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KENTUCKY PSC IS 75 YEARS OLD TODAY

Will mark birthday with commissioner reunion later this year

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 6, 2009) – The Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC) today marks its 75th birthday, on the anniversary of the appointment of the first commissioners.

On July 6, 1934, Gov. Ruby Laffoon appointed Lloyd Clark of Barren County, William D. Cochran of Mason County and Wilbur K. Miller of Daviess County to the PSC.

The PSC had been established earlier that year by the Kentucky General Assembly, through a statute that took effect on June 14, 1934.

Miller served as the first chairman. He later served 31 years on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, beginning in 1945.

In its first recorded actions, on July 16, 1934, the PSC issued orders granting 11 Kentucky municipalities permission to finance, construct and operate water systems. The first of those orders was for Auburn, in Logan County.

The 11 applications were all filed, heard and granted on the same day.

Nevertheless, in its next session in 1936, the Kentucky General Assembly removed municipal utilities from PSC jurisdiction.

That was but the first of many changes the PSC has seen in its 75 years, said Chairman David Armstrong, who is the 25th person to head the commission.

“Over time, the PSC’s jurisdiction has expanded in some areas and contracted in others,” he said. “But throughout its history, the PSC’s central goal has remained unchanged – safe and reliable utility service at fair, just and reasonable rates.”

Other jurisdictional changes have included the removal of streetcars from PSC regulation in 1950, the addition of water districts in 1964 and water associations in 1972, the addition of private sewer companies in 1975, and the removal of sanitation districts in 1987 and broadband services in 2004.

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Armstrong announced that the PSC will formally mark its 75th anniversary this fall with an event to which all living former commissioners will be invited. The date will be announced later.

“I know that everyone here is looking forward to meeting past commissioners and hearing their perspective on the PSC’s evolving challenges and responsibilities,” Armstrong said. “I hope that former commissioners, especially those who have not been in our current building, in turn will be eager to visit us and see how technology has transformed and improved PSC operations.”

The PSC is an independent agency attached for administrative purposes to the Energy and Environment Cabinet. It regulates more than 1,500 gas, water, sewer, electric and telecommunication utilities operating in Kentucky and has approximately 100 employees.