served. The approved plan also limits the exposure to the Universal Service Fund from

## Regulated Provider

which the Commission pays the regulated provider for uncollectibles relating to low-income customers. All customers should eventually benefit from the downward pressure on prices as fewer bad debt customers are served by the natural gas marketers. The Georgia General Assembly by law required the

Commission to select a Regulated Provider by July 1, 2002. SCANA will begin accepting customers after August 15 and is expected to begin selling gas to these two customer groups on September 1, 2002.



## Commission Hosts Engineering Conference At Jekyll Island

The 80th National Conference of Regulatory Utility Commission Engineers (NCRUCE), composed of representatives from state and federal regulatory organizations from across the nation, met at Jekyll Island during June 23 - 17, 2002 to participate in a program titled "Deregulation:

What direction now?". Seventy-one registrants gathered to discuss a range of telecommunications, natural gas, electric, water/waste water utility issues in the current environment of restructuring/transition to competition/deregulation. The GPSC hosted the meeting and made the arrangements

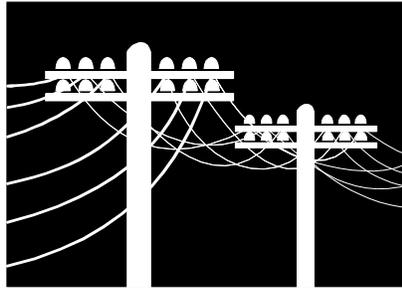
for the meeting facilities and related activities. Participating from the Commission were Philip Bedingfield, Sheree Kernizan, Earnest Whatley, Michelle Thebert, Janey Chauvet, Julia Truss, Danny McGriff and Ken Ellison. Commissioner McDonald made a presentation to the group and Tom Bond moderated a panel.

## Commission Rulings



### Commission Reduces Electric Bills For Customers of Savannah Electric and Power Company

The Commission on May 30 voted to reduce Savannah Electric power bills by about 7.5%. The Commission reduced fuel rates by \$13.50 per month for the average residential customer. The fuel portion of the bill is currently \$49 per month. The new rate will be around \$35.50. The Commission granted the Company \$7.8 million in



additional revenue instead of the \$24 million the Company requested. The Commission also increased the lo-income senior citizen discount to \$10.50 per month from the current \$7. The Commission also approved a new economic

development high load factor rate to attract new businesses and to keep existing businesses that meet certain size and electric usage criteria. Commission Chairman David Burgess said, "The Commission's decision strikes a balance between satisfying the Company's revenue requirements and addressing the financial market issues raised in this case. More importantly, the customers will see an overall reduction in their electric bills. Residential customers with average usage of 1,200 kilowatt hours will see a net decrease of around \$8

## Commission Rulings

### Commission Cuts Atlanta Gas Light Company's Revenues



#### Atlanta Gas Light Company

In a decision handed down April 29, the Commission reduced Atlanta Gas Light Company's annual revenues by \$10 million. The Commission set the Company's allowed return on equity at 11% and increased the senior citizen discount to \$10.50 per month from the \$0.95. The Commis-

sion also ordered AGLC to improve customer service and emergency response times and to invest \$9 million in a Customer Information System for more accurate and reliable information. The Commission also adopted a

Performance Base Rate which allows AGLC to earn between 10% and 12%. If AGLC earns above the band, the excess earnings will be split automatically between rate payers and the company with ratepayers receiving 75% and the Company 25%. As long as earnings remain within the band, the Company may not seek a rate increase.



## Important Election Dates

### Election

General Primary  
Primary Runoff  
Special Election  
General  
General Runoff

### Voter Registration Deadline

July 22, 2002  
July 22, 2002  
August 19, 2002  
October 7, 2002  
October 7, 2002

### Election Date

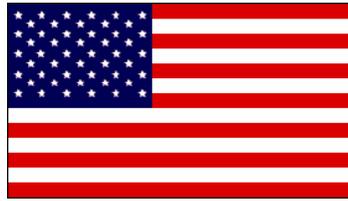
August 20, 2002  
September 10, 2002  
September 17, 2002  
November 5, 2002  
November 26, 2002

# Employee News



## Employees in the Military

The Commission's Public Information Officer, **Bill Edge**, returned to his PSC post following nearly four months on active duty in support of the war on terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom. Edge was recalled to active duty in February and reported in mid-March to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command in Bahrain. He is a public affairs officer in the Naval Reserve.



Meanwhile, Telecommunications Engineer **Dennis Sewell** remains on active duty at Fort McPherson, Georgia. He is a member of the U.S. Army Reserve. He has been on active duty since December, 2001.

## New Employees



### Tony Wackerly

Tony joined the Commission June 3, 2002. He is a native of Iowa and spent eight years in the U.S. Navy. After leaving the military, he settled in the Atlanta area. He received his MBA from Kennesaw State University in July 2001.



### Quawanda Boyer

Quawanda joined the Gas Section as Administrative Assistant on July 1. She had previously worked for Gas as a TRC employee.



### Shane Weiberg

Shane joined the Commission on June 1, 2002 as a utilities analyst in the Natural Gas Section



### Nakeisha Bowman

Nakeisha became an Information Referral Specialist on May 1. She was previously with TRC services.



### Cynthia Johnson

Cynthia became Assistant to the Director For Education and En-

forcement May 1 in the Consumer Affairs Section. Cynthia brings a wealth of experience in customer service and information systems to the Commission. She spent 13 years with the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and nine years with BellSouth Information Systems. She has a BS Degree from Georgia State University.



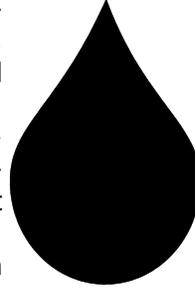
## News Items

### Walton EMC Files Application For Gas Marketer

Walton Electric Membership Corporation becomes the first Georgia Electric Membership Corporation to file for certification as a natural gas marketer following the passage of HB 1568 during the 2002 General Assembly. Walton EMC filed its application on July 16.

In its application, Walton EMC Natural Gas seeks to become a natural gas supplier in all nine pool areas currently served by Atlanta Gas Light Company. Walton EMC Natural Gas would be a wholly owned subsidiary

of Walton EMC which currently serves about 96,000 customers in DeKalb, Gwinnett, Greene, Walton, Oconee, Rockdale, Morgan, Barrow and Clarke counties. As of this writing, the Commission had not set a hearing date on Walton's application. HB 1568 allows EMCs to set up affiliated natural gas marketers as long as the EMC and its affiliate meet certain financial requirements.



## Commission Calendar

### August

15-Committees  
20-Administrative Session  
28-Special Administrative Session  
29-Committees

### September

2- Labor Day Holiday  
3-Administrative Session  
3-5 Georgia Power and Savannah Electric hearings  
12-Committees  
17-Administrative Session  
26-Committees

## Commission Calendar

### October

1-Administrative Session  
10-Committees  
15-Administrative Session  
31-Committees

### November

5-Administrative Session  
14-Committees  
19-Administrative Session

### NARUC

Annual Convention  
November 10-13, 2002  
Chicago, Illinois

Winter Meeting  
February 21-24, 2003  
Washington, D.C.



### GPSC ONLINE:

[www.psc.state.ga.us](http://www.psc.state.ga.us)



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**David Burgess, Chairman**  
**Robert Baker**  
**Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, Jr.,**  
**Earleen W. Sizemore**  
**Stan Wise**

