

# THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

HANNAH CHAFFEE

Between EMCs (electric membership cooperatives), the PSC (Public Service Commission) and the IRP (Integrated Resource Plan), it's easy to feel like you're drowning in the daunting alphabet soup that is state energy policy. But fear not! Pluck up your courage because today we're diving into all things Public Service Commission.

The Georgia Public Service Commission (commonly referred to as the PSC) is a state agency that oversees multiple utility industries. Each state has their own version of a Public Service Commission, though some function differently or go by a different name.

Whether you know it or not, the PSC plays a crucial role in how you go about your daily life. The infrastructure that runs electricity to your coffee pot and clicks on your electric stove top in the morning: the PSC makes rulings on it all – how it gets to you and what you'll pay for it. The PSC regulates underground facilities (think "Call Before You Dig"), telecommunications, natural gas and electric utilities.

The PSC is made up of one representative from each of the 5 Public Service Commission Districts (see right for regions and current commissioners). Terms last 6 years and voting for seats is staggered. Candidates must reside in the district they are running for, but all Georgia voters can (and should!) vote on every commission race.

## PSC COMMISSIONERS:



**DISTRICT 4: Lauren "Bubba" McDonald**



**DISTRICT 3: Fitz Johnson**



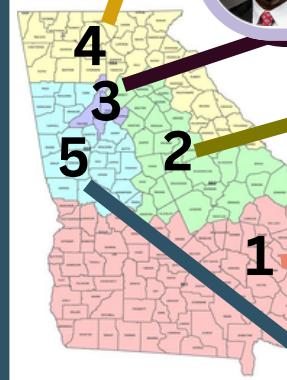
**DISTRICT 2:  
Tim Echols,  
Vice-Chairman**



**DISTRICT 1:  
Jason Shaw,  
PSC Chairman**



**DISTRICT 5: Tricia Pridemore**



## THE PSC REGULATES:

**ELECTRICITY**



**NATURAL GAS**



**TELECOMS**



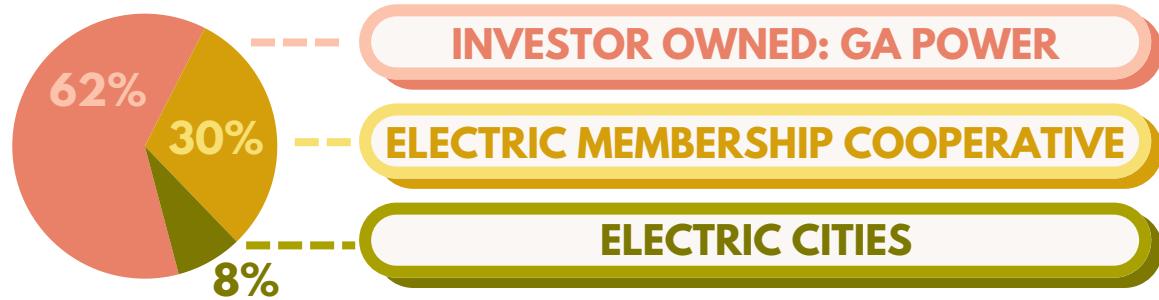
**UNDERGROUND FACILITIES**



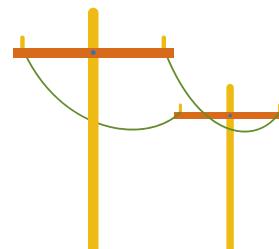
Today we'll be focusing on how the PSC regulates our electricity. Electric utilities in Georgia can be divided into three types based on ownership: investor owned, Electric Membership Cooperatives (EMCs), and Municipal Electric Systems.

There is only one investor owned electricity provider in the state: Georgia Power. There are 41 EMCs. These are member-owned, not-for-profit utilities. Then there are Municipal Electric Systems (also called "Munis"). These are non-profit electric utilities that provide energy on a county or city level and are directed by local elected officials. Georgia currently has 51 cities and 1 county that fall into this category.

## GA ELECTRIC UTILITIES: 2022 RETAIL SALES OF ELECTRICITY



Source: US Energy Information Administration Form 861



While the PSC fully regulates Georgia Power, their oversight of EMCs and Munis is limited and largely pertains to territorial disputes. Generally speaking, your electric provider is predetermined based on what utility is assigned to where you live. Athens-Clarke County residents are served by 4 different electric providers. Three of which are local EMCs: Rayle, Walton and Jackson. A majority of Athens-Clarke County residents are served by GA Power.

For the PSC's regulation of Georgia Power, there are several key proceedings that generally occur every three years: the Integrated Resource Plan (which lays Georgia Power's plan to meet energy needs for the next 20 years), the Rate Case (which determines the rate Georgia Power can charge customers), and the Fuel Case (which determines what Georgia Power can charge based on fuel source).



Making a 20 year plan every three years . . . yes, we know the PSC is confusing but there is no better time to learn and get involved because the PSC's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is kicking off this month and the PSC wants to hear from you!

Why is getting involved in the IRP so important? The IRP determines what Georgia Power will plan for: predictions on how much energy they will need to produce, which power plants will be retired and which will be created, what their fuel source breakdown will be, how that power is getting to you and how they will be decreasing that energy demand through energy efficiency efforts.

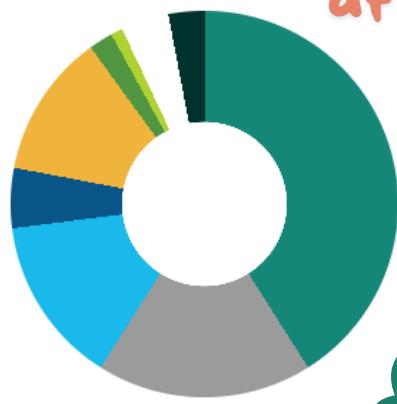
The 6 month process of the IRP will include three public hearings in Atlanta: March 25-28, May 27-30 and a rebuttal hearing June 23-25. The first hour of each day's hearing will be reserved for public comment. But there are plenty of other ways to advocate for your interests: individuals can attend regular committee meetings or send comments to the PSC via mail, email or through the [PSC's electronic portal](#).

You can also reach out to your PSC representatives. Tim Echols is the current Commissioner for District 2 (which Athens falls under). His office can be emailed at: [techols@psc.ga.gov](mailto:techols@psc.ga.gov)

Stay involved and stay tuned: ACC Sustainability will continue to share more details of the IRP in coming newsletters!

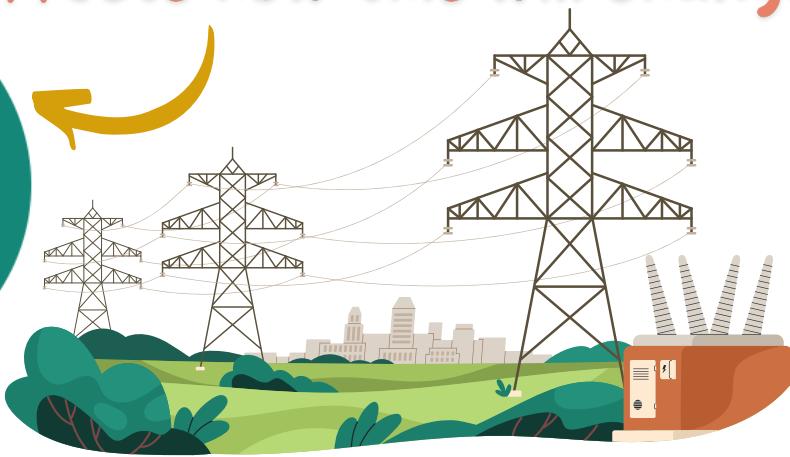
## Georgia Power 2024 Capacity Mix

- Oil – 3%
- Natural Gas – 41%
- Coal – 18%
- Nuclear – 14%
- Hydro – 5%
- Solar\* – 12%
- Bio-Mass – 2%
- Wind – 1%
- DSO\* – 4%



\* Capacity Mix Disclaimer

Your involvement in the IRP affects how this will change!



Information sourced from Southface and Georgia Interfaith Power and Light resources.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!](#)