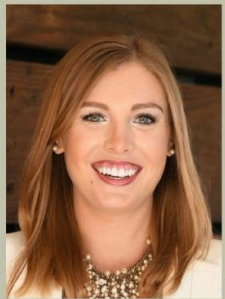


THE POWER SOURCE

IGNITING THE FUTURE OF FLORIDA



April 2026

AshleyAnn Adams Chambers
Assistant Vice President | Regional
Marketing Officer, Gulf Region
Volkert, Inc.

AshleyAnn, congratulations on your recent promotion to regional marketing officer. Please describe your position for readers not familiar with Volkert or with your role

Thank you so much! Volkert is a professional services firm offering a full range of planning, engineering, and construction services to both public and private clients across a broad spectrum of industries.....[Read More](#)

What inspired you to pursue your career with Volkert?

Nearing the end of college, I was not quite sure what I wanted to do with my international business degree, and I had casually been offered an internship by someone who works for Volkert. My father works in the engineering industry, but I wasn't quite sure what all that entailed. I decided why not? I liked the few people that I knew at Volkert at the time, so it could be fun, interesting, and new.[Read More](#)

To date, what has been then most rewarding part of your job?

I think sometimes the things that engineers design and build: transmission lines, gas lines, roads, bridges, etc., are under appreciated. We take them for granted or they are wrapped up in politics, but these types of things are what support our economy, give us comfort in our homes, and improve our quality of life.[Read More](#)

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NARUC Urges Lawmakers to Streamline Federal Permitting Authority with No State Preemption



NARUC
National Association of
Regulatory Utility Commissioners

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) is urging Congress to oppose legislation that would preempt state authority over the permitting and siting of electric transmission projects, arguing that state regulators are more efficient and better equipped to address local concerns than federal agencies.

In a letter to Senators Mike Lee and Martin Heinrich, NARUC emphasized that states have successfully overseen more transmission development in recent years and are better positioned to manage landowner issues and balance competing interests due to their proximity and project-specific knowledge. NARUC President Ann Rendahl stated, "Preempting existing state authority would be a federal overreach, leading to a more cumbersome, protracted process," and encouraged lawmakers to focus instead on streamlining federal processes. The organization also offered its expertise to help shape effective permitting reforms that ensure energy infrastructure is developed efficiently and in the public interest. The full letter is [available here](#).

FLORIDA'S WOMEN IN ENERGY
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Robinson Nuclear Plant Receives Approval From U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to Continue Operating Until 2050



The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has approved a 20-year license renewal for Duke Energy’s Robinson Nuclear Plant in Hartsville, South Carolina, allowing it to operate through 2050 and continue providing reliable, affordable energy to the region. The plant, which powers about 570,000 homes, plays a key role in meeting growing electricity demand and supporting economic stability in the Pee Dee area. State and federal leaders, along with Duke Energy executives, praised the renewal as critical for maintaining dependable, low-cost power, supporting jobs, and strengthening local communities, with Governor Henry McMaster noting it preserves “a reliable, affordable source of nuclear energy our state depends on.”

The renewal also underscores the importance of nuclear energy in Duke Energy’s portfolio—supplying roughly 51% of customer needs in the Carolinas—while extending the life of a long-standing facility that has undergone significant upgrades and contributes millions annually in local taxes. [Read More](#)

City’s PowerTLH EV Fast-Charging Station Opens

The City of Tallahassee celebrated Earth Day on April 22 by opening its first zero-emission EV fast-charging station, featuring advanced Level 3 chargers capable of powering up to four vehicles in as little as 20 minutes. Conveniently located near Anita Favors Plaza, the station offers easy access to nearby trails, parks, and local businesses, creating a more enjoyable charging experience. City leaders emphasized the project as a significant step toward sustainability and innovation, with additional stations already planned.

Developed in partnership with local organizations and powered by the City’s electric utility, the initiative highlights Tallahassee’s ongoing commitment to clean energy and a more sustainable future. [Read More](#)



Lakeland Electric Nationally Recognized As a Reliable Public Power Provider



Lakeland Electric has earned a Reliable Public Power Provider (RP₃)[®] designation from the American Public Power Association for providing reliable and safe electric service to the Lakeland, Polk City and Polk County community.

The RP₃ designation, which lasts for three years, recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement. Criteria include sound business practices and a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity.

“Receiving an RP₃ designation is a great honor and a testament to the work these utilities are doing to follow industry best practices,” said Jeremy Ash, Chair of APPA’s RP₃ Review Panel and General Manager at Kansas City Board of Public Utilities, Kansas. “These designees have distinguished themselves as committed to pursuing excellence and perpetual improvement for the benefit of their communities.”

“We are incredibly proud to earn this distinguished designation,” said Mike Beckham, General Manager of Lakeland Electric. “We go to work every day to ensure reliable service to this community, and it’s nice to see this hard work recognized on the national level.” [Read More](#)

FERC Finalizes Five-Year Review of the Oil Pipeline Index

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has finalized its five-year review of the oil pipeline rate index, establishing a new level of Producer Price Index for Finished Goods minus 0.55% (PPI-FG - 0.55%) for the period beginning July 1, 2026. The update is designed to more accurately reflect changes in industry costs while ensuring oil pipeline rates remain just and reasonable.

FERC leaders emphasized that the adjustment supports fair returns for pipeline operators providing a critical national service while continuing to protect shippers and consumers, noting that pipeline transportation costs make up only a small share of overall fuel prices and are unlikely to impact costs at the pump or airfare.

The final rule also incorporates revised cost data methodologies, including updates tied to the Commission’s 2020 return-on-equity policy and refined data sets, and will take effect following the required federal review period. Learn more at <https://www.ferc.gov>.



DOE Announces New Emergency Oil Exchange to Boost Supply and Strengthen Strategic Reserve

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an emergency exchange of up to 92.5 million barrels of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), continuing a broader effort to stabilize global energy markets. This action builds on a historic, rapid series of exchanges under President Trump's plan to release 172 million barrels domestically as part of a coordinated 400 million-barrel release by International Energy Agency member nations. Sourced from multiple SPR sites, the exchange allows companies to borrow crude oil now and return it later with additional premium barrels—strengthening the reserve at no cost to taxpayers. Previous exchanges have already delivered about 80 million barrels and demonstrated the SPR's ability to respond quickly to supply disruptions while expanding reserves. Bids for the latest solicitation are due by May 4, 2026. Learn more [HERE](#)

NRC Authorizes FPL's St. Lucie Nuclear Plant to Operate for Another 20 Years



The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has approved subsequent license renewals for Florida Power & Light's St. Lucie Nuclear Plant Units 1 and 2, allowing operations to continue through 2056 and 2063. The milestone follows a multi-year review process and ensures the continued delivery of reliable, low-cost, and clean nuclear energy across Florida. St. Lucie, a longstanding pillar of the state's energy infrastructure, generates electricity for more than 1 million homes and businesses and accounts for roughly 11% of FPL's power generation. "This approval ensures that St. Lucie will continue to provide safe, reliable, low-cost energy for generations to come," said FPL President Scott Bores.

Beyond energy production, the plant remains a key economic driver for the region, supporting hundreds of high-paying jobs and contributing millions in local taxes annually. Company leaders emphasized both the operational excellence behind the renewal and the plant's ongoing role in Florida's energy future. "This approval represents the culmination of rigorous efforts by our dedicated nuclear team to meet and exceed regulatory expectations," said Carlos Santos, St. Lucie site vice president. The renewal further strengthens NextEra Energy's broader nuclear portfolio, reinforcing its commitment to long-term, carbon-free energy generation. [Read More](#)



Session 2026 Energy Policy Recap

Lawmakers passed legislation aimed at ensuring that the energy and water demands of data centers are not shifted onto other utility customers. They also moved to stop rural electric cooperatives from charging fees that could limit consumer choice when it comes to fuel types or household appliances. In addition, the Legislature approved a ban on local governments implementing or enforcing net-zero carbon requirements, including those tied to public contracting.

At the same time, environmental safeguards were strengthened by placing new limits on oil and gas activities near sensitive coastal areas and extending funding timelines for land conservation in regions like the Florida Keys. However, several broader energy initiatives failed to advance, including efforts to expand regulatory pathways for advanced nuclear technologies and proposals to tighten siting rules for certain waste-to-energy facilities, underscoring continued disagreements over the state's future energy and environmental direction.

SB 484 establishes new oversight, permitting, and utility cost requirements for large-scale data centers to ensure they bear their own infrastructure costs, comply with land use regulations, and do not shift financial burdens to other ratepayers. The measure also requires public utilities to create tariffs ensuring large load customers cover their own costs, prohibits service to foreign entities, and establishes new water-permitting standards for large-scale data centers, including requirements to use reclaimed water when feasible and undergo a hearing for high-volume water applications or modifications.

HB 1217 bans local governments from enacting or enforcing any resolution, ordinance, rule, code, or policy that supports a net-zero carbon emissions policy, including as a condition for contractors to get government work.

HB 755 expands the prohibition on oil and gas drilling, exploration, or production within 30 miles of a national estuarine research reserve in any county that includes an area of critical state concern. The bill also creates an exemption from payment and performance bond requirements for projects located in an area of critical state concern under certain 99-year ground leases with Habitat for Humanity,

SB 288 prohibits rural electric cooperatives that sell electricity at retail from adopting or enforcing fees, such as lot or developer fees or surcharges, that limit or prohibit the use of specific fuel sources or appliances. It aims to narrow the statute to maintain core consumer protections while reducing exposure to litigation.

HB 1451 mandates that new or amended municipal utility agreements outside municipal boundaries be in writing and preceded by public meetings to disclose service details, proposed rates, and use of revenues. The measure also preempts a charter amendment passed by voters in Gainesville last year that attempted to return control of Gainesville Regional Utility Authority to the Gainesville City Commission.

For more information please reach out to Sarah Sims at sarahsims@lilajaber.com.

