



2015 Chestnut Street, Camp Hill, PA 17011 Phone: (717) 763-7635, Fax: (717) 763-7455, Email: office@arippa.org

ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 1-1-19

(News clips from the previous month)

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[Register Now! PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation/National Abandoned Mine Lands Program Conference, Scholarships Available](#) - Registration is now open for the combined 2019 PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation and National Abandoned Mine Lands Program Conference in Pittsburgh on September 8-11.

[U.S. Coal Mining Reaches 16-Month High](#) - Cold weather and a hot natural gas market helped drive U.S. coal production to the highest in 16 months.

[Return Of Polar Vortex In Early January Could Drive Natural Gas Prices Higher](#) - The U.S. Global Forecasting System (GFS Model) anticipates a return of the Polar Vortex in the first week of January.

[Carbon dioxide emissions from the U.S. power sector have declined 28% since 2005](#) - U.S. electric power sector carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂) have declined 28% since 2005 because of slower electricity demand growth and changes in the mix of fuels used to generate electricity.

[Capacity pricing changes: How each power market plans to account for resource adequacy](#) - While PJM's capacity market reform plans dominate headlines, all grid operators are facing the need for greater flexibility as renewables increasingly enter their system.

[Full PJM Study Makes Case for Fuel Security Payments](#) - The full report on fuel security in PJM's footprint that CEO Andy Ott teased during a D.C. press conference on Nov. 1 shows that the grid is reliable in all but extreme scenarios and will remain so — as long as resources are compensated for being fuel-secure.

[State Regulators Still Frustrated with PJM](#) - The tension between PJM and certain states has not loosened, judging by comments made at a forum held by the Great Plains Institute and Duke University's Nicholas Institute on Environmental Policy Solutions last week.

[Bloomberg: U.S. Meeting Paris Climate Goals Without Being Part of the Agreement](#) - Former New York City Mayor and possible 2020 candidate Michael Bloomberg said Sunday that the United States is meeting the goals of Paris Climate Accords despite withdrawing from the agreement.

[New Book Arms Policymakers, Lawyers, Private Sector With Tools To Combat Climate Change In U.S.](#) - In early 2019, Environmental Law Institute Press will release Legal Pathways to Deep Decarbonization in the United States, edited by Michael B. Gerrard and John C. Dernbach.

[At Penn State, researchers push for answers on carbon capture: Will it stay where we put it?](#) - If power plants that burn fossil fuels could capture their carbon emissions and store them somewhere, it would go a long way toward preventing greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere.

[New Jersey regulators issue rules to rejoin RGGI carbon trading system](#) - New Jersey environmental regulators on Monday unveiled two rules to re-enter the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a multi-state carbon trading system that the state left in 2012.

[Wind and solar clash with energy reality](#) - In the name of protecting the environment, some public and political leaders want most of our electrical energy to come from renewables.

[Powering the world: Renewables are still far behind coal and natural gas](#) - The United States and the world need to continually improve electrical energy mixes with respect to economic and environmental factors. Key sources of U.S. and world energy include natural gas, coal, nuclear power, hydropower and renewables (such as wind and solar).

[Changes in coal sector led to less SO₂ and NO_x emissions from electric power industry](#) - Annual U.S. electric power industry emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) have declined by 88% and 76%, respectively, between their peaks in 1997 and 2017.

[The Impact of Environmental Regulations on Power Generation](#) - For many years, air pollution control (APC) rules and regulations have governed the design and economics of the world's power generation fleet. These rules have had a tremendous impact, improving air quality even while the fleet's capacity has increased significantly. They have also resulted in the development and deployment of many innovative APC technologies.

[NERC: Winter preparedness initiatives will help keep lights on in northern US](#) - The North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) released its winter reliability assessment Wednesday, which finds grid operators have adequate generation resources and transmission to reliably serve demand this winter, with credit going to preparedness programs and new coordination initiatives.

[PJM and Members Prepared to Meet Winter Electricity Demand](#) - PJM Interconnection and its members are prepared to meet the forecasted winter electricity demand in the nation's largest high-voltage power grid.

[U.S. coal consumption in 2018 expected to be the lowest in 39 years](#) - EIA expects total U.S. coal consumption in 2018 to fall to 691 million short tons (MMst), a 4% decline from 2017 and the lowest level since 1979. U.S. coal consumption has been falling since its peak in 2007, and EIA forecasts that 2018 coal consumption will be 437 MMst (44%) lower than 2007 levels, mainly driven by declines in coal use in the electric power sector.

[Nations at UN climate talks back universal emissions rules](#) - After two weeks of bruising negotiations, officials from almost 200 countries agreed Saturday on universal, transparent rules that will govern efforts to cut emissions and curb global warming.

[Coal looms large as climate-change talks begin in Poland](#) - Negotiators from around the world opened the United Nations' annual climate change conference Sunday in a Polish city built around mining coal, widely seen as a main culprit behind global warming.

[As the U.S. pushes fossil fuels at COP24, protesters howl — but allies emerge, too](#) - Trump administration officials at high-stakes climate talks here offered an unapologetic defense of fossil fuels on Monday, arguing that a rapid retreat from coal, oil and gas was unrealistic.

[November U.S. natural gas prices increased beyond previous market expectations](#) - On November 23, the natural gas spot price at the Henry Hub in Louisiana was \$4.70 per million British thermal units (MMBtu), the highest price since a temporary spike in January 2018, and before that, the highest price since June 2014.

[The rescue of three people in West Virginia spotlights the dangers of abandoned coal mines](#) - Their faces covered in black soot, three adults safely rescued after several days in an inactive West Virginia coal mine were mobbed by loved ones in a teary reunion, then they thanked the crews that got them out.

[EPCAMR \\$49,500 grant through the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation-Chesapeake Bay Technical Capacity Program Develops Green Infrastructure & Concept Plans for Green Spaces in Wilkes-Barre](#) - This technical assistance grant project completed the planning and conceptual designs for water quality improvement projects in nine (9) public green spaces in the City of Wilkes-Barre at no cost to the City.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[Democrats Establish a New House 'Climate Crisis' Committee](#) - It's official: When Democrats take control of the House of Representatives next month, they will form a special new committee to examine climate change, Nancy Pelosi said in a statement on Friday.

[EPA braces to run out of funds by week's end as shutdown continues](#) - A week after the government failed to agree on a final funding bill, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is preparing to follow suit and shut down.

[Trump's EPA to Maintain Obama-Era Coal Plant Rules, With a Twist](#) - The Trump administration is poised to propose maintaining Obama-era restrictions on mercury pollution from power plants, responding to opposition from electric utilities that have already spent billions of dollars to meet the requirements.

[Heading into 2019, action on climate change divides GOP in Congress](#) - According to scientists spread across 13 federal agencies, the nation's coastal cities and critical infrastructure are endangered if nothing is done to combat climate change. Pennsylvania Democratic U.S. Sen. Bob Casey said the time for action is now.

[Sens. Jeff Flake and Chris Coons introduce bipartisan carbon tax bill](#) - Sens. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., and Chris Coons, D-Del., on Wednesday introduced a carbon tax bill to combat climate change, just days before the end of the current session of Congress.

[Green groups press for McNamee recusal on FERC resilience docket](#) - Four environmental groups formally requested on Tuesday that Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Bernard McNamee recuse himself from a pending proceeding on grid resilience due to his past involvement crafting coal and nuclear bailout proposals at the Department of Energy.

[Amid Broad Legal Challenges, EPA Proposes Narrower Definition of WOTUS](#) - In a move widely applauded by the power industry, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of the Army proposed a new definition of "waters of the U.S." (WOTUS) that could exempt groundwater and ditches from regulation under the Clean Water Act (CWA).

[Coal supporter Manchin named top Dem on Senate Energy Committee](#) - Senate Democrats on Tuesday named Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) as the ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, despite objections by progressive groups.

[Interior Secretary Zinke resigning, cites 'vicious' attacks](#) - Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, facing federal investigations into his travel, political activity and potential conflicts of interest, will be leaving the administration at year's end, Trump said Saturday.

[Senate Republicans argue that progressives' Green New Deal would be impossible and unaffordable](#) - Senate Republicans struck back Tuesday at growing momentum among progressive House Democrats for a "Green New Deal" next Congress to combat climate change.

[Federal government issues RFP for 'coal plants of the future'](#) - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is rapidly moving ahead with its support for development of more modern and efficient coal plants, and issued a request for proposals (RFP) on Friday, seeking conceptual designs through its Office of Fossil Energy.

[Senate confirms McNamee to FERC as coal recusal calls mount](#) - The U.S. Senate on Wednesday voted 50-49 to confirm Department of Energy official Bernard McNamee to serve on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the remainder of a term ending in June 2020.

[Trump EPA outlines rule change to encourage new coal plants](#) - The Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday proposed weakening an Obama-era rule that would have required new coal plants to be built with expensive technology that captures carbon emissions from their smokestacks.

[Republican introduces 'technology neutral' tax credit bill to boost energy innovation](#) - A Republican lawmaker in the U.S. House of Representatives has proposed new tax credits aimed at boosting energy innovation and efficiency.

[EPA Names Dana Aunkst Director Of Chesapeake Bay Program](#) - On December 12, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the selection of former DEP Deputy Secretary Dana Aunkst as the new Director of EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program.

[Policymaker of the Year: Kevin McIntyre, FERC](#) - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Chairman Kevin McIntyre began the year as an enigma. He ends it as one of the most consequential FERC leaders in recent history.

[Nancy Pelosi agrees to step aside in 2022 to secure votes in bid to be House speaker](#) - Rep. Nancy Pelosi clinched the votes for a second stint as House speaker on Wednesday after agreeing to serve no more than four years in a deal with a group of Democratic rebels - a significant concession to their demands for generational change.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[Pa. air pollution fee hike planned for thousands of facilities as DEP account runs dry](#) - Fees for thousands of facilities with air pollution permits would increase by \$12.7 million under a proposal by Pennsylvania regulators to avoid running out of money in an account that pays for staff and air quality monitoring statewide.

[Gov. Wolf reshuffles cabinet ahead of second term](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf is reshuffling his cabinet as he prepares for a second term.

[Climate change in Pennsylvania: A look back at 2018 and ahead at 2019](#) - A flurry of climate reports came out this fall — from the United Nations and the U.S. government — painting a dire picture of the challenges facing the globe. Here's a look at how Pennsylvania has been working to reduce emissions in 2018 and a preview of what may be in store for next year.

[David W. Sweet To Serve As Vice Chairman Of Public Utility Commission](#) - On December 20, Public Utility Commission Chairman Gladys M. Brown announced the Commissioners' selection of David W. Sweet as Vice Chairman effective Jan. 1.

[DEP Posts 2019 Advisory Committee, Board Meeting Schedules](#) - The Department of Environmental Protection published the 2019 advisory committee, certification and rulemaking and other board meeting schedules and agency contacts in the December 15 PA Bulletin.

[Pennsylvania governor reviewing plan to cap greenhouse gases](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf says he's considering whether to support a petition filed last week that asks a Pennsylvania environmental rule-making board to impose a cap-and-trade program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[Draft version of carbon-cutting plan envisions a dramatic shift in Pa.'s energy mix](#) - A draft update to Pennsylvania's guidebook for combating climate change sets a target for the first time on how much greenhouse gas emissions should be cut by 2050 — and then describes how even major shifts toward cleaning up the state's energy system will likely fall short of reaching it.

[Wanting to get things done, Gov. Tom Wolf prepares for a 2nd term](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf, who introduced himself at his first inauguration as an unconventional governor and then unveiled an ambitious blueprint to transform Pennsylvania's tax structure, is returning for a second term with big plans, although with perhaps a more sober view of what is possible.

[Role Of Coal, Natural Gas, Nuclear Power Questioned In DEP Climate Plan Update](#) - On December 4, members of DEP's Climate Change Advisory Committee got the chance to comment on the draft 180-page 2018 PA Climate Action Plan Update and recommendations prepared for DEP by their consultant ICF.

[Auditor General DePasquale Announces Plans For Special Report On Climate Change In PA](#) - On December 3, Auditor General Eugene DePasquale announced plans to prepare a special report exploring how Pennsylvania is responding to climate change in light of a failure by national leaders to recognize and act on the issue.

[Authority: DEP's ruling could lead to expensive mandates, modifications](#) - Cambria Somerset Authority officials contend that a state Department of Environmental Protection permit requirement essentially reclassifies the regional authority as a private water system, making it subject to certain Clean Water Act regulations.