



## Entergy Mississippi Customers See Lower Bills for Remainder of 2008

Customers of Entergy Mississippi, Inc. are paying less for electricity for the remainder of the year, as utility bills dropped some 9 percent when the company's fourth quarter fuel filing went into effect October 1.

The quarterly adjustment is effective through December. The typical residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours per month will see a savings of nearly \$10.50.

The lower rates are in addition to a mid-quarter adjustment in September that lowered customers' bills 9.6 percent in September. Combined, the reductions total an 18.6 percent decrease for residential customers or more than \$23 from July and August bills.

"We are pleased that our customers will continue to see relief from higher fuel prices," said Haley Fisackerly, president and chief executive officer, Entergy Mississippi, Inc. "While natural gas prices have been declining in recent months, they are still too high. We are in a national energy crisis,



and will continue to work hard to find solutions that will benefit our customers."

The volatility of the natural gas market caused a 28 percent increase in residential customers' bills in July and August. However, in late July prices for natural gas began dropping, leading to downward adjustments that began with September bills.

Should fuel prices rise again, they could have a negative impact on future customer bills as natural gas is Entergy Mississippi's largest fuel source. While Entergy Mississippi uses a diverse mix of fuel to generate electricity at the lowest reasonable cost, nearly 60 percent of the current mix is natural gas.

The company has worked to manage through the increase, which reflects the actual costs of fuel incurred by Entergy Mississippi and is passed through dollar-for-dollar to customers with no profit for the company.

## Entergy Mississippi "Boot Camp" Prepares Communities to Compete

Economic developers and community leaders from around the state recently graduated from "Site Selection Boot Camp," an intensive one-day workshop sponsored by Entergy Mississippi, Inc. and Strategic Growth Institute.

The second "Boot Camp" of 2008 focused on how to effectively market communities to industrial prospects. Participants included representatives from Claiborne, Coahoma, Hinds, Leflore, Lincoln, Madison, Rankin and Sunflower counties, and the Delta Economic Development Center.

The inaugural Boot Camp was held earlier this year and prompted the second session.

"We received positive feedback from our first Boot Camp and wanted to build on its success," said John Turner, director of economic development for Entergy Mississippi, Inc. "The more our community leaders know about the site selection process, the more they can improve their recruiting and marketing programs and win big projects."

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## Entergy Mississippi Awards Community Partnership Grants to Local Organizations

Projects designed to bolster education, improve communities and encourage healthy families are receiving a boost from Entergy Mississippi, Inc.

"I am very pleased to announce that 48 projects have been selected to receive 2008 Entergy Mississippi Community Partnership Grants," said Gloria Johnson, customer service director for Entergy Mississippi, Inc. in Jackson.

"For these to be selected, they had to meet some very rigorous standards," she said. "As always, there were dozens of entries for this grant program, and all of them were great projects."

More than \$43,600 in grant money is being awarded to 48 projects in Entergy Mississippi's 45-county service territory. Among the recipients are:

- Madison County Schools, Ridgeland
- National Coalition of 100 Black Women - Southwest Mississippi
- Carthage Elementary School
- North Sunflower Medical Foundation
- Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi, Inc.
- Brookhaven Little Theatre
- Mississippi Humanities Council, Inc., Jackson
- Senatobia Municipal Schools

Johnson noted that helping fund the 48 projects is part of Entergy Mississippi's ongoing commitment to invest in the communities it serves. The grant program, in its 19th year, provides up to \$1,000 to efforts that promote education and literacy, community improvement and enrichment, healthy families, and arts and culture.

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## “...Boot Camp...” CONTINUED

The workshop included interactive presentations that showed how companies and consultants make site-selection decisions and what a community can do to improve its chances of being recognized as a desirable location for a potential business or industry.

“One of the things we learned is that if you don’t have an available site or building, you’re out of the game,” said Steve Shurden, executive director of Sunflower County Economic Development District. “We’re going to have to address that issue, either by increasing industrial sites or even creating one, so that we’ll have the opportunity to attract industries.”

They also learned how to write effective responses to RFIs, or requests for information — a critical step in the recruiting process.

Boot Camp trainees were asked to develop responses to a mock RFI for a manufacturing plant that would create 100 new jobs. They then met one-on-one with experienced site selection consultants to review critiques of their responses and identify areas for improvement.

“It was definitely helpful to get a first-hand perspective of what they are looking for,” said Mitch Stringer,

manager of existing industry and business development for the Madison County Economic Development Authority. “It’s important to cut through all the fluff and provide the exact



Economic developers and community leaders from around the state recently graduated from Entergy Mississippi’s “Site Selection Boot Camp.” Participants shown here are (clockwise) Mitch Stringer, *Madison County EDA*, Anita Lewis, *Entergy Mississippi, Inc.*, Lenita Knight, *Madison County EDA* and Taravia Seals, *Madison County EDA*.

information being requested in an RFI, and we learned pointers that will help us improve our responses.”

Entergy Mississippi works with more than 20 communities throughout the year on various industrial recruitment and economic development projects. Anita Lewis and Steve Kelly, community developers for Entergy Mississippi, work to help these communities understand that the key to winning projects is to provide accurate information in a timely fashion.

“Positive feedback about the Boot Camp shows that community leaders are serious about the recruiting process and improving their chances to win big projects,” said Kelly.

Lewis added that participants are learning how to improve their recruiting strategies in these workshops.

“We’ll continue to offer programs and training to help our communities be more competitive,” she said. “They are fast learners, and many of them have already made significant improvements in their recruiting programs based on what they learned at the Boot Camp, so these training and networking opportunities definitely add value.”

## “...Community Partnership Grants...” CONTINUED

Selected community organizations will use the grants as “seed money” and seek additional funds and volunteers to assist with projects.

“We are partners with the communities we serve,” Johnson said. “We want our schools to improve. We want existing businesses to grow and expand, and we want new businesses to locate here. This can happen only if we all work together to build a better future.”

An advisory panel of experts in education and community service selected the winning programs. Judges carefully consider applicants’ approach, objectives, benefits and participation.

“The selection process for grant recipients is always a challenge,” said Liz Brister, manager of external affairs for Entergy Mississippi, Inc. “There are so many deserving groups performing small miracles every day.”

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The Community Partnership Grants program is part of Entergy’s continuing tradition of providing support to improve communities through economic and community development activities and contributions. Details on how to apply for next year’s Community Partnership Grants will be announced at a later date.

# Entergy Currents

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Editorial Staff:  
Joey Lee  
Mara Hartmann

Direct suggestions or inquiries to:  
Entergy Communications  
PO Box 1640  
Jackson, MS 39215-1640

