

Montgomery Advertiser

montgomeryadvertiser.com

WEDNESDAY Aug. 27, 2008 *Montgomery Edition* 50 cents SINCE 1829

MONTGOMERY MAY RAISE TAXES, TRASH FEES — 2A

Alabama Power requests rate hike

By Phillip Rawls
The Associated Press

Alabama Power Co. has asked the Public Service Commission to raise rates for residential customers by 14.6 percent due to rising costs for coal and natural gas.

The state's utility regulatory board announced Tuesday that it will hold a public hearing Sept. 23 in Montgomery to consider the power company's request.

The PSC's regulations allow Alabama Power to recover its fuel costs. But as of July, the company was \$239 million behind because coal costs have gone up 16 percent and natural gas costs 46 percent since 2007, company spokesman Michael Sznajderman said Tuesday.

"Like other utilities, we have experienced pretty dramatic increases in the cost of fuel," Sznajderman said.

Without a change in rates, Alabama Power predicts it would be nearly \$1 billion behind in fuel costs by October 2009, he said.

Under the power company's proposal, a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours per month would go from paying \$112.74 to \$129.19.

The power company's plan calls for an increase of 16 percent for commercial customers and 24.8 percent for industrial customers.

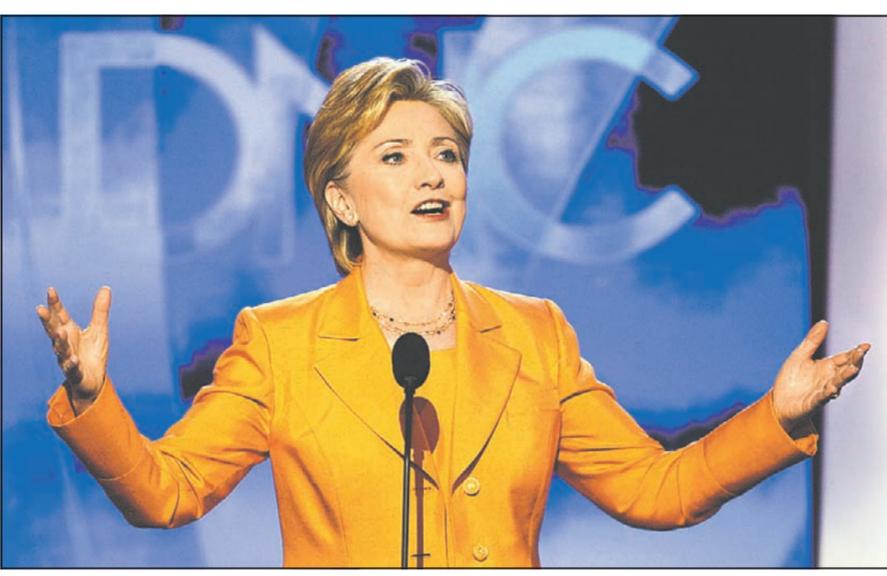
If approved by the commission, the rates would take effect Oct. 9. Over the next year, they would allow Alabama Power to erase the shortage on fuel recovery charges, Sznajderman said.

The commission has the option of stretching the company's recovery over more than 12 months, which would reduce the size of the increase, the company spokesman said.

Alabama Power's proposed hike is part of a trend. Customers of Georgia Power Co., a sister company of Alabama Power, and Entergy Mississippi have seen recent rate hikes due to fuel costs. The Tennessee Valley Authority, which serves the northern third of Alabama, approved a 20 percent rate hike last week.

Alabama Power serves the southern two-thirds of the state.

Its request for a rate hike is no surprise. At a meeting Aug. 5, PSC members mentioned the company was spending more on fuel than it was getting back from its customers, and they speculated that a rate increase application could be coming up.



Ron Edmonds AP

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., addresses Democrats on Tuesday.

Clinton asks supporters to unite behind Obama

By David Espo
The Associated Press

DENVER — Hillary Rodham Clinton summoned the millions of voters who supported her in the primaries to send Barack Obama to the White House Tuesday night, and drew thunderous applause at the Democratic National Convention when she declared her one-time rival is "my candidate and he must be our president."

"We don't have a moment to lose or a vote to spare," said the former first lady, writing the final chapter in a quest for the White House every bit as pioneering as Obama's own.

The packed convention floor became a sea of white "Hillary" signs as the New York senator — Obama's fiercest rival across 56 primaries and caucuses — strode to the podium for her prime-time speech. The signs were soon replaced by others that read simply, "Unity."

While her remarks included a full-throated endorsement of Obama, Clinton did not say whether she would have her name placed in nomination or



seek a formal roll call of the states when the party's top prize is awarded by delegates tonight.

Clinton had been the prohibitive favorite for the nomination she launched her campaign last year, seeking to become the first female president. But she fell behind Obama after the leadoff Iowa caucuses in January, and he now is poised to become the first black nominee of a major party.

Obama turned the featured speaking slot of the convention's second night over to Clinton, hoping she could nudge her disenchanted supporters toward his candidacy.

He called her after her speech to express his appreciation, aides said.

She followed others to the podium who ripped into Republi-

can McCain as indifferent to the working class and cozy with big oil.

"If he's the answer, then the question must be ridiculous," New York Gov. David Paterson said of the GOP presidential candidate.

Said Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, "It's time to bring our jobs back and bring our troops home."

"Call the roll!" urged Ted Sorensen, a party elder eager to propel Obama toward the White House.

Not yet. Obama's formal nomination was set for tonight. First came Clinton.

The convention hall was packed for her appearance, so much so that officials sealed the entrances.

Calling herself a "proud supporter of Obama," Clinton dismissed Republican John McCain with a few choice words.

"No way. No how. No McCain," she said as the hall erupted in cheers.

Clinton Page 5A

Segall campaigns at home during event

By Markeshia Ricks
mricks@gannett.com

Instead of pressing the flesh at what would have been his first convention, District 3 Democratic challenger Joshua Segall is on the campaign trail here in Alabama.

In the lead-up to the convention, Segall said he was going to Denver to drum up interest in his campaign. But he now seems to be taking a cue from fellow Democrat and District 2 candidate Mayor Bobby Bright who made an early decision to stay home.

"There is too much work to be done here," said Segall campaign manager Don Weigel.

Part of that work will be clos-

ing the gap against incumbent U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Saks.

A recent poll from Capital Survey Research Center shows Rogers ahead by 21.5 points.

Though the district trends Democratic, 54 percent of the voters said they favored Rogers, while 32.5 percent said they would vote for Segall. Of the 468 people surveyed, 34.5 percent identified themselves as Democrats, while 26.8 percent said they were Republicans.

Voters who said they were independent represented 31 percent of those surveyed.



Segall

The survey has a margin of error of 4.5 percentage points.

In addition to opening offices in Anniston and Opelika this month, Weigel said the campaign is taking its message on the road.

Segall has been holding a series of town hall meetings throughout the district and plans to hold one in every county of the sprawling district by Nov. 4. So far he's held meetings in Talladega, Russell and Cherokee counties, and he will be in Chambers County on Thursday.

"We're focusing on rural areas where historically Republicans have outperformed Democrats," Weigel said.

Segall Page 5A

AREA HOME SALES DROP IN JULY — 9A

Fay eases conditions of drought

By Markeshia Ricks
mricks@gannett.com

Fay helped save Alabama from the drought, but it may take Gustav to clinch the deal.

Tropical Storm Fay erased the rain deficits in Montgomery, Mobile and Birmingham, but experts said it will take some time before Alabama sees the long-term benefits from the four to 10 inches of rain Fay dropped on the state.

State Climatologist John Christy said the state received enough rain to drastically reduce the amount of severe drought and eliminate any extreme drought conditions, but moderate drought and abnormally dry conditions will remain.

"Although the total rain is above average, many of our rivers were at record lows," Christy said. "Right now we see these spikes in river flow, but how far are they going to fall back? We hope they don't fall back to where they were."

Christy said it also could be some time before the deep soil moisture that was lost during last year's unseasonably dry weather is restored.

Roger McNeil, a hydrologist with the National Weather Service in Birmingham, said whether Fay's impact will be a lasting one will hinge in part on what

happens with another storm that seems to be headed for the Gulf of Mexico — Hurricane Gustav.

Gustav was pounding Haiti on Tuesday, but is expected to be in the Gulf by Sunday.

McNeil said the chance for rain will diminish throughout the rest of the week until that time.

"We're definitely doing better," said Jason Elliot, a meteorologist with the National Weather Services in Huntsville. "What we got in the last 72 hours has definitely made a difference."

Tom Littlepage, chief of water management for the Office of Water Resources, said with the exception of Huntsville, metro areas have received at or above average rainfall thanks to Fay.

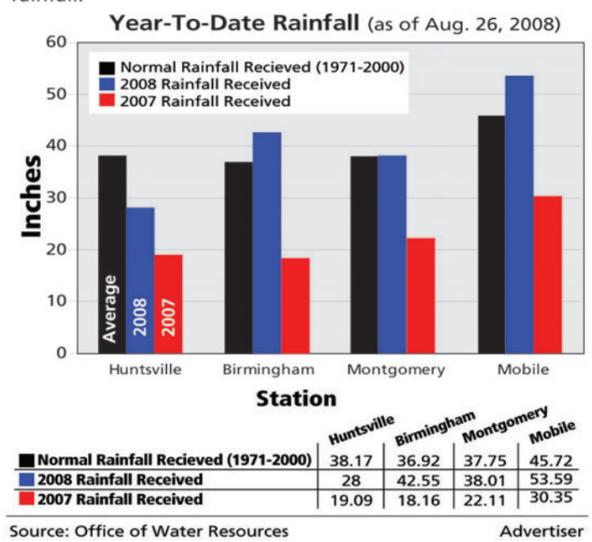
Birmingham and Mobile have surpassed their year-to-date average rainfalls, accumulating 42.55 inches and 53.59 inches respectively. Last year this time, Birmingham received only 18.6 inches and Mobile 30.35.

Littlepage said Montgomery just squeaked past its average rainfall for this time of year, accumulating 38.01 inches compared to 22.11 inches this time last year.

"We're looking pretty good right now, but Gustav will be a factor in this next phase," he said.

DROUGHT RELIEF

Thanks to Tropical Storm Fay, all of the state's major metropolitan areas except Huntsville have surpassed their average rainfall.



A Gannett Newspaper
28 pages
Volume 181, Number 240
© 2008 The Advertiser Co.

For home delivery
877-424-0007
Toll free



50¢

INDEX

ABCs to ACTs	2D	Jumble	7C
Alabama	1B	Metro	2A
Annie's Mailbox	4D	My Life	1D
Bridge	7C	Movies	4D
Business	9A	Nation/World	4B
Classified	6C	Obituaries	8A
Comics	2D	Sports	1C
Crossword	7C	Sudoku	4D
Cryptquote	7C	TV listings	4D
Editorial	2-3B	Weather	10A
Horoscope	7C		

TODAY'S FORECAST

89° Some sun, a t-storm

67° An evening t-storm

For more weather updates go online at montgomeryadvertiser.com

CHECK IT OUT ONLINE
@ www.montgomeryadvertiser.com

Surviving the \$squeeze: Stories about coping in today's economy

Calling all moms! Join our online discussion groups

JEWELRY REPAIR ON PREMISES!
Same Day Service When Possible Tuesday-Saturday

Marqurette's
EXQUISITE JEWELRY

Watch Battery Replacement \$4⁰⁰
Limit 10 per customer with this ad. Expires 10/31/08.

7818 Vaughn Rd. at Taylor Rd. in Cornerstone near Stein Mart • (334) 270-0074 • SORRY, NO PHONE QUOTES. No silver or costume jewelry.