



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

ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 1-4-21

(News clips from the previous month)

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[2020: A Year of Reckoning for Competitive Generators](#) - Over the past year, power generators that depend on wholesale electricity markets for the bulk of their revenues endured remarkable pressure stemming from the pandemic, changing company business priorities, and environmentally driven policy shifts.

[Commodities 2021: PJM capacity auction, market rule updates, carbon pricing on tap](#) - PJM Interconnection market participants and stakeholders in 2021 are looking forward to the first capacity market auction since 2018, while energy market price formation and more work on pricing carbon dioxide emissions will also be priorities as the fuel mix shifts more toward renewables.

[US coal-fired generation to face modest 2021 recovery driven by jump in demand](#) - Coal-fired generation in the US is likely on its way to a modest recovery in 2021, following the damaging impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, driven by a large jump in demand in the power sector expected as natural gas prices encourage gas-to-coal switching.

[Ohio Supreme Court stops collection of nuclear plant subsidy](#) - The Ohio Supreme Court on Monday issued a temporary stay to stop collection of a fee from nearly every electric customer in the state starting Jan. 1 to subsidize two nuclear power plants, a provision included in a scandal-tainted bill approved by the state Legislature in July 2019.

[National Assn. Of Abandoned Mine Land Programs Honors DEP's Brian Bradley](#) - The National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs recently honored Brian Bradley, Assistant Director of DEP's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation with the Stan Barnard Award.

[Rising renewables penetration is a threat to grid reliability in some regions, NERC concludes](#) - The North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) expects there to be sufficient resource adequacy across most of the electric grid for the next decade, but also concluded in its 2020 Long-Term Reliability Assessment that there is a growing risk related to the high penetration of renewables in some regions.

[Coal Sales to Rebound With First Gains in Years in U.S., Europe](#) - Global coal demand is poised to rebound next year as the economy recovers and the U.S. and Europe may see the first increase in consumption in several years, the International Energy Agency said.

[Wholesale power sales in Q3 2020 down 3% due largely to coronavirus pandemic](#) - US wholesale power sales in the third quarter of 2020 were down 3% compared to Q3 2019, according to quarterly data filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and compiled by S&P Global Platts.

[GE All-in to Fight Climate Change, Urges Accelerated Replacement of Coal Power](#) - General Electric (GE) has taken a marked step to position itself in the global fight against climate change, advocating for immediate and effective power sector decarbonization through a replacement of coal-fired power generation with a combination of renewables and natural gas-fired power.

[The new operator of Pennsylvania's third largest coal mine remains a mystery](#) - Last week, a mysterious new outfit took over the 40-year-old Cumberland Mine in Greene County.

[Maryland, Illinois may pursue legislative MOPR exit, despite new FERC nearing](#) - With a new Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on the horizon, states that opposed the agency's minimum offer price rule expansion within the PJM Interconnection are grappling with how or whether to continue fighting the rule.

[No 'green halo' for renewables: First Solar, Veolia, others tackle wind and solar environmental impacts](#) - From the toxics and wastewater in manufacturing to the difficulty of recycling PV panels and turbine blades, solar and wind in particular create impacts the industries are trying to reduce.

[Continued Toll on Coal; More Companies File Bankruptcy](#) - The struggling U.S. coal industry, decimated by falling demand for the fuel from the power generation sector, and hit hard by low prices during the coronavirus pandemic, saw two more mining companies declare bankruptcy this week.

[IEA/NEA: Renewables, Nuclear, Hydrogen Gaining Cost Competitiveness](#) - By 2025, the economics of low-carbon generation technologies are poised to disrupt conventional fossil fuel generation so dramatically, onshore wind could have the lowest levelized costs of electricity (LCOE) on average, and nuclear power could emerge as the dispatchable low-carbon technology with the lowest expected costs.

[Regulator of the Year: Neil Chatterjee, FERC](#) - Few agencies have impacted the power sector this year in the same way as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and it's impossible to divorce that effect from its now-former chairman.

[The capacity of U.S. coal mines has fallen 28% since its 2009 peak](#) - The U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) latest Annual Coal Report (ACR) shows that U.S. coal mining productive capacity, or the maximum amount of coal that mines can produce in a year, totaled 1,009 million short tons (MMst) in 2019.

[Top regulator's exit raises questions about utility and fossil fuel influence](#) - Critics question whether the former Ohio utility commission chair should have recused himself more often to avoid any appearance of bias.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[White House appears to conclude review of EPA 'secret science' rule](#) - The White House appears to have concluded its review of an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rule that's expected to limit the types of scientific research the agency can consider in its rulemaking process.

[Pence asks judge to reject lawsuit seeking to empower him to overturn election](#) - Vice President Mike Pence asked a judge late Thursday to reject a lawsuit that aims to expand his power to use a congressional ceremony to overturn the presidential election, arguing that he is not the right person to sue over the issue.

[Trump signs \\$2.3T relief, spending package](#) - President Trump on Sunday signed the government funding and coronavirus relief package, the White House said, averting a government shutdown and delivering economic aid as the pandemic worsens.

[Federal stimulus includes wind, solar tax credit extensions, adds first US offshore wind tax credit](#) - Congress on Monday passed another stimulus package as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Here's what's in the new \\$900 billion stimulus package](#) - Congressional leaders brokered a deal on a roughly \$900 billion relief bill Sunday night, with promises to pass the legislation as soon as possible, potentially as soon as Monday.

[Biden introduces his climate team, says 'no time to waste'](#) - Just as the United States has needed a unified, national response to COVID-19, it needs one for dealing with climate change, President-elect Joe Biden said Saturday as he rolled out key members of his environmental team.

[FERC's Clements: 'Grave threat' of climate change will 'underlie my approach as a commissioner'](#) - Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Allison Clements made clear during her first meeting on the commission that climate change will play a role in her decision making.

[FERC chief Danly's bid to investigate CAISO over August blackouts rejected by Glick, Chatterjee](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission chair's proposal to initiate a show cause investigation into the California grid operator's tariff was shot down Thursday in a 2-1 vote.

[Supreme Court rejects Texas' and Trump's bid to overturn election](#) - The Supreme Court on Friday rejected a bid from Texas' attorney general -- supported by President Donald Trump -- to block the ballots of millions of voters in battleground states that went in favor of President-elect Joe Biden.

[Trump EPA finalizes rollback making it harder to enact new public health rules](#) - The Trump administration finalized a rule Wednesday making it harder to enact public health protections, by changing the way the Environmental Protection Agency calculates the costs and benefits of new limits on air pollution.

[EPA Retains Soot Standards; Drastic PM Reductions Already Achieved, Industry Says](#) - In a significant but controversial final action, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Dec. 7 retained its existing National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for both fine and coarse particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10).

[Clements sworn into FERC, Christie to assume role in January](#) - Allison Clements was sworn into FERC Tuesday. Mark Christie is scheduled to be sworn in Jan. 4, according to The Foster Report. "I am honored to serve our country as a #FERC Commissioner and am excited to get started," Clements said in a tweet.

[In this Congress or the next, experts see opportunity to boost electric investment and secure the grid](#) - Lawmakers and policy experts have not given up hope that bipartisan energy legislation could be passed in the waning days of this Congress, with emphasis on the potential for cybersecurity improvements and grid investment.

[U.S. Senate Confirms Lanny Erdos as Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement](#) - Today, the U.S. Senate voted unanimously to confirm Lanny Erdos as Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE). Mr. Erdos has served as the Principal Deputy Director exercising the delegated authority of the Director of the OSMRE since 2019.

[Bipartisan Bill to Preserve Existing Nuclear Plants Clears Senate Committee](#) - The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW) has approved the American Nuclear Infrastructure Act of 2020 (ANIA), just two weeks after it was introduced.

[SBA reveals full list of recipients of PPP loans](#) - Data released by the Small Business Administration Tuesday reveals which Pennsylvania businesses and groups shared \$5 billion in loans of under \$150,000, provided through the federal Paycheck Protection Program.

[THE BIG PICTURE: EPA Regulatory Roundup](#) - Over its 50-year history, several rules issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have reshaped the power sector. But for at least a few modern rules, the road has been full of turns.

[FERC Regains Full Five Members as Regulatory Fights Loom](#) - The U.S. Senate on Nov. 30 confirmed Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) nominees Allison Clements and Mark Christie, filling out all five seats at the helm of the federal energy regulator with a bipartisan panel for the first time in nearly two years.

[Some Republican states would fight forced utility emissions cuts under Biden climate agenda](#) - The governors of five Republican states are ready to fight Democratic President-elect Joe Biden if he tries to require the power sector to slash greenhouse gas emissions.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[Gov. Wolf Announces Lifting of Time Limited Mitigation on Jan. 4, Dashboard to Track Progress of COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution](#) - The time-limited mitigation orders put in place on Dec. 12 have helped to begin flattening the curve of new cases following the post-Thanksgiving surge in Pennsylvania.

[DEP Sets Feb. 3 Virtual Public Hearing On Mine Reclamation Project In Westmoreland County](#) - The Department of Environmental Protection published notice in the January 2 PA Bulletin of a February 3 public hearing on the Soberdash Mining Reclamation Project in South Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County starting at 10:00 a.m.

[Pennsylvania's alternative energy goals set to flatline next year, unless legislature acts](#) - Pennsylvania's goals for utilities to buy increased amounts of power from alternative sources, such as wind and solar, are set to flatline in 2021 unless the General Assembly acts.

[A look back at 2020 in Pa. and a look ahead at 2021](#) - 2020 was a year that felt like five of them.

[DEP Posts 2021 Schedule Of Advisory Committee, Board Meetings](#) - The Department of Environmental Protection posted the schedule of 2021 advisory committee and board meetings.

[Gov. Wolf directs \\$145M to aid businesses hurt by the coronavirus pandemic](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf said he is directing \$145 million to aid businesses that have been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic.

[Groups sue EPA over PA coal plant air pollution in Indiana County](#) - Environmental groups are suing the EPA in federal court over what they call an inadequate plan to reduce air pollution in Western Pennsylvania.

[Lawsuits contend Gov. Wolf has no authority to issue new restrictions](#) - A Butler County attorney who previously won a federal lawsuit against the Wolf administration over the spring covid-19 shutdown orders filed two new suits over the governor's most recent orders.

[Pennsylvania electors cast their votes for Biden](#) - In a ceremony often considered as little more than a formality, Pennsylvania's College of Electors on Monday certified their 20 votes for president-elect Joe Biden.

[The 2020 election cost Pa. counties millions in OT, was most expensive ever, officials say](#) - Forrest Lehman has yet to calculate Lycoming County's final bill for the June primary and the Nov. 3 general election. But the elections director knows this: He spent four times his office's budget for overtime this year, and the cash balances for other items like postage have never looked so depleted.

[Hearings begin on climate change initiative](#) - Testimony at public hearings Tuesday leaned strongly in favor of Gov. Tom Wolf's proposal to have Pennsylvania join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a consortium of 10 Mid-Atlantic and New England states formed to reduce emissions that contribute to climate change.

[Supreme Court rejects GOP bid to overturn Biden's Pennsylvania win](#) - The U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected Republicans' last-gasp bid to reverse Pennsylvania's certification of President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the electoral battleground.

[Pandemic, partisan attacks exposed gaps in Pa.'s new mail-in voting law](#) - Before any threat of a deadly, fast-spreading coronavirus disrupted daily life in every way across Pennsylvania, state lawmakers had approved a new way of voting that gave residents an alternative to going in person to the polls.

[Environment & Energy Bills Signed Into Law, Vetoed In 2020](#) - 2020 was marked more by what didn't happen on environment and energy legislation than what was actually passed by the Senate and House and signed into law by Gov. Wolf. Here's a rundown on what happened.

[Hoping to promote civility in Pa. House, lawmakers form unique bipartisan caucus to work through their differences](#) - Tired of the partisan bickering that seems to get in the way of governing? You aren't alone. Apparently, so are two members Pennsylvania House of Representatives, one a Republican and the other a Democrat.

[Senate Takes No Action To Fill Vacancy On Public Utility Commission](#) - On August 10, Gov. Wolf nominated Haley Book to fill the vacant position on the Public Utility Commission created by the resignation of Commissioner Andrew Place on April 16.