

Quarterly Programs and Issues
1st Quarter 2019 – WRHM & WVSZ

Programs:

WRHM/WVSZ provides local newscasts nine times each weekday. One-minute updates run on the half-hour, Mon-Fri, between 6 and 10am. In addition, longer newscasts air at 7:02 and 8:02am and on the half-hour between 3 and 6pm. On Saturday, the longer newscasts air on the half-hour between 9am and 12noon.

Public Service Announcements are aired on a rotating basis, and are prerecorded. Some are voiced by members of the community. Public service announcements air daily.

The FM107 Community Calendars air on a daily basis, and are updated two to three times per week. Those calendars provide dates, time and phone numbers of events occurring in Lancaster, Chester, York and Chesterfield Counties. These programs air multiple times per day.

Critical Issues facing the region, covered by FM107 news during the quarter include:

10/1/18 - Top Republican leaders and city leaders announced the official dates of the Republican National Convention on Monday. Officials said the dates will be August 24 to 27. Charlotte is hosting the high profile event in 2020 at The Spectrum Center. The announcement was critical from a planning perspective because tens of thousands of visitors will descend on Charlotte that week. Officials said \$50 million federal tax dollars are going toward protecting the public during the week of the RNC. The convention is expected to bring a major economic boost to the region with a positive spending impact approaching \$200 million for the week.

10/1/18 - Dominion Energy will be doing business in South Carolina, just as the Virginia-based company wants to buy SCE&G's parent SCANA Energy. In a release, Dominion Energy says that a subsidiary of theirs has been awarded the contract to buy and operate the electric utility system for Fort Jackson in Columbia. The subsidiary, Dominion Privatization South Carolina, LLC, will assume ownership, operation and maintenance of the electric system at Fort Jackson. Dominion Energy will take over operation of the base's system in April 2019. The company has a 50-year contract to provide service.

10/3/18 - The federal government will open three Disaster Recovery Centers in the flood-damaged Pee Dee region. The Small Business Administration and FEMA said the centers open today in Horry, Dillon, and Chesterfield counties. They're meant to help residents with damages and losses from Hurricane Florence's aftermath. State officials say more than 1,500 homes were damaged by the storm... including more than 750 with major damage or completely destroyed.

10/3/18 - The South Carolina Election Commission wants to replace the statewide voting system by 2020. It's working on raising as much as 50 million dollars to pay for a new voting system. Election Commission spokesperson Chris Whitmire (Whit-myre) said the current system has been in use for more than 14 years. Whitmire said the commission will have a better idea of how much the system will cost when vendors start submitting bids.

10/5/18 - The South Carolina Department of Transportation has been making progress repairing 75-million dollars in roads damaged by Florence. Nearly 100 roads remain closed statewide because of flooding or damage from the storm. SCDOT Deputy Secretary for Engineering Leland Colvin says floodwaters are still too high in some areas to assess damage. That 75-million dollar damage estimate is expected to go up since DOT teams haven't been able to assess some roads because they're still too flooded.

10/8/18 - As South Carolina hosts world aerospace leaders at its annual Aerospace Conference and Expo this week in Columbia, an economist says the industry contributes more than 14-billion-dollars to the state economy. University of South Carolina Research Economist Joey von Nessen says the industry has grown significantly over the past decade in South Carolina. According to von Nessen's research the aerospace industry contributes 14-point-one billion dollars to the state economy and it is expected to continue to grow.

10/9/18 - President Trump accepted the resignation of U-S Ambassador to the United Nations - Nikki Haley on Tuesday. President Trump announced in a joint meeting with the Ambassador that she would be staying on until the end of the year - and that the discussion of the potential resignation had come up months before. Haley said she would leave the post at year's end. Haley said she has no immediate plans after leaving office... although she said she does not plan to run for president in 2020.

10/11/18 - Crews from several utilities are working to restore power to thousands of customers in South Carolina after Tropical Storm Michael. As many as 135-thousand outages were reported statewide Thursday morning. Eric Boomhower with SCE&G said the quick-moving storm will help crews working to restore power. Boomhower also recommends that if your power goes out, report it. That way the utility knows how many customers are affected by an outage.

10/12/18 - A federal appeals court has given the federal government the go-ahead to begin closing down construction of an experimental nuclear project in Aiken County. The panel this week reversed a lower judge's hold which prevented the Energy Department from ending work on the costly, behind-schedule Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Facility until South Carolina's lawsuit could be heard. Attorney General Alan Wilson said he's disappointed by the ruling, but his office is working out its next steps. Nuclear watchdog Tom Clements said the ruling may mark the project's end. Clements said Congress has already authorized the Energy Department to use its funding to shut down the project. If finished, the MOX plant would convert nuclear warheads into reactor fuel. However the project in Aiken County has fallen years behind schedule and is practically out of money.

10/17/18 - The state Senate Finance Taxation System Review and Reform Subcommittee meet Wednesday. Committee Co-Chair Republican Sean Bennett of Dorchester County says overhauling the entire state tax codes is something that should be tackled during the next legislative session. He says he wants to go further than the tax bill they passed in a special two weeks ago.

10/21/18 - One of the farmers participating in the state's pilot industrial hemp program has completed his harvest. Kevin Dean with Lowcountry Hemp said he lost about one-third of his crop in Hurricane Florence, but was able to salvage the rest for C-B-D oil processing. Dean said he was inspired to grow hemp after working with a client who needed his services as an attorney to testify before state lawmakers. Dean said hemp could help tobacco farmers in rural counties recover from a drop in demand. Dean hopes the program will help change public perception about hemp. The SC Department of Agriculture selected 20 farmers to grow up to 20 acres of industrial hemp in this first year. Applications are currently being reviewed for the second-year growers.

10/24/18 - Are you a billionaire? Check your tickets. The winning numbers for the record \$1.6 billion Mega Millions jackpot were drawn Tuesday night. According to the Mega Millions website, one ticket sold in South Carolina matched all six numbers to win Tuesday's \$1.6 billion jackpot. The jackpot for Friday's Mega Millions drawing has reset to \$40 million. The winning numbers were 5-28-62-65-70 and the Mega Ball was 5.

10/26/18 - South Carolina students outperform the nation on SAT and Advanced Placement Examinations. On Thursday the College Board released national and South Carolina specific results for their SAT and Advanced Placement assessments. South Carolina students scored fifteen points above the national average on the SAT exam and exceeded the nation on eight out of the top ten tested subjects of Advanced Placement exams. South Carolina's overall mean score was 1064, fifteen points above the national mean of 1049. A total of 22,141 South Carolina students or 50% of the class of 2018 took the SAT assessment, a 5.7% increase from last year's class.

10/26/18 - Nutramax, a Lancaster County manufacturer is expanding, bringing 225 new jobs and a \$20 million investment. Published reports say a statement from South Carolina Department of Commerce said Nutramax will expand its existing buildings both for corporate and manufacturing space. Hiring will begin immediately. Nutramax researches and develops nutritional supplement products for people and pets. Nutramax moved its animal health and corporate operations to Lancaster County in 2010. The company now operates sites in South Carolina and Maryland.

10/29/18 - John Hayes...a circuit judge from Rock Hill, SC is expected to declare the South Carolina Baseload Review Act Unconstitutional, according to published reports. In lieu of the expected decision the judge has asked lawyers to prepare orders before the final ruling. If ruled unconstitutional the decision could force SCE&G to repay hundreds of millions of dollars to customers to pay a 5-billion dollar portion of almost 9 billion dollars spent on the abandoned V.C. Summer Nuclear project. This could jeopardize the proposed 14.6 billion dollar deal between SCANA corp and Dominion Energy as well as prevent the utility from recovering their costs in the future.

10/30/18 - The State House Opioid Abuse Prevention Study Committee Tuesday heard from Dr. Josh Rising of the Pew Research Center on treatment plans other states are using. He says there is a gap in South Carolina between the number of people who need treatment and those who access treatment.

10/31/18 - Legislators say they will consider a proposal by a Virginia company to potentially manage state-owned utility Santee Cooper. Dominion Energy has proposed keeping Santee Cooper public, but taking over the day-to-day operations as the utility struggles to repay \$4 billion in debt. State Sen. Larry Grooms said Dominion should submit a proposal to the committee if it is serious. The study committee hopes to consider potential bids or other offers by early next year.

11/1/18 - Carolina Poly Inc. in Chester County is expanding and adding 75 new jobs. The company is part of Poly-America, one of the largest polyethylene film manufacturers in the U.S. Carolina Poly announced in 2015 they were investing \$100 million in Chester County. The 500-square-foot facility at 1580 Lancaster Highway began production in 2017. Now, the polyethylene film manufacturer is making a \$25 million investment to add capacity. Hiring for new positions begins immediately. State employment data shows manufacturing is a major force in Chester County, with more than three times the manufacturing jobs there than in any other segment of the work force.

11/1/18 - The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources received a \$270,000 grant toward the purchase of land for the Flat Creek Conservation Area. It adjoins the Forty Acre Rock Heritage Preserve in Lancaster County. The property will be open year-round and remain as wildlife habitat, forest and recreation site. OceanaGold is the grant donor. The next grant cycle, through Central Carolina Community Foundation, is accepting applications for funding through Dec. 31. The Forty Acre Rock site is almost 3,000 acres, open during daylight hours. Camping and motorized vehicles aren't allowed. The site, off U.S. 601 and Nature Reserve Road, has nearly a dozen rare, threatened or endangered species along with waterfalls, caves, natural water slides and more.

11/4/18 - The number of voter registrations for this election submitted in the last four months more than doubled from the same time in 2014. Chris Whitmire with the South Carolina Election Commission says compared to 43-thousand voter registrations in 2014, there were 91-thousand voter registrations during the last four months of 2018. Whitmire says this year there was a social media push encouraging people to register to vote that didn't occur in 2014. People can vote by absentee until 5 p-m today at their county election offices. All absentee ballots must be received by county registration offices by 7 p-m Tuesday.

11/5/18 - Chester County Council is now ready for a final vote Nov. 5 on rezonings that could make way for new industrial construction on more than 1,200 acres. The area likely will be three of four large industrial sites, rather than a "super site" with one industry according to published reports. Karlisa Parker Dean, director of Chester County Economic Development, said the rezonings could make the land more desirable for companies. The rezonings fit into what Chester county forecasts for the Richburg area, just north of Lancaster Highway, near Sloan Road. The land, called Richburg Magnolias, is across from the several-hundred acre L&C Distribution Park, and other industrial sites. County records show two of the six land parcels -- a combined 197 acres -- up for rezoning were sold May 10 for \$6 million. The remaining four parcels combined are 1,012 acres and worth \$3.74 million, according to county records.

11/6/18 - Midterm elections came to a close last night as winners were announced locally and statewide. Randy Ligon defeated Tom Hawk in a race for House Seat 43. Ligon said the entire process was rewarding. Other House winners include Raye Felder...BRandon Newton...Gary Simrill...Tommy Pope...Bruce Bryant and John King. In a race for York County Council Seat 7 it was Joel Hamilton who ousted Montrio Belton. Hamilton said the County can't pave its way out of trouble, but they need to keep paving. Brent Faulkenberry won the at large seat on the Rock Hill School Board. Faulkenberry said the biggest thing people want in Rock Hill is school safety.

Robin Owens defeated Valarie Walker for the District 4 seat. She said she is honored by the support she received. Helena Miller defeated Marilyn Martin for the other school board seat. In Fort Mill it was Celia McCarter..Wayne Bouldin...Michele Branning and Brian Murphy winning the four at-large seats on the school board. Amber Floyd and Diana Howard earned seats on the York School Board. Carolyn Rogers defeated Diondra Love to earn another term as York County Probate Judge and Ralph Norman defeated Archie Parnell for another term representing the 5th Congressional District.

11/7/18 - In results likely to shake up South Carolina's political landscape and grab national attention, Democrat Joe Cunningham won the state's coastal seat in Congress. The outcome, was not decided until 2 a.m. this morning. Additionally, Republican hopeful Katie Arrington had been widely favored to win the seat and keep the district in GOP hands after defeating Republican incumbent and former governor Mark Sanford, fell victim to the assumption that being a conservative was enough in a district drawn with a built-in red base. Cunningham won with 50.7% of the vote. In the second house district it was Republican Joe Wilson winning with 56.9% over Democrat Sean Carrigan. House Seat District Three went to Republican Jeff Duncan carrying 67.8% of that vote. Trey Gowdy's seat in House District Four will stay in G.O.P. hands as William Timmons garnered 59.7% of that vote. Fifth District Republican Congressman Ralph Norman defeated Democratic candidate Archie Parnell by a decisive 57% of the vote. Democratic Incumbent James Clyburn scored 70% of the vote in the 6th district to return for another term in the U.S. House and in District 7 Republican Tom Rice won with 60% of that vote.

11/7/18 - The South Carolina Public Service Commission hearing on who will set South Carolina Electric&Gas' rates and decide who, SCE&G owner SCANA, customers or both, will have to pay off its nearly \$5 billion in construction debt from the abandoned VC Summer nuclear expansion continues this week. Anthony James of the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff testified how that they communicated with SCE&G on the project. SCE&G and partner, state-owned Santee Cooper decided in July of 2017 to abandon the project due to costs.

11/11/18 - SCANA CEO Jim Addison testified at a South Carolina Public Service Commission hearing Friday that South Carolina Electric and Gas is doing well in the aftermath of the abandonment of their nuclear expansion at the VC Summer plant in Fairfield County in July 2017. SCE&G and state-owned partner Santee Cooper decided to end the project after realizing there was no way that could complete it.

11/12/18 - SCANA CFO Iris Griffin testified at a Public Service Commission hearing Monday that if an Office of Regulatory Staff rate cut becomes permanent it would put the company into

financial straits. SCANA is the parent company of SCE&G, the hearing will eventually determine who pays for the failed VC Summer nuclear expansion.

11/14/18 - The state Senate Finance K-12 Education Committee is looking into what can be done in removing clutter from the classroom that creates barriers for teachers. Sen. Vincent Sheheen says teachers need to teach. He acknowledges that there are some things that cannot be eased or eliminated.

11/15/18 - During a South Carolina Public Service hearing Thursday on the possible sale of utility SCANA, an official with protentional buyer Dominion Energy said that SCANA customers would not pay for the merger. James Chapman says the cost of the merger would be spread out. The hearing will also determine who pays for SCANA and state-owned utility Santee Cooper's abandoned nuclear expansion at the VC Summer plant in Fairfield County.

11/18/18 - Triple-A expects a record number of people will be traveling this Thanksgiving holiday and 90-percent of them will be driving. Tiffany Wright with triple-A Carolinas says there's going to be a lot of people on the roads this week. Drivers are warned to be patient, slow down, wear seatbelts, avoid distractions and don't drink alcohol.

11/18/18 - Leaders from several South Carolina charter schools told legislators last week that they left the state's official public school district for a new one because of disrespect and unreasonable expectations from the public district. Gray Collegiate Academy principal Brian Newsome said they moved to the Erskine Charter Institute because they did not agree with the criteria used to put them on probation. David Crook of the online charter Cyber Academy said they were being judged to the same standards as other schools, despite that many of their students are taking their courses as a last resort. Legislators are studying what to do about the Erskine Charter Institute... which started up last year and took on schools that had been on probation at the public district. South Carolina's charter school laws were only drafted with the expectation of a single district.

11/20/18 - The former vice president of nuclear finance administration for SCANA testified at the South Carolina Public Service Commission hearing Tuesday that executives tried to silence her concerns about the VC Summer nuclear expansion project before it failed. Carlette Walker told commissioners she was not going to lie. Walker was a witness for the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff.

11/20/18 - A third suspect was taken into custody in Lancaster County after a Nov. 1 burglary and shooting on Kings Circle in Lancaster. Malcolm Eugene Belk, 28, was arrested last Thursday. Members of the sheriff's office street crimes unit found Belk at a home on Elm St. in Lancaster. He was charged with burglary, attempted murder and possession of a firearm during a violent crime. Bond was denied. Two other suspects were arrested earlier. Aikiriea Okeishai Crockett, 21, was arrested and charged with burglary and attempted murder. Travis Phillip Miller was arrested Nov. 6 in Lancaster and charged with burglary, attempted murder, possession of a firearm in a violent crime and possession of a stolen pistol. A fourth suspect, identified by police as Danquinton Lamar Johnson, 27, remains at large. Sheriff Barry Faile's office has issued warrants for Johnson's arrest in the incident. Anyone with information should call 888-274-6372.

11/23/18 - MorningStar Fellowship Church has sued York County and two former county leaders, claiming civil rights violations related to religious freedom over the church's efforts to protect Heritage Tower near Fort Mill. According to published reports, MorningStar, which owns the tower that was part of the former Heritage USA, filed the suit Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Rock Hill, alleging "hostile and discriminatory conduct" by the county. The suit asks for a temporary restraining order and permanent injunction against York County, prohibiting it from "taking any action whatsoever to attempt to destroy" the 21-story Heritage Tower.

11/26/18 - South Carolina State Senator Ronnie Cromer suspects just like SCE&G and SCANA dominated the last legislative session, Santee Cooper will be a major issue in this coming one. The legislature debated several bills designed to protect ratepayers after SCANA and Santee Cooper decided to give up building nuclear reactors at the V.C. Summer Station in Fairfield County. The Pomaria Senator said there's still a lot of work to be done regarding state-owned Santee Cooper. Last session, the legislature passed a temporary rate cut for SCE&G customers -- who were paying for construction costs on the nuclear reactors after the work stopped.

11/27/18 - Atrium Health said a cyber incident involving a vendor it uses for billing services may have exposed the personal information of 2.65 million patients. AccuDoc Solutions, Inc. informed Atrium, formerly known as Carolinas HealthCare System, that there may have been unauthorized access to its databases. Those databases contained personal information related to patient payments from Atrium locations as well as locations Atrium manages. Atrium said the compromised information included patients' names, addresses, dates of birth, insurance policy information, medical record numbers, invoice numbers, account balances and dates of services. Atrium estimates about 700,000 of the exposed records may have also included Social Security numbers. Atrium Health is the largest health care system in both North and South Carolina.

11/28/18 - South Carolina's environmental agency is reopening its search for a new chief. The Department of Health and Environmental Control's board is moving to reopen a national search for its next director. The State newspaper reports Chairman Mark Elam informed employees of the decision after the board could not find anyone they wanted among the 108 applications they received. The search takes on an increased urgency after interim director David Wilson... who was previously the agency's liaison with the legislature... indicated he plans to retire at year's end. Elam said the search will reopen for a brief time to allow for a potential new round of interviews.

11/29/18 - A judge has dismissed a lawsuit over the death of a Marine recruit on Parris Island two years ago. The case stems from 20-year-old Raheel Siddiqui's death at the Marine training base. An investigation found Siddiqui had jumped off a stairwell after particularly severe punishment from a drill instructor... including slapping him after he collapsed from running. That drill instructor was later found guilty of abuse by a military jury. According to the Associated Press, Federal Judge Arthur Tarnow expressed "strong reservations" on Tuesday but said he must follow legal precedent, which does not allow litigation for military deaths. The family did receive a half-million dollars in death benefits and insurance, but the judge agreed it did not address their complaints.

12/3/18 - Offshore drilling off South Carolina is one step closer to reality. The National Marine Fisheries Service on Friday authorized permits for five companies to potentially impact wildlife with seismic surveys in the mid-Atlantic Ocean. The technology uses sonic air blasts to search for potential oil or natural gas deposits at the bottom of the ocean. Conservation groups oppose the permits... arguing the technology used impacts marine wildlife, although the industry says there is little conclusive evidence of that. Most of South Carolina's coastal elected officials... and Gov. Henry McMaster... say they oppose any drilling. However, some inland lawmakers hope it could bring jobs to neglected parts of the state.

12/4/18 - Some 47,953 residents are living in poverty in the York-Lancaster- Chester tri-county area. This according to the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates report from the U.S. Census Bureau released yesterday, the funding area schools will get next school year depends on the data in this report which is part of the funding formula for Title 1 school eligibility. According to a published report, Title 1 distributes additional funding to schools in lower income, higher poverty areas. State Department of Education data lists 15 Title 1 schools in York County, nine in Lancaster County and six in Chester County. Most are elementary schools. School district trend data dates back to 1999. Funding for the 2019-2020 school year will be based on the 2017 poverty estimates released yesterday.

12/4/18 - According to published reports, Police in Lancaster are investigating a Sunday evening shooting of a man who was found in the street by neighbors. The incident happened around 6 p.m. Sunday on Old Landsford Road near Springdale Road outside the Lancaster city limits. Doug Barfield, spokesman for the Lancaster County Sheriff's office said the 22 year old male victim was transferred from Springs Memorial Hospital in Lancaster to a Charlotte hospital after the shooting. The victim was shot at least once in the torso. The victim's identity has not been released.

12/5/18 - Reforming the state's tax code is one goal in the next legislative session for state lawmakers. The Senate Finance Taxation System Review and Reform Subcommittee this week heard from senior policy analyst of the Tax Foundation Jared Walczak. Walczak told senators that South Carolina is not a high tax state, however, its policies are out of date.

12/7/18 - The remains of an Anderson sailor killed at Pearl Harbor 77 years ago have now returned home. Navy Fireman Second Class Carl Dorr was among 429 crewmen who died when the battleship USS Oklahoma sank in the Japanese attack. His remains were identified this summer. The Greenville News reports they were flown back to South Carolina on Wednesday, then escorted by the Highway Patrol and Patriot Guard Rider motorcyclists to a funeral home. Dorr and hundreds of other unidentified men were interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. The Pentagon recently ordered DNA tests on the Oklahoma victims in an effort to identify them.

12/9/18 - State election officials are now moving to replace South Carolina's outdated voting machines. The Election Commission submitted a request from potential vendors for bids to replace its approximately 13,000 voting machines... which date back to the early 2000s. The agency says it still needs about \$60 million to pay for the new machines and will make such a

request to the legislature next year. It hopes to have the new machines in time for the 2020 presidential primary elections.

12/10/18 - The most recent layoffs at the Mix-Oxide Fuel Facility in Aiken County brings the total jobs lost to 988. Another round of layoffs at the MOX facility in Aiken County brings the total job losses to nearly one-thousand. The Aiken Standard reports 372 employees received layoff notices last Thursday. Previous layoff notices have been issued since the Nuclear Security Administration announced in October that its was terminating its contract for the mix-oxide fuel facility. The Aiken Standard reports the final layoff notices will be issued next month.

12/11/18 - The Lake Wateree lake level is just under 100 feet and began spilling yesterday afternoon. The Duke Energy hydro operations team is aggressively moving water through the river system with spillway gates open at Wylie, Fishing Creek and Cedar Creek hydro stations. Based on current conditions, the lake level is not expected to exceed 101.0 feet. Additional rainfall is forecast for this weekend and will cause higher lake levels. More information will be provided as conditions change.

12/11/18 - Christopher Benjamin Mendez, 29, of Lancaster, is charged with murder and possession of a weapon during a violent crime. Mendez is the accused killer of Karson Whitesell, 19, a teenage store clerk at the Peach Stand in Fort Mill who was killed on January 23rd. Mendez was hospitalized for a mental health problem before the killing and after arrest was tested by doctors, court records show. No motive for the killing has been released. York County prosecutors confirmed the Tuesday morning hearing for Mendez at the Moss Justice Center in York, but declined to say what is expected to happen at the hearing.

12/13/18 - The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee this week heard testimony that teachers need more time to teach. George Johnson of Meeting Street Academy in Charleston told the committee teachers need more interaction with students. He says when teachers have more time to teach, students appreciate it.

12/14/18 - South Carolina regulators signed off Friday on SCANA's merger with Virginia-based Dominion Energy. Public Service Commission Vice-chair Elliott Elam says he feels that it's a good deal. Dominion's offer includes an up-to-\$22-a-month rate cut for customers of SCANA's electric subsidiary, SCE&G. But no \$1,000 rebate which was part of another merger plan.

12/14/18 - The volunteer chief at the Indian Land Fire Department was arrested Friday in a prostitution sting at a motel near Carowinds, according to authorities. Thomas Wayne Pickard, 52, was charged with first-offense prostitution and is in the York County jail. Pickard is also a full-time lieutenant with Lancaster County Fire Rescue. He has been placed on administrative leave without pay until a personnel investigation is conducted.

12/16/18 - Utility watchdogs say state law limited what customers could get after a Virginia-based company got permission to buy South Carolina Electric & Gas last week. The Public Service Commission ruled customers will pay for nuclear-related debt incurred before March 2015 on an ill-fated nuclear project. Office of Regulatory Staff director Nanette Edwards said that's the date the commission believes SCE&G no longer spent prudently on the project it

ultimately abandoned. Spokesman Ron Aiken said a 2007 state law allows utilities to recover money spent "prudently" on nuclear construction. The ruling means the percentage of customers' bills going towards nuclear debt will remain the same... roughly \$22 less than this point last year on average.

12/17/18 - South Carolina's environmental and public health agency is still looking for a new director... more than 17 months after the previous one announced her resignation. The Department of Health and Environmental Control board met last week to pick an interim. The board named general counsel Marshall Taylor as temporary director, replacing David Wilson who is retiring after holding the post for more than a year. Chairman Mark Elam said the board also met with several potential candidates. The board had more than 100 applicants earlier this year, but did not hire any of them.

12/18/18 - Two veteran South Carolina teachers explained to a Senate subcommittee why there's a teacher shortage in South Carolina. Wages, too much testing, class size and even personal security were among the issues they raised. Lisa Ellis with "S-C for Ed" said many tests students take are not mandated by the state. S-C Education Association President Sherry East said some districts are more worried about their annual report card scores than the children they're supposed to be educating. S-C Education Association President Sherry East said the number-one issue for teachers is pay. S-C Education Association President Sherri East said teachers are frustrated because students are not being disciplined for classroom behavior. The Senate subcommittee wanted teachers to tell them about the clutter in the classroom that creates barriers for teachers.

12/18/18 - Michael Brent Gay, 35, pleaded guilty late last week in criminal court in Lancaster to voluntary manslaughter, according to published reports. Prosecutors had already started a trial seeking a murder conviction against Gay in the death of Joshua Flint McManus, 40, who was killed in December 2015, after an argument between the two men. The trial went through two days of prosecution witnesses. Gay agreed to plead guilty before the case went to the jury, court records show. Gay was sentenced to 30 years in prison, the maximum in South Carolina for a voluntary manslaughter conviction.

12/19/18 - After a 17-month search, the board for South Carolina's health and environmental agency has picked a new director... one of their own. Former Beaufort Memorial Hospital president Rick Toomey has served on the DHEC ("D-heck") board since February. Fellow board member Jim Creel, Jr., said he thinks it's a good choice. The directors have not been able to find a candidate after dozens of interviews since previous director Katherine Heigel ("high gull") stepped down last year. Creel said acting director David Wilson is set to retire at month's end. Toomey will earn the minimum \$178,000 salary as director.

12/19/18 - 1,000 new jobs will be heading to Lancaster County after Governor Henry McMaster announced today that ServiceMac...a mortgage subservicing company is planning to open an office within the County. The 24 million dollar investment will operate out of a 100-thousand square foot office facility in the Bailes Ridge Corporate Park in Indian Land. Officials said Lancaster County received a \$100,000 Set Aside grant to assist with project costs.

12/20/18 - Many domestic violence cases involving same-sex partners in recent months had been dismissed by magistrate judges because South Carolina law recognized only “man and woman” couples in defining domestic violence. That has now changed. After months of dismissals, York County courts now can move forward with domestic violence cases involving same-sex victims. In a published report, Kevin Brackett, 16th Circuit Solicitor, said that change was announced this week in preliminary hearing court by York County Magistrate Judge Michael Scurlock. South Carolina’s law was ruled unconstitutional by the S.C. Supreme Court in 2017. Scurlock said in court that judges had received instruction from the South Carolina Supreme Court.

12/20/18 - New Census estimates show South Carolina's population is growing... and most of that is due to out-of-staters. The Census Bureau estimated a net of nearly 63,000 more people living in South Carolina from June 2017 to this summer. That was the ninth-fastest population-wise of any state overall. Nevada had the fastest growth rate. Almost 90 percent of the growth was due to people moving rather than new births. That compared to a national growth that was split roughly 50-50. South Carolina is believed to have added almost 460,000 new residents... roughly the population of the entire Columbia metro area ... since 2010.

12/21/18 - Lake Wateree's lake level is slowly rising and projected to begin spilling tonight, but is not expected to exceed 103 feet. The Catawba River Basin is experiencing significant runoff from the rainfall. The Duke Energy hydro operations team is aggressively moving water through the river system and spillway gates continue to be open at Wylie, Fishing Creek and Cedar Creek hydro stations. The City of Rock Hill is closing river access points at River Park and Riverwalk due to high and potentially dangerous water flow. This closing will be in effect until further notice.

12/24/18 - A months-long drug investigation in Lancaster County ended with a pre-Christmas raid and roundup with the arrest of 23 people on 40 drug charges, according to police and published reports. The drug activity was throughout Lancaster county, including Indian Land. The investigation started in June and included investigations for dealing Oxycodone, marijuana, cocaine, crack, painkillers and meth. Last week, drug agents started searching for the suspects after warrants were issued by judges for 40 drug charges, said Doug Barfield, sheriff’s office spokesperson. Twenty-three of the people charged were arrested, but some warrants have not been served, Barfield said. Twenty of the drug dealing charges were near schools or parks.

12/26/18 - After a failed referendum some state lawmakers want to retry appointing the superintendent of education. According to The Post and Courier, some lawmakers would like to get the measure back on the ballot again in 2020. Republicans State Sen. Tom Young Aiken, and Rep. Micah Caskey Lexington have prefiled bills for the next session that would give voters another chance. Voters rejected the idea of having the governor appoint the superintendent of education in November by 60 percent.

12/26/18 - Once again a bill will be introduced in the state legislature that would exempt military retirees from paying state income tax on their pension pay. Similar bills have passed the House three times but never made it through the Senate. Chairman of the state Military Base Task Force Bill Bethea said they have proven that the economic benefits outweigh the loss in tax revenue. Chairman of the state Military Base Task Force Bill Bethea (Beth-AY) said the tax exemption

would entice retired military people to live in South Carolina. Governor Henry McMaster said he supports the proposal. Currently 37 states exempt income tax on military pensions.

12/26/18 - An Australian mining company wants to expand its mine in South Carolina because they have discovered more gold. The Associated Press reports OceanaGold said the new discovery "has significant value" but doesn't give specifics in requests to expand the Lancaster County mine in state and federal documents. Before opening the mine near Kershaw two years ago, OceanaGold said it thought there was up to \$2 billion of gold in the area, according to The State newspaper. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will review the potential environmental impacts of the expansion and issue a report. Several environmental groups opposed OceanaGold's initial permit for the mine, worried It would destroy wetlands.

12/28/18 - Across the Carolinas, average gasoline prices have dipped below two dollars per gallon. While North Carolina's statewide average is \$2.18, South Carolina's statewide average is \$1.96 per gallon. That's five cents less than last week and 25 cents less than a month ago. Nearly 20 percent of states are currently enjoying prices below \$2.00 per gallon. Nationally, retail averages have dropped 83 of the past 90 days. The national average for regular unleaded gasoline currently sits at \$2.30 per gallon.

12/31/18 - South Carolina inventors are being granted patents faster than the national rate. The Post and Courier reports that about 1,600 patents were granted in 2018 with at least one South Carolina inventor's name on the award. Nearly 170,000 patents granted across the United States. General Electric, which has a turbine manufacturing plant in Greenville, accounts for 349 of patents issued to South Carolina inventors in 2018. Boeing, which has a facility in North Charleston had 75. The number of patents issued in South Carolina could mean well for business.

12/31/18 - State-owned utility Santee Cooper is suing its partner in a failed nuclear project. The lawsuit claims SCE&G committed civil fraud and misconduct that caused billions of dollars to be wasted on the unfinished reactors. Santee Cooper owned 45 percent of the project... which lost \$9 billion before it was abandoned last year. The State newspaper first reported the lawsuit, which accuses SCE&G of "dishonesty and bad faith in how it handled Santee Cooper's money on the project. But an SCE&G spokesman told the newspaper Santee Cooper was well aware of the project's problems and delays and shared equal blame for its management.