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## ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 10-1-20

(News clips from the previous month)

### CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[Despite Dead DOE Rule, Grid Resiliency Persists as a Major Concern](#) - The U.S. power industry lacks forward-looking ways to measure grid resiliency and traditional reliability metrics could become irrelevant as more intermittent generation inundates the bulk power system.

[Vistra to retire 6.8 GW coal, blaming 'irreparably dysfunctional MISO market'](#) - Competitive energy supplier Vistra on Tuesday announced it would retire 6,800 MW of coal by 2027, blaming in part its grid operator's "irreparably dysfunctional" market.

[Duke Energy considers retiring 9,000 MW of coal, adding vast amounts of storage](#) - Duke Energy Corp. would retire all of its power plants in the Carolinas that "rely exclusively on coal" within the next 10 years and add between 1,050 MW and 7,400 MW of storage to its portfolio under the six scenarios outlined in its recently proposed 2020 integrated resource plans.

[Ohio attorney general sues to block \\$1.3B bailout of former FirstEnergy nuclear plants](#) - Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost is seeking a court order to block FirstEnergy's former power plant subsidiary FirstEnergy Solutions, doing business today as Energy Harbor, from receiving any of the \$1.3 billion in new customer charges imposed by a state law now at the center of a federal racketeering probe.

[PJM action on valuation 'opens the door' to energy storage in its capacity market](#) - The Markets and Reliability committee at PJM Interconnection last week approved an Effective Load-Carrying Capability (ELCC) package in response to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's order on how regional transmission organizations value energy storage in wholesale power markets.

[Citing slow, overcrowded market, GE exits coal industry, raising questions about next steps](#) - GE says the "rapid decline" of a market for coal generation triggered company's Monday announcement that it would no longer participate in the construction of new coal plants.

[US gas-to-coal switching to boost coal consumption, help trim stocks](#) - Despite a long-term trend of coal power plant closures, and dented energy demand more recently due to the coronavirus crisis, upside for coal has been materializing in the US as gas-fired generators reacted to higher prices in the summer months and coal regained some market share lost in 2019.

[China's carbon neutral pledge signals turning point for fossil fuel markets](#) - China's unexpected stance on climate change at the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 22 could signal a turning point for the coal and petroleum industries, and puts the country's next five-year economic plan starting 2021 firmly in focus for major policy announcements impacting energy markets.

[Murray Energy exits bankruptcy; former union workers land jobs](#) - Murray Energy Corp. has exited bankruptcy, and former union workers have positions with the company now controlling Murray Energy's assets.

[The 5 Biggest US Utilities Committing to Zero Carbon Emissions by 2050](#) - Over the past three years, some of the country's biggest utilities have been committing to a goal that few may have predicted they'd undertake on their own: weaning themselves off carbon-emitting generation by 2050.

[Ohio regulators launch probe into FirstEnergy's political and charitable contributions](#) - The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio on Tuesday opened a review of FirstEnergy's political and charitable contributions, following a request last week to the agency by the Ohio Consumers' Counsel for a broader management audit of the company.

[RGGI carbon dioxide allowance prices jump to five-year high](#) - The price of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative's carbon dioxide allowances increased to \$6.82/st in the third auction of 2020, the cap-and-trade program's administrator announced Sept. 4.

[Penn State looks to fix acid mine drainage, recover rare earth metals](#) - When it comes to a solution for the acid mine drainage that has degraded more than 5,500 miles of Pennsylvania streams, money most often is the biggest problem.

[Feds salute Ehrenfeld coal refuse pile removal](#) - Federal mine land reclamation officials have given one of their top awards to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation for its spearheading of the recent removal of towering coal refuse piles in Ehrenfeld, it was announced Monday.

[As U.S. coal-fired capacity and utilization decline, operators consider seasonal operation](#) - Coal-fired electricity generating capacity in the United States is retiring, as tighter air emission standards and decreased cost-competitiveness relative to other power resources make coal-fired power plants less economical.

[Householder returns to Ohio House to defend himself, nuclear bailout](#) - Larry Householder, who was removed from his position as Ohio House speaker in the wake of a federal indictment on bribery and racketeering charges, returned to the Statehouse on Tuesday ready to defend his record and the nuclear bailout at the center of the federal investigation.

[FirstEnergy bills followed different paths to same-day passage in WV, Ohio](#) - July 23, 2019, was a very good day for FirstEnergy Corp.

[Register Now! First Virtual PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference Oct. 28-29](#) - Instead of you coming to the annual PA Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference, this October the Conference is coming to you!

#### **LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL**

[FERC steps into fray on carbon price](#) - Commissioners with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission signaled Wednesday they were prepared to set regulations around carbon pricing, as states around the country move towards reducing carbon emissions to combat climate change.

[The Energy 202: How Amy Coney Barrett may make it harder for environmentalists to win in court](#) - If President Trump's Supreme Court nominee, Amy Coney Barrett, is confirmed it could make it harder to enact and enforce tougher environmental protections for years to come.

[Supreme Court Environmental Cases Could Stretch to Climate, Coal](#) - The U.S. Supreme Court launches its new term with a light environmental docket and a heavy air of uncertainty, with a nomination battle raging and a global pandemic continuing to disrupt the institution's normal order.

[House passes massive clean energy bill amid Trump veto threat, Senate uncertainty](#) - The House on Thursday passed the Clean Economy Jobs and Innovation Act, a companion bill to the Senate Energy Innovation Act.

[Department of Energy to fund \\$122 million for rare earth elements from coal](#) - The Energy and Natural Resources Committee received a \$122 million Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) by the Department of Energy.

[U.S. Energy Secretary promotes energy versatility in Pittsburgh visit](#) - U.S. Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette visited the Pittsburgh region this week, stopping at a multibillion-dollar ethane cracker plant being built in Beaver County, Carnegie Mellon University and the United Association Local 449 Steamfitters headquarters in Pittsburgh.

[Murkowski 'not giving up' on Senate clean energy bill vote before the end of 2020](#) - Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, is holding out hope that the comprehensive clean energy bill she sponsored will pass the Senate this year, despite a potentially more difficult path following the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on Friday.

[FERC lowers barriers to DERs in wholesale markets in rare Chatterjee-Glick consensus](#) - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Neil Chatterjee and Commissioner Richard Glick reached a rare agreement on Thursday, passing an order 2-1 that would lower the barriers to distributed energy resources' (DER) participation in wholesale markets.

[Senators press FERC nominees on California blackouts, baseload compensation, climate role](#) - Senators on Wednesday pressed nominees awaiting confirmation to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on the California blackouts, resource compensation, pipelines and climate change.

[EPA Chief Pledges More Cleanups, Less Focus on Climate](#) - Environmental Protection Agency chief Andrew Wheeler on Thursday defended the Trump administration's record on protecting the nation's air and water and said a second term would bring a greater focus on pollution cleanups in disadvantaged communities and less emphasis on climate change.

[DOE Issues Emergency Order to Alleviate California Power Crisis](#) - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) on Sept. 6 took the rare but drastic action of issuing an emergency order under the Federal Power Act (FPA) to authorize the maximum operation of three natural gas-fired facilities on the California Independent System Operator's (CAISO's) grid whose full capability had been stranded by federal air quality and other permits.

[For now, latest federal rollback of coal regs won't affect PA plants](#) - A Trump administration rollback of rules for toxic waste water from coal plants won't have an immediate effect on coal-fired power plants in Pennsylvania, because the state has already adopted tougher Obama-era EPA standards for treating the waste.

[EPA finalizes changes to coal ash, wastewater limits expected to save industry \\$140M annually](#) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Monday finalized a rule that changes regulations on how power plants manage coal ash and wastewater disposal.

[Biden presidency could decarbonize US power sector by 2035, Trump win would delay past 2050: Woodmac](#) - Research released Tuesday by Wood Mackenzie suggests Joe Biden's \$2 trillion climate plan could help the U.S. achieve complete power sector decarbonization by 2035, 15 years ahead of Woodmac's base case scenario.

#### **LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE**

[Wolf vetoes bill that would keep Pennsylvania out of RGGI](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf is rejecting a measure that would require the legislature's approval to join a regional effort to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

[Federal appeals court must now decide whether to stay court order regarding state's covid-19 shutdown](#) - It is now up to the Third U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to decide if a lower court decision ruling Gov. Tom Wolf's covid-19 shutdown orders unconstitutional ought to be stayed.

[Federal judge rules Gov. Wolf's shutdown orders were unconstitutional](#) - A federal judge in Pittsburgh on Monday ruled that orders issued by Gov. Tom Wolf restricting the size of gatherings and closing nonessential businesses to protect against the spread of covid-19 were unconstitutional.

[GOP Takes Pennsylvania Court's Ballot Deadline to High Court](#) - Republican lawmakers in Pennsylvania asked the U.S. Supreme Court on Monday to put a hold on a ruling in the presidential battleground state that extends the deadline in November's election to receive and count mailed-in ballots.

[Pa. Supreme Court denies motion to stay ballot decision requested by Republicans](#) - The Pennsylvania Supreme Court on Thursday denied a request by state Republicans to stay its decision allowing for the use of ballot drop boxes and an extended deadline for mail-in ballots.

[Gov. Wolf says coronavirus-driven Pennsylvania budget deficit of billions of dollars will have state 'scrambling'](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf said Thursday that the state will be “scrambling” to find ways to fill a coronavirus-driven budget deficit that has been estimated at \$5 billion over two years.

[Independent Regulatory Review Commission Approves Final DEP Air Quality Fee Increase Regulation](#) - On September 17, the Independent Regulatory Review Commission approved the final Environmental Quality Board regulation increasing DEP’s Air Quality Program fees by a vote of four to one.

[Republicans On House Environmental Committee Approve Letter Opposing DEP Air Quality Fee Increase](#) - On September 15, the Republicans on the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee approved a letter to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission opposing the final Environmental Quality Board regulation increasing DEP’s Air Quality Program fees.

[In contentious vote, Pennsylvania takes formal step towards joining regional cap and trade market](#) - The Pennsylvania Environmental Quality Board (EQB) on Tuesday voted 13-6 to launch a formal rulemaking process required for the state to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a carbon cap and trade program among 10 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states.

[Audit of Gov. Wolf’s COVID-19 business shutdown waivers nears completion with consistency and fairness as its focus](#) - An audit that examines the consistency and fairness of Gov. Tom Wolf’s controversial coronavirus waiver process that allowed some businesses to reopen after appealing the governor’s March 19 business closure order while others were told to remain closed will be released next month.

[Latest Pa. GOP attempt to strip Gov. Tom Wolf of his coronavirus emergency powers fails](#) - The latest Republican attempt to curtail Gov. Tom Wolf’s emergency powers failed Wednesday, as GOP lawmakers in the state House did not garner enough Democratic support to end the state’s coronavirus disaster declaration.

[Pa. Senate’s vote to curb executive power devolves into partisan shouting match](#) - Capping off its first week of lawmaking following a lengthy summer recess, Pennsylvania’s state Senate left Harrisburg without approving changes to the state’s election code, which advocates and local officials say are essential to ensure safe and smooth voting in the Nov. 3 general election.

[DEP Receives \\$25 Million From Feds For Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Economic Development Projects](#) - On September 2, Department of Environmental Protection announced it has received \$25 million for environmental restoration projects focused on economic development or community revitalization at abandoned mine land (AML) locations across Pennsylvania.

[Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf renews the COVID-19 disaster declaration for another 90 days](#) - For the second time since the first two presumptive positive cases of the coronavirus appeared in Pennsylvania on March 6, Gov. Tom Wolf on Monday renewed the state’s disaster declaration for the pandemic for another 90 days.

[DEP Environmental Justice Champion Of Community Involvement: Bobby Hughes, EPCAMR](#) - DEP’s Office of Environmental Justice put the spotlight on another Champion of Community Involvement in their latest newsletter by profiling Bobby Hughes, Executive Director of the Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation.