

Jacob Veaghn

From: Ellen Plendl
Sent: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 10:14 AM
To: Consumer Correspondence
Subject: Docket No. 20210001.
Attachments: Re Florida Power & Light Company issues; Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company

See attached customer correspondence and FPSC reply for Docket No. 20210001.

Jacob Veaghn

From: Beatrice Balboa <beatricebalboa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 11:39 PM
To: Ellen Plendl
Subject: Re: Florida Power & Light Company issues
Attachments: FPL customer bills to rise in May due to fuel costs.pdf; FPL bills to increase because of fuel costs.pdf; Power restored at Fort Lauderdale auto repair shop after FPL cuts electricity by mistake – WSVN 7News _ Miami News, Weather, Sports _ Fort Lauderdale.pdf; The Fossil Fuel Industry Used Deception To Conceal Damage To BIPOC — NAACP Report.pdf

5 April 2021 2330 hours

Ellen Plendl
Regulatory Consultant
Florida Public Service Commission
Office of Consumer Assistance & Outreach
1-800-342-3552 (phone)
1-800-511-0809 (fax)

To whom it may concern,

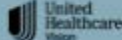
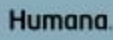
I am writing regarding the latest news media reports underscoring the woeful and disastrous state of the electrical grid throughout the State of Florida, despite strong documentation indicating such problems exist. To compound FPL deep contempt and disrespect of the hardworking taxpayers residents of the State of Florida, documented allegations of overbilling, overcharging and overwhelming electrical rates, surcharges, and fees (Florida Power & Light (FPL) is asking for a \$2 billion increase!) are contributing to a pervasive climate of complete distrust between customers of FPL and the FPL Corporation. Please coordinate, collaborate and cooperate on Federal, State and/or local jurisdictional levels in addressing these egregious concerns potentially impacting adversely the public's safety, health, finances, policies, trust, confidence, and quality of life issues. Thank you for your time in these matters and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,
Beatrice Balboa
1010 South Ocean Boulevard, Unit 1008
Pompano Beach, Fl 33062-6631
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The Fossil Fuel Industry Used Deception To Conceal Damage To BIPOC — NAACP Report



The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) just published a report titled *Fossil Fuel Foolery*, which identified 10 tactics that the fossil fuel industry used as excuses for not accepting accountability for its impacts on the environment and human health. DesmogBlog noted that the industry used a long list of deceptive tactics that concealed environmental destruction harming Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) as well as low-income communities. Not surprising — the fossil fuel industry only cares about money, and if the planet and human health stand in the way of profit, so be it.

The article gave a snapshot of the report findings, and one of the most disturbing things I took notice of was the common tactic that the NAACP described as *“co-opt community leaders and organizations and misrepresent the interests and opinions of communities,” sometimes with financial support, to “neutralize or weaken public opposition.”*

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In short, fossil fuel companies and utilities pour donations on churches, nonprofits, and advocacy



pollution. The article said it plainly: “to stifle the push towards renewable energy.” And that also includes misrepresenting the community through one or two hired hands.

One example noted in the article is Florida Power & Light’s donation of around \$225,000 to the NAACP’s Florida state chapter between 2013 and 2017. Just after these donations, the Florida chapter began repeating industry talking points against the growth of solar energy. This helped accelerate the NAACP’s Initial 2019 report. In addition, the fossil fuel industry and its allies shift the blame onto the very communities affected the most by pollution to distract from the impact of industry operations. This sounds like a narcissistic abuser. Hurt someone and then blame them and convince them it’s their fault.

Last month, President Biden brought attention to a common nickname that encompasses my own city, Cancer Alley. In Louisiana, Cancer Alley is an area along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge (where I live) and New Orleans — the River Parishes of Louisiana where numerous industrial plants are located. This area has clusters of cancer patients and the constant coverage by the media led to the nickname.

President Biden spoke out about the petrochemical facilities that dump out the large quantities of toxic pollution onto predominantly Black communities, and Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) accused the President of slamming our area. Considering Senator Cassidy’s stance in favor of fossil fuels, this isn’t surprising. Earlier this year, President Biden signed executive orders to

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paused oil and gas leasing on federal land. President Biden also targeted removing subsidies for those industries. Senator Cassidy and Senator Kennedy spoke out against the President's orders and in favor of the fossil fuel industry.

"Biden's executive orders are counterproductive. They eliminate jobs and send them overseas to countries with worse environmental standards, increasing global emissions. We don't need symbolism — we need solutions. So far, all we are seeing from this administration is an 'energy' agenda that betrays the working Americans who thought that this President was going to work for them." — Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA)



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SmogBlog noted that when United Nations human rights official issued a statement last month calling "the development of petrochemical complexes" in the region "a form of environmental racism," Senator Cassidy had some words to say about this. It should be noted that Senator Cassidy received around \$600,000 in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry during the 2020 election season. The fossil fuel-addicted senator pointed to obesity and cigarettes as the causes of cancer instead of the rampant pollution.

Late last year, I went down to the riverfront and was fortunate to have had my N95 mask — the chemicals from the plant across the river not only created a haze but made the air foul. That smell was well worse than cigarette smoke. [I wrote about it here](#) because it was so striking.

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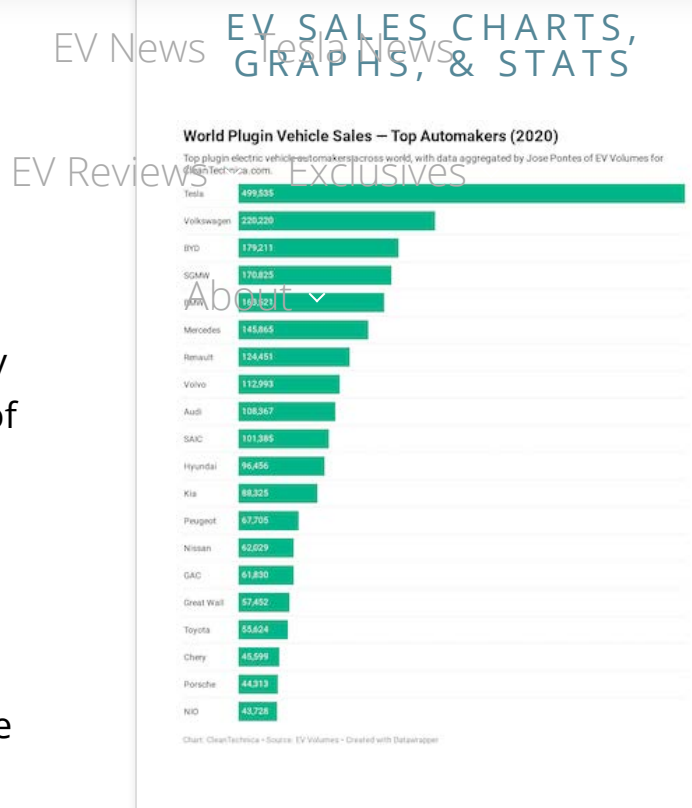
The Top 10 Fossil Fuel Industry Tactics

The NAACP listed the top 10 fossil fuel industry tactics that shift the blame and responsibility of its impact on BIPOC communities. They are as follows:

1. Invest in efforts that undermine democracy.
2. Finance political campaigns and pressure politicians.
3. Fund scientists and scientific research institutions to publish biased research.
4. Say government regulations hurt the economy and low-income communities.
5. Deny or understate the harms polluting facilities cause to people and the environment.
6. Deflect responsibility—shit blame to the communities they pollute.
7. Co-opt community leaders and organizations and misrepresent the interest and opinions of communities.
8. Exaggerate the level of job creation and downplay the lack of quality and safety in jobs.
9. Praise false solutions while claiming that real solutions are impractical, impossible, or harmful for BIPOC and poor communities.
10. “Embrace” renewables to control the new energy economy.



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The highly detailed report actually has information that is highly disturbing. For example, in 1980, ALEC founder Paul Weyrich stated: "I don't want everybody to vote. Elections are not won by a majority of people. They never have been from the beginning of our country, and they are not now. As a matter of fact, our average in the elections quite candidly goes up the voting populace goes down."

In 2010, the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission determined that limited political spending by corporations restricted their constitutional right to freedom of expression. This shifted the political power away from citizens to corporations and special interest groups.

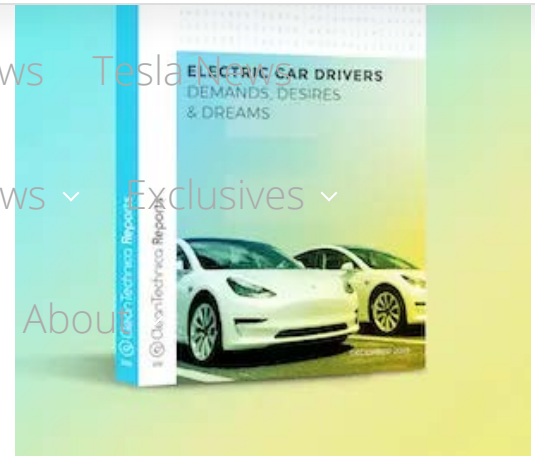
Also, leading up to the 2020 election, the American Petroleum Institute spent over \$5 million in lobbying practices. The group funneled money to campaign contributions — mostly financing the Senate Leadership Fund, which is a super PAC that supports the Republican Party. From the report:

"With financial support from the fossil fuel industry, politicians actively support destructive energy practices, falsely claim that emissions, not fossil fuels, are the enemy and draft diluted environmental

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In this section of the report with the clever above headline, it noted that the Center for American Progress identified over 50 research agreements from a 2010 report. These agreements were between universities and major energy companies, where the companies donated a range between \$1 million and \$500 million toward energy-related research.

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Another example cites a 1997 study by the National Centre for Cancer Institute which found that the chemical benzene, which is found in crude oil and gasoline, was connected to the development of chronic diseases in workers exposed to it. Following this report, several petrochemical companies gave nearly \$40 million to fund scientific research “designed to protect member company interests.” One example of this type of research is the Shanghai Research Project which published research that supported the petrochemical companies’ practices.

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The report noted that around 63,000 Americans are killed each year by air pollution and these Americans are disproportionately BIPOC and low-income community residents. Senator Cassidy can blame fat people and cigarettes all day, but it won't change the fact that 40% of communities of color and low-income communities live within three miles of power plants that emit particulate matter that taints our air quality. Last year when the Exxon plant had that [explosion](#) — and, yes, in spite of what officials said, there were reports of an actual explosion (I was less than five miles away from the explosion) — who knows what was pumped into our air?



[You can read the NAACP's full report here.](#)

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Power restored at Fort Lauderdale auto repair shop after FPL cuts electricity by mistake

Brandon Beyer

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA. (WSVN) - Florida Power and Light crews have restored power to an auto repair shop in Fort Lauderdale, days after they shut it off by mistake.

Ben Levy, the owner of Wales Garage, said his troubles started Saturday morning.

"I received a phone call that there was no power here at the shop," he said.

The family-owned auto repair shop has been fixing engines in South Florida since 1975, a tough job that's impossible to do without electricity.

Levy said FPL was supposed to turn the power off to a billboard that hovers just above the garage, but crews made a mistake and turned off his instead.

"We went outside and saw that the meters were missing and that the drop from the power pole had been removed," he said.

His neighbors' security cameras showed the power truck as it pulled up Friday afternoon. The workers' bucket went up, and the power was cut off.

"FPL actually admitted that they went to the wrong address, that they removed the drop improperly, and that the meter cans didn't need to be replaced," said Levy.

In a statement to 7News, FPL spokesperson Matt Eissey wrote, "We are aware of a situation involving FPL crews who recently went to an incorrect address in Fort Lauderdale for scheduled work. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our customer. We restored service to the customer earlier today and continue to work directly with him regarding this situation."

Levy said he felt a lot better when he saw the power trucks roll in Monday afternoon and restore his power.

"It was a relief to see them turning the corner and then coming up and saying, 'We know we made a mistake. We're gonna make this right for you,'" he said.

Levy said he understands things can happen, but he had to rent an expensive generator to keep his shop up and running throughout the weekend, and he hopes he is able to recoup those costs.

"Hopefully they'll reimburse us for what it's cost," he said.

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FPL bills to increase because of fuel costs

Jim Saunders, Reporter, News Service of Florida

Published: **April 2, 2021, 10:50 am**

Tags: **Florida, Money**





increases in their monthly bills starting in May.

The state Public Service Commission on Thursday approved a request by FPL to collect \$302.5 million from customers to cover additional costs of fuel for power plants. Also Thursday, the commission approved a pilot program that will involve Tampa Electric Co. installing about 200 charging ports for electric vehicles.

Fuel costs make up a major part of customers' monthly bills, and utilities are supposed to pass through those costs without profiting. Each fall, the commission approves estimated fuel costs. But utilities can return to the commission to seek increases in customer bills if fuel costs are substantially higher than projected.

FPL made a **filing in February** asking to collect the additional money, pointing to increases in "natural gas prices and a rise in the natural gas forward curve exacerbated by cold weather events."

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Under the plan approved by the commission, FPL customers who use 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity a month will see their bills increase from the current \$99.05 a month to \$103.02 in May. The additional charges will continue through December.

The utility industry uses 1,000 kilowatt-hour residential bills as a benchmark, but electricity consumption varies widely among customers.

Duke Energy Florida made a **filing last week** at the Public Service Commission that said its fuel costs surged early in the year but that natural gas prices subsequently went down. As a result, it said it would not seek an increase in the amount it collects from customers.

Duke pointed to a "short-term increase driven by increased demand during the winter months coupled with a short-term decrease in supply resulting from the winter storm that impacted Texas and the (Midwest) in February. In the aftermath of that unprecedented event, natural gas prices have decreased."



other companies try to prepare for increased use of electric cars and trucks in the coming years.

Under the four-year program, Tampa Electric will install about 200 charging ports at places such as businesses, multi-family housing communities and government buildings. The commission approved the utility spending \$2 million on costs such as installation and another \$100,000 a year for operations.

“Electric vehicle use in Florida is on the rise, and approval of these additional charging stations will help Florida keep pace with this growing industry,” Commission member Andrew Fay said in a statement after the approval.

But commission Chairman Gary Clark dissented, expressing concerns about Tampa Electric customers who wouldn't participate in the program being forced to pick up part of the cost.

Ad

“I just think that we really need to look at how, even in a pilot program, how we are spreading costs around,” Clark said.

News Service of Florida

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

[Jim Saunders](#)

Jim has been executive editor of the News Service since 2013 and has covered state government and politics in Florida since 1998.

 [email](#)



NEWSWIRE

FPL customer bills to increase in May; company officials cite rising fuel costs

Jim Saunders News Service of Florida

Published 6:32 p.m. ET Apr. 4, 2021

TALLAHASSEE — With natural gas costing more than expected, Florida Power & Light customers will see increases in their monthly bills starting in May.

The state Public Service Commission on Thursday approved a request by FPL to collect \$302.5 million from customers to cover additional costs of fuel for power plants. Also Thursday, the commission approved a pilot program that will involve Tampa Electric Co. installing about 200 charging ports for electric vehicles.

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FPL made a filing in February asking to collect the additional money, pointing to increases in "natural gas prices and a rise in the natural gas forward curve exacerbated by cold weather events."

By the way: FPL's newest Indian River County solar energy farm to be completed by summer

Related: FPL deploys artificial reef ball project to stop beach erosion, create wildlife habitat

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Duke pointed to a "short-term increase driven by increased demand during the winter months coupled with a short-term decrease in supply resulting from the winter storm that impacted Texas and the (Midwest) in February. In the aftermath of that unprecedented event, natural gas prices have decreased."

The commission's approval of the Tampa Electric vehicle-charging pilot program came as the state, utilities and other companies try to prepare for increased use of electric cars and trucks in the coming years.

Under the four-year program, Tampa Electric will install about 200 charging ports at places such as businesses, multi-family housing communities and government buildings. The commission approved the utility spending \$2 million on costs such as installation and another \$100,000 a year for operations.

"Electric vehicle use in Florida is on the rise, and approval of these additional charging stations will help Florida keep pace with this growing industry," Commission member Andrew Fay said in a statement after the approval.

But commission Chairman Gary Clark dissented, expressing concerns about Tampa Electric customers who wouldn't participate in the program being forced to pick up part of the cost.

"I just think that we really need to look at how, even in a pilot program, how we are spreading costs around," Clark said.

Jacob Veauhn

From: Ellen Plendl
Sent: Tuesday, April 6, 2021 10:13 AM
To: 'beatricebalboa@gmail.com'
Subject: Consumer Inquiry - Florida Power & Light Company

Ms. Beatrice Balboa
beatricebalboa@gmail.com

RE: FPSC Inquiry 1366420C

Dear Ms. Balboa:

This is in response to your E-mail to the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) regarding Florida Power & Light Company (FPL). You expressed concern about FPL's mid-year request for an increase to its fuel adjustment charge.

The fuel adjustment charge recovers the actual expenses associated with securing and processing fuel necessary to run the power plants used to generate electricity. Fuel rates mirror rising and falling fuel costs as reflected in the international marketplace. The revenue generated by the fuel adjustment charge does not add to the profit of the utility companies, but goes to pay fuel suppliers and transporters. The cost of fuel is shown as a separate cents per kilowatt-hour charge, and fuel costs are not contained in any other charge on a customer's bill.

Each year, utilities file their projected fuel expenses for the upcoming calendar year. The FPSC, along with the Office of Public Counsel and other consumer representatives closely examine the fuel costs requested by the utilities. Public hearings are held annually to set the fuel factors for the next year. Since rates are set on projected costs, at the end of the year, the costs are "trued-up" or compared to the audited actual expenses incurred by the utility. If the utility recovered more than its actual costs, the amount of over-recovery is used to reduce the next year's costs. If the utility under-recovered (costs were higher than expected) that deficit is likewise rolled into the next year. The fuel cost adjustment is recognized by virtually all state commissions, by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and is also used by most municipal electric utilities and rural electric cooperatives.

The fuel and capacity cost component of customers' bills is set for each calendar year, but mid-course corrections are used when a utility's costs increase or decrease significantly in the interim. Under Commission rules, a utility must notify the FPSC when it expects an under- or over-recovery greater than 10 percent. Current fuel factors for Florida's investor-owned utilities were set by the FPSC during the November 2020 annual cost recovery clause hearing.

On April 1, 2021, the FPSC approved a fuel factor increase for FPL customers resulting from unexpected natural gas price increases. Utilities do not earn a profit on fuel charges, and the FPSC will continue to ensure the company has done everything possible to keep fuel costs reasonable, while maintaining a reliable fuel supply.

As a result of the approval, FPL customers will see a bill increase beginning in May to reflect its under recovery of fuel costs. A residential customer's monthly 1,000-kilowatt hour (kWh) bill for May through December 2021 will be \$103.02, an increase of \$3.97 over the current bill of \$99.05.

We appreciate your comments regarding the petition and will add your correspondence to Docket No. 20210001.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 1-800-342-3552 or by fax at 1-800-511-0809.

Sincerely,

Ellen Plendl
Regulatory Consultant
Florida Public Service Commission
Office of Consumer Assistance & Outreach
1-800-342-3552 (phone)
1-800-511-0809 (fax)