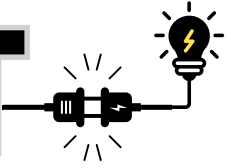




PUCurrent

Public Utility Commission of Texas



(L to R: Interim Chair Kathleen Jackson, Comms. Will McAdams, Lori Cobos, Jimmy Glotfelty)

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RULES FOR A MORE RESILIENT TEXAS

Just three months clear of this year's legislative session, Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) staff is already busy turning legislation that became law in the 88th Legislative Session into PUCT rules. [Read more](#)



TEXAS IS GROWING, SO WE'RE HIRING! (COME WORK WITH US!)

The PUCT will hire approximately 80 additional staff across the agency. This includes 50 full-time employees (FTEs) to supplement the existing workload at the PUCT. [Read more](#)

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

*Special message from
Interim Chair Kathleen
Jackson*

'VIRTUAL POWER PLANTS' GO LIVE IN ERCOT

At the end of August, two 'virtual power plants' began providing dispatchable power to the Texas electric grid. They are the first two virtual power plants to participate in the ERCOT market, marking an exciting milestone for the PUCT's Aggregate Distributed Energy Resource (ADER) Pilot Project, which launched in June 2022. [Read more](#)

COMMISSIONER'S CORNER

Greetings from the Public Utility Commission of Texas and welcome to our inaugural edition of PUCurrent! We are excited to introduce our new, quarterly newsletter where Texans can read about all the ways PUCT is working on your behalf to positively impact your everyday life.

In this kickoff issue, we highlight the launch of Texas' first "virtual power plants." Through this innovative pilot project, Texans with small energy resources like battery energy storage systems, backup generators and electric vehicles can sell surplus power to the Texas grid and boost grid reliability and resiliency.

And we share the latest statistics on how much the PUCT's Consumer Protection Division was able to secure in refunds or rebates for electric, water and telecom utility customers.

At the PUCT, we're proud to serve our great state and we look forward to sharing our stories with you.

Kathleen Jackson
Interim Chair



PUCT EXPANDS PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Texans will have more opportunities to speak directly to Public Utility Commissioners about important matters beginning with the PUCT's September 14, 2023 Open Meeting. Beginning at that meeting, the public can sign up to speak on a specific agenda item (other than a contested case) at the time that item is taken up by Commissioners. The general comment period at the beginning of the Open Meeting will remain.

Anyone wishing to speak on a specific agenda item must sign up to speak before a regularly scheduled Open Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. CT at the agency's offices in the William B. Travis State Office Building in Austin. Please check the PUCT's [event calendar](#) for a schedule of the agency's Open Meetings. Speakers will have two minutes to address the Commissioners.

To learn more about this expanded public comment opportunity and how to participate in the PUCT's proceedings, please contact the PUCT's Office of Public Engagement (OPE) by email at public@puc.texas.gov or by phone at 512-936-7374. OPE staff will also be present at PUCT Open Meetings to assist consumers in person.

RULES FOR A MORE RESILIENT TEXAS

We are busy turning legislation passed during the 88th Regular Legislative Session into Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) rules. Work began immediately after the final gavel fell on Memorial Day to determine which rules to address first, with the agency receiving public, industry, and stakeholder input on proposed priorities during a July 11 public workshop.

The PUC's first wave of rulemakings focuses on resiliency – keeping critical systems working during extreme weather and preparing to recover faster, if necessary. This includes:

- Shortening the regulatory approval timeline for new electric transmission lines so they can be built faster.
- Allowing electric utilities to submit comprehensive resiliency plans for the first time to strengthen and modernize their transmission and distribution systems to withstand extreme weather events.
- Allowing electric utilities to use mobile generators and electric battery storage solutions to recover from significant power outages.
- Requiring electric utilities to study and identify opportunities to efficiently rotate outages.
- Establishing an emergency pricing program to ensure that wholesale electricity prices are not at extremely high levels for an extended period during tight supply conditions.
- Making the process smoother to sell or transfer small or underperforming water utilities to water utilities with more resources and expertise to effectively and efficiently operate these utilities.



The agency's Government Relations and Rules and Projects teams will provide quarterly updates on rulemaking progress during PUC Open Meetings. The next update is expected in September 2023. You can watch those progress reports live [online](#).

**TEXAS IS
GROWING,
SO WE'RE
HIRING!
(COME
WORK
WITH US!)**

As Texas grows at a break-neck pace, so too do the duties and responsibilities of the PUC. Our work on behalf of Texans has never been more critical – making sure the electric utilities that generate and deliver your electricity and operate your drinking water systems do so reliably and affordably. To keep pace, we requested, and the 88th Legislature granted us, more funds to hire additional staff. In total– in total, approximately \$9 million over the next two fiscal years (FYs 2024 and 2025) to hire dozens of people for increasingly critical positions.



The PUC will hire approximately 80 additional staff across the agency. This includes 50 full-time employees (FTEs) to supplement the existing workload at the PUC. Additionally, the Office of Public Engagement will expand to increase public engagement across the state, instructing Texans how to participate in rulemakings, rate cases, and hearings. Likewise, the Consumer Protection Division will add workers to expand the agency's ability to assist consumers.

This hiring phase will start rolling out in late 2023, so please watch our [jobs page](#) for open positions and come work at the best state agency in Texas!

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An ADER is a grouping of small, consumer-owned energy devices, such as battery energy storage systems, backup generators, and controllable Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers, that can participate as a resource in the wholesale electricity market, acting as a 'virtual power plant.' By participating in an ADER, consumers can sell the surplus power their devices generate to the grid.

"It's a win-win for Texas," Commissioner Will McAdams said. "Home and business owners get paid for power they supply and consumers in ERCOT get more reliability."

The ADER Pilot Project and a 20-member task force were established by Commissioners McAdams and Glotfelty. For more information, read the PUCT's recent [press release](#).

JOBS WITH JOHN – WORKING AT THE PUCT

BY JOHN COX, TALENT ACQUISITION SPECIALIST

Making a difference in the lives of 30 million Texans every day by keeping people safe and maintaining affordable water and electric utilities are some of the key reasons why people like me choose to work for the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

With oversight of electric, water and telecommunication services, we have an enormous responsibility to Texas. It is fantastically challenging and wonderfully rewarding to be part of this team of about 200 deeply dedicated professionals. We all share a common purpose to serve a purpose greater than ourselves; imagine getting to be a part of that every day! And there are certainly many more benefits to joining our PUCT family...

- Have you been a part of a layoff recently? There is stability in joining a GROWING organization!
- How about incredible medical, vision and dental insurance at low costs for you and your family?
- How about great pay? The state legislature has made sure the salaries of our team will compete against comparable industries.
- Tired of being the smartest person in the room? Collaborate with subject-matter experts in engineering, legal, accounting and finance, and customer service, among other fields. The work here is challenging, and you'll learn while you work alongside other high-octane professionals.

Be a part of this unique moment in time when our organization is experiencing growth and change. Check our [careers page](#) and apply today!



HAVE A VOICE AT THE PUCT

Do you want your voice heard at the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT)? Do you want a say in how decisions are made, like where transmission power lines are built, or how much a utility can increase rates – but you don't know how to be heard? Our Office of Public Engagement is ready to help you.

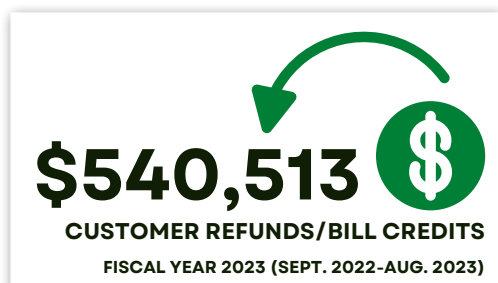
The PUCT makes decisions every day that directly impact the lives and wallets of Texans. The OPE can help you better understand those decisions – and most importantly, how you can participate in the decision-making process.

OPE staff also travel around Texas meeting with community organizations and homeowner and business groups to explain how the PUCT works, and how citizen groups can get involved in important issues that are before the agency.

Visit our [website](#), call us at 512-936-7374 or email us at public@puc.texas.gov with questions or concerns about policies of the PUCT, or to set up an in-person or virtual community visit.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

For consumer issues such as complaints about utility service, billing questions, service interruptions or how to choose a retail electric provider, contact the PUCT's Consumer Protection Division.



QUESTION OR COMPLAINT ABOUT YOUR UTILITY SERVICE?

CONTACT US



1-888-782-8477



consumer@puc.texas.gov

CONSUMER RESOURCES

[Assistance Paying Your Bill](#)

[Understanding Charges On Your Electric Bill](#)

[The Rights You Have as a Utility Customer](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)



The mission of the Public Utility Commission of Texas is to protect customers, foster competition, and promote high quality utility infrastructure.