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## ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 7-1-21

(News clips from the previous month)

### CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[Coal refuse-fired power plant company mines in new way: bitcoin](#) - A western Pennsylvania company whose power plant source makes electricity from waste coal mined over the last 150 years is using that electricity to create a new mining for the 21st century, mining for bitcoin.

[US Northeast heat wave pushing up demand, power, gas prices thru midweek](#) - The US Northeast has been hit by this year's second heat wave, with forecasts for increased power demand, and temperatures above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, while power and natural gas prices were above recent averages on June 28 in New England, New York and the PJM Interconnection.

[National labs identify priorities in modernizing U.S. electricity markets](#) - As the U.S. electric grid reinvents itself, a collaboration between the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and several top national laboratories is underway to provide research insights that will inform grid markets, investments, and planning.

[US DOE NETL-led projects to prioritise rare earth extraction from coal waste](#) - The US Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) has awarded nearly US\$18 million to advance eight projects to extract rare earth elements (REEs) and other critical minerals (CMs) from materials such as coal waste materials and support revitalisation in regions across the country that face economic adversity due to declines in coal and power plants communities.

[February's increase in coal-fired electric generation reduced U.S. coal stockpiles](#) - Coal stockpiles at U.S. power plants decreased significantly from December 2020 to February 2021, including a draw of nearly 16 million tons in February 2021.

[PJM auction results provoke disparate views from FERC members on need for reform](#) - Two Federal Energy Regulatory Commission members pointed to the results of PJM Interconnection's recent capacity auction as reason to slow down efforts to overhaul the controversial minimum offer price rule, while the agency's head insisted it was necessary to move ahead full-steam ahead to avoid disruptions to new renewable resources looking to enter the market.

[NRG Will Close 3 Coal Plants After Poor Auction Results](#) - NRG Energy Inc. said it will retire three coal-fired power plants—two in Illinois and one in Delaware—next year after disappointing results in the May 2021 capacity auction for the PJM Interconnection.

[Texas grid operator urges electricity conservation as many power generators are unexpectedly offline and temperatures rise](#) - The Electric Reliability Council of Texas says a large number of power plants are offline, but it could not provide details as to what may be causing the “very concerning” number of outages.

[Utilities to DOE: More information, not new regulations, needed to secure the grid](#) - Utilities support development of a U.S.-based supply chain for grid equipment, but warn that sudden changes in procurement processes could drive up prices and impact reliability.

[Lou Barletta: As a coal region, we're sitting on a gold mine of rare earth elements](#) - Rare earth elements don't get the attention they deserve, but they are vital to our everyday life as key components of a nearly endless list of electronic devices.

[Developer abandons Keystone XL pipeline after Biden refuses to budge on permit](#) - The sponsor of the Keystone XL crude oil pipeline pulled the plug on the contentious project Wednesday after Canadian officials failed to persuade President Joe Biden to reverse his cancellation of its permit on the day he took office.

[GenOn Holdings, LLC Announces Retirement of Three Coal-Fired Power Plants](#) - GenOn Holdings, LLC (GenOn) announced today that it has initiated the process to permanently retire 2,421 MW of coal-fired electric generating capacity at three stations in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

[Electric power sector CO2 emissions drop as generation mix shifts from coal to natural gas](#) - Over the past 15 years, the U.S. electricity generation mix has shifted away from coal and toward natural gas and renewables, resulting in lower CO2 emissions from electricity generation.

[AEP 'Cooperating Fully' With SEC Subpoena](#) - AEP Ohio says the Securities and Exchange Commission is looking into benefits from HB6, the energy bill at the center of a bribery scandal.

[Coal Mine Along PA-WV Border Is Closing](#) - A coal mine along the Pennsylvania – West Virginia border is closing.

[U.S. energy consumption in 2020 increased for renewables, fell for all other fuels](#) - We recently updated our U.S. energy consumption by source and sector chart with 2020 data. All sources for U.S. energy consumption totaled 92.9 quadrillion British thermal units (quads) in 2020, a record 7% decrease from 2019.

[FERC should expand organized markets across the US, former chairs and commissioners say](#) - Although momentum for RTO expansion is growing, resistance to the shift is strong in some markets where the more competitive structure doesn't exist.

[PJM reliability valuation proposal could boost energy storage in capacity market, group says](#) - PJM Interconnection has proposed an Effective Load Carrying Capability (ELCC) framework that would refine the assessment of grid resources' reliability value as part of revisions to its tariff and its Reliability Assurance Agreement.

[It's Not Over for Coal as Global Prices Surge on Hot Demand](#) - Coal is seeing a dramatic spike in demand just as several major miners are hit with production problems, sparking a surge in prices from China to Europe and the U.S.

[Nuclear capacity increases by 4.5 GW in long-delayed 'MOPRed' PJM auction, coal loses 8 GW](#) - Total costs dropped \$4.4 billion and prices dropped to \$50/MW-day compared to the previous auction, during PJM's years-delayed capacity auction concluded on Wednesday, due largely to lower load forecasts, which translated to lower reliability requirements, according to the grid operator.

[PSEG Power Closes Last Coal Plant, Explores Divestiture of Other Fossil Assets](#) - PSEG Power retired its Bridgeport Harbor Station Unit 3 (BHS 3, Figure 1) on May 31. The unit, located in Bridgeport, Connecticut, was the last remaining coal-fired power plant in the company's fleet.

[Clean energy advocates bring lawsuit to roll back FERC's latest PURPA rules](#) - The Montana Environmental Information Center and nine other solar and environmental groups have challenged in federal court the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC's) recent rulemaking on PURPA that they said "effectively guts" the law's implementation.

[Coal Substitutes Touted as Way to Keep Coal-Fired Power Plants Open](#) - The move away from coal-fired power generation has supported the growth of other technologies to produce electricity.

[Leveraging R&D Strength to a Sustainable Future for Coal](#) - For a decade or more, coal has been a political football and a lightning rod for the unfolding transformation of the energy landscape.

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

[Biden administration, House Dems talk up need for interconnection reform](#) - The Biden administration expressed support for policies that would overhaul the nation's electric transmission rules to unlock more capacity and plan for interregional transmission in a House hearing Tuesday.

[Massachusetts state rep, favored by renewables industry, emerges among the frontrunners to fill FERC seat](#) - Maria Duaine Robinson, a Massachusetts state representative, is among the frontrunners to replace Federal Energy Regulatory Commissioner Neil Chatterjee, sources confirm.

[White House agrees to bipartisan infrastructure deal with \\$73B in power grid spending](#) - President Joe Biden announced a deal with a bipartisan group of senators for an infrastructure framework that will spend \$73 billion on power infrastructure.

[Bipartisan lawmakers back clean electricity standard, but fall short of Biden goal](#) - Bipartisan House lawmakers are showing support for a standard aiming to reduce the electric sector's carbon dioxide emissions 80 percent by 2050.

[U.S. Democrats launch bill allowing existing nuclear plants tax credit](#) - Five Democrats in the U.S. Senate introduced a bill on Thursday that would allow some existing nuclear power plants to receive a tax credit equal to an incentive already given to operators of wind power turbines.

[House passes broad bipartisan measure to help states fund energy cybersecurity efforts](#) - The U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday voted 398-21 to reauthorize a program to assist states in securing energy infrastructure against cyber and physical threats.

[Manchin-led committee puts forth sprawling energy infrastructure proposal](#) - A Senate committee that's led by key swing vote Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) has released a 400-page energy infrastructure proposal that it will weigh later this week.

[Manchin defends coal-fired plants, expresses concern over 'aggressive' Biden climate goals](#) - Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., offered a spirited defense of the nation's coal-fired power plants Thursday at Edison Electric Institute's 2021 conference.

[G7 Nations Take Aggressive Climate Action but Hold Back on Coal](#) - President Biden pushed climate action after four years in which Donald Trump rejected cooperation with allies. But leaders failed to set an expiration date for burning coal.

[E.P.A. to Review Rules on Soot Linked to Deaths, Which Trump Declined to Tighten](#) - The Biden administration says it will consider tougher limits on a deadly air pollutant that disproportionately affects low-income and minority communities.

[Glick: FERC to outline plan to tackle transmission 'certainly' by the end of summer](#) - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chair Richard Glick on Thursday laid out a number of short and long-term goals he has for the commission to tackle transmission policy, and said regulators will outline a clearer path forward on those issues "in the near future."

[In Major Reversal, EPA, Army Will Revise Definition of 'WOTUS'](#) - In yet another dramatic turn for federal policy governing the "waters of the U.S." (WOTUS), the Biden administration has announced its intent to revise the definition of WOTUS, citing "destructive impacts" to critical water bodies under a Trump-era rule.

[Biden proposes more than \\$2B for clean energy infrastructure, \\$14B+ increase in climate spending](#) - President Joe Biden's proposed 2022 budget calls for increased spending on climate mitigation, research and a variety of infrastructure projects — including energy efficiency and transmission — while emphasizing economic recovery and job growth.

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

[Pennsylvania governor vetoes GOP-led election overhaul citing voter ID restrictions](#) - Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf vetoed a Republican rewrite of Pennsylvania's Election Code on Wednesday, making clear his party's opposition to stricter voter ID requirements and setting up a potential showdown on the issue at the ballot box.

[Pennsylvania lawmakers pass \\$40.8 billion state budget; Gov. Tom Wolf says he'll sign it](#) - The Pennsylvania General Assembly has passed a \$40.8 billion state budget with a fair amount of bipartisan support for the investments it makes in schools and continuing economic relief from the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Face mask mandate ends Monday in Pa., although businesses can still require them](#) - Pennsylvania's requirement for people who aren't vaccinated against COVID-19 to wear face masks in public will end as of 12:01 a.m. on Monday.

[DEP: No heat, smoke or smell at mine](#) - Temperature checks in the drilled boreholes and the abandoned mine slope atop Big Mountain in Zerbe Township continue to reveal numbers typical to the underground mine environment, according to Megan Lehman, environmental community relations specialist, Williamsport, with the state Department of Environmental Protection.

[Republicans aim again to block Gov. Wolf's climate strategy](#) - Republicans who control Pennsylvania's Legislature are reprising a fight from last year, passing legislation Monday to require Gov. Tom Wolf to go through them if he wants to impose a price on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants.

[Gov. Wolf Joins Democrats to Discuss RGGI Benefits for Environment and Economy](#) - As Pennsylvania moves forward towards reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions by participating in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), Governor Tom Wolf today joined state Sen. Carolyn Comitta and state Rep. Dianne Herrin, who are introducing legislation that would target funding from RGGI proceeds to communities impacted by climate change.

[Gov. Tom Wolf signs bill to extend pandemic regulatory waivers](#) - Gov. Tom Wolf on Friday signed legislation to extend hundreds of waivers of regulations that his administration approved over the last 15 months under the authority of his pandemic disaster emergency declaration that lawmakers voted to end.

[Legislature votes to immediately end Pa.'s coronavirus disaster declaration while keeping waivers in place](#) - The Pennsylvania legislature has voted to immediately end Gov. Tom Wolf's coronavirus disaster declaration using a new power granted to the legislative branch by primary voters, while also keeping in place certain regulatory waivers.

[Pa. Senate passes bill requiring government agencies to publicize their agendas](#) - Pennsylvania is home to 4,831 local government agencies.

[RGGI supporters say initiative could provide resources for when plants, mines close](#) - An Indiana Borough councilman joined other supporters of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in stressing that Gov. Tom Wolf's effort to bring Pennsylvania into the multi-state combine could open up vast opportunities for businesses working on energy efficiency projects and clean energy solutions to drive job growth in the years to come.

[DEP Names Erin Wells Director Northwest Regional Office](#) - On June 2, the Department of Environmental Protection announced Erin Wells as the new Director of the Northwest Regional Office.

[WV Legislature approves resolution asking federal government for \\$8 billion for mine reclamation](#) - The West Virginia Legislature adopted a resolution Thursday urging the federal government to allocate \$8 billion to West Virginia to reclaim forfeited mine sites and support struggling coal communities.

[Audit report finds WV lawmakers, DEP risking mining reclamation program insolvency through lack of oversight](#) - West Virginia lawmakers and environmental regulators risk letting the state's mining reclamation program slip into insolvency through gaping holes in statutory and permitting oversight, according to a new state legislative audit report.