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## ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 1-4-22

(News clips from the previous month)

### CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[2021: A Dark Year for Electricity Security, Reliability](#) - While 2021 kicked off short on optimism given chaos from the COVID-19 pandemic, the year was characterized by an extraordinary series of critical energy crises.

[X-MAT® wins \\$1.2M contract from DOE](#) - Department of Energy awards contract to fund research of 3D printing coal waste.

[Natural gas use may affect climate as much as coal does if methane leaks persist](#) - As satellites deliver more accurate data on methane emissions from oil and gas production, scientists are getting a clearer picture of how natural gas stacks up against coal and whether it is truly the cleaner fuel.

[Coal deliveries to power plants reach six-month low in Oct: US EIA](#) - Coal deliveries to US power plants fell to a six-month low in October, dipping to 38.17 million st, according to Energy Information Administration data from Dec. 27.

[3 ways 2021 changed electricity — and what's next](#) - As sweeping climate legislation stalled in Congress this year, states and utilities were busy aiming to reshape the future of electricity.

[Four environmental fights to watch in 2022](#) - With Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) dashing Democratic hopes for major climate change and environmental legislation, pressure is increasing on the Biden administration to take significant regulatory action.

[Groups urge bigger targets, more equity as RGGI states consider changes](#) - The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is undergoing a review by participating states for the third time since its kickoff in 2009. Advocates say more ambitious targets are needed in response to more dire climate projections.

[U.S. can get to 100% clean energy with wind, water, solar and zero nuclear, Stanford professor says](#) - A prominent Stanford University professor has outlined a roadmap for the United States to meet its total energy needs using 100% wind, water and solar by 2050.

[Coal-fired power generation on track to hit all-time high this year, IEA says](#) - Coal-fired power generation is due to hit an all-time high this year, according to a report from the International Energy Agency, with the organization's executive director calling for urgent action to mitigate emissions from the sector.

[Extreme weather, plant retirements challenge US grid amid a looming Midwest capacity shortfall: NERC](#) - Extreme weather is becoming more common and energy disruptions seen in California last August and in Texas this February "should serve as a wake-up call for the rest of the country," North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC) Director of Reliability Assessments and System Analysis John Moura said Friday in a call with reporters.

[Energy transition likely requires market changes, transmission growth, PJM finds](#) - The PJM Interconnection's markets and transmission planning will likely need to evolve to handle high penetrations of renewable energy, according to a study the grid operator released Wednesday.

[Of the operating U.S. coal-fired power plants, 28% plan to retire by 2035](#) - Although coal-fired power plants have no mandatory retirement age, power plant owners and operators have reported to EIA that they plan to retire 28%, or 59 gigawatts (GW), of the coal-fired capacity currently operating in the United States by 2035.

[How Dems' climate plan may transform coal in rural America](#) - The budget reconciliation package that passed the House this month is targeting one of the most fossil fuel-heavy parts of the electricity sector: coal plants in rural America.

[PJM Tracker: power, gas prices remain significantly higher in November on year](#) - PJM Interconnection wholesale power prices remained well over 150% higher in November on year, but decreased on a monthly basis at some locations, while forward power prices remained significantly higher on year.

[More than 32 GW of New Gas-Fired Power Plants in U.S. Pipeline](#) - Recent reports from groups analyzing U.S. power generation note how states near the nation's largest shale plays are expected to bring significant new natural gas-fired generation online over the next few years, despite concerns about recent market volatility that sent gas prices to their highest levels in more than a decade.

[Carbon prices, long in the dumps, surge in U.S. and Europe](#) - Carbon bulls are on the ride. Emission allowances in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a cap-and-trade program covering power plants in the Northeast, closed at a record-high \$13 per ton at auction last week.

[EIA: U.S. Coal Stockpiles Lowest Since 1978](#) - The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) recently said it expected coal-fired power generation in 2021 to be 22% higher than in 2020, producing the first year-over-year increase in U.S. electricity generation from coal since 2014.

[SCRIP: AMD treatment a vital component of national infrastructure](#) - After debate, the U.S. Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed the federal infrastructure legislation into law on Nov. 15. The bill aims to revitalize the nation's roads, bridges, waterways and public transit.

[U.S. Coal Is Making A Transitory Comeback](#) - While the U.S. Administration is pushing its green energy agenda and wants to decarbonize the power grid by 2035, coal is making a comeback this year as high natural gas prices incentivize more coal use in electricity generation.

[Despite authority to require RTOs, Glick says FERC will encourage bottom-up approach to creating power markets](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will not require participation in regional transmission organizations (RTOs) despite having the authority to do so, Chair Richard Glick said Thursday at an event hosted by the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA).

[US to add 200 GW of renewable capacity by 2026, but IEA warns 30 GW offshore target 'challenging'](#) - Renewable capacity in the United States will increase 65% from 2021 to 2026, adding more than 200 GW of emissions-free generation that will mostly be solar, according to a Wednesday report from the International Energy Agency.

[Unit Flexibility and Asset Optimization: Helping Coal-Fired Power Plants Survive in a Renewables-Driven Market](#) - Many coal-fired power plants are being asked to ramp output up and down regularly, and often to levels less than units were originally designed to operate at. Implementing a Unit Flexibility and Asset Optimization program can help plants widen operating windows and hit necessary targets.

[The Convoluted Tale of U.S. Coal Ash Management](#) - Sometime around midnight on Dec. 22, 2008, a dike at the coal ash dewatering pond for the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA's) 1,400-MW Kingston power plant in Roane County, Tennessee, failed. That led to what has been reported as the largest industrial spill in U.S. history.

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

[CDC recommends shorter isolation, quarantine for those with COVID](#) - U.S. health officials on Monday cut isolation restrictions for Americans who catch the coronavirus, from 10 days to five days, and similarly shortened the time that close contacts need to quarantine.

[FERC orders PJM to change reserve market rules, delay capacity auctions](#) - Reversing parts of an earlier decision, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on Wednesday ordered the PJM Interconnection to revise its reserve market rules, which will delay the grid operator's upcoming capacity auction.

[DOE announces technical assistance for 21 states on grid modernization, energy transition challenges](#) - Regulators in 21 states will receive up to two years of technical assistance from the national laboratories on a range of grid modernization and energy transition issues, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced on Wednesday.

[Supreme Court to hold special session on vaccine requirements](#) - The Supreme Court says it will hold a special session in just over two weeks to hear arguments on the Biden administration's vaccine or testing requirement for large employers and a separate vaccine requirement for healthcare workers, an announcement that comes amid rising coronavirus cases.

[Insight from Washington: Policy pivot looms as new commissioner joins FERC](#) - As energy transition ambitions amp up around the world, a key US energy regulator is about to embark on a transformation of its own.

[DOE Establishes New Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced the establishment of the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations, a new DOE office that will help deliver on President Biden's bold climate agenda, create new, good-paying jobs for American families and workers, and reduce pollution while benefitting disadvantaged communities.

[Sen. Cramer, Colleagues Introduce Bill to Reinstate and Preserve Mission of the National Coal Council](#) - Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND), member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, joined Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) in introducing the Coal Council Certainty Act, legislation to reinstate the National Coal Council (NCC).

[Sen. Joe Manchin outlines tax, policy changes he'd want in Biden bill](#) - Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin on Monday outlined possible changes to President Biden's mammoth \$2 trillion economic agenda that might draw his support, while lashing out at White House staff and fellow Democrats for trying to bully him.

[Democrats plan to press ahead with Build Back Better bill, despite Manchin opposition](#) - Democratic leaders plan to move ahead with key climate and social spending legislation despite Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., on Sunday saying he opposed the \$1.9 trillion Build Back Better bill, which includes new and expanded tax credits for the power sector and funding for electric vehicles and transmission lines.

[EXPLAINER: Must employers follow Biden's vaccine mandates?](#) - Tens of millions of workers across the U.S. are in limbo as federal courts have issued different rulings related to President Joe Biden's COVID-19 vaccine mandates for larger private companies, certain health care workers and federal government contractors.

[Congress votes to raise the debt ceiling, punting the next fight to 2023](#) - The House voted 221 to 209 early Wednesday morning to increase the federal borrowing limit by \$2.5 trillion, a figure Democrats say will allow the government to avoid default until early 2023.

[FERC eyes rule changes to prevent utilities from charging ratepayers for political expenses](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission started an inquiry Thursday into whether it should change its accounting rules to prevent electric and gas utilities from recovering expenses related to political and lobbying contributions from their customers.

[Readout of Investment Roundtable Hosted by the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization](#) - Today, Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization (IWG) Co-Chairs National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy and National Economic Council Director Brian Deese hosted a roundtable with stakeholders from the private sector, philanthropy, labor and community-based organizations.

[Coal interests press Supreme Court to limit EPA reach](#) - Coal companies and Republican-led states yesterday called on the Supreme Court to constrain EPA from going as far as the Obama administration did when it crafted a systemwide approach to curb carbon emissions from existing power plants.

[Biden order on emissions-free power, EVs sends market signals, experts say](#) - The federal government — the largest U.S. energy consumer — will aim to get carbon-free electricity on a net annual basis by 2030, with half of it being emissions-free around the clock, under an executive order signed Wednesday by President Joe Biden.

[FERC swears in Phillips as fifth commissioner giving Democrats 3-2 majority](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission swore in Willie Phillips to start a five-year term as the fifth commissioner on Dec. 3.

[Senate passes stopgap funding bill, avoiding shutdown](#) - The Senate passed a stopgap spending bill Thursday that avoids a short-term shutdown and funds the federal government through Feb. 18 after leaders defused a partisan standoff over federal vaccine mandates. The measure now goes to President Joe Biden to be signed into law.

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

[Hearings set on preliminary state House and Senate district maps](#) - Pennsylvanians will have six opportunities over the next two weeks to voice their opinion about preliminary Pennsylvania House and Senate district maps.

[Governor Wolf Responds to Congressional Redistricting Map Proposed by the House State Government Committee](#) - Governor Tom Wolf sent a letter to House leadership and the chairs of the House State Government Committee outlining his concerns with the proposed new map for Pennsylvania's congressional districts passed by the committee on Dec. 15, 2021.

[Wolf Administration says it wants to improve environmental justice policy](#) - Pennsylvania's environmental regulator wants to be a better resource for disadvantaged communities with a historically high pollution burden.

[Top stories of 2021: The fight over RGGI](#) - Pennsylvania moved closer this year to joining a regional program to cut greenhouse gas emissions from power plants.

[Pa. lawmakers say they have time to draw maps; but state courts, Wolf admin. Disagree](#) - Pennsylvania's courts appear poised to intervene in the state's contested redistricting process unless the Republican-controlled General Assembly and Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf can come to some agreement in the next six weeks.

[Lawmakers consider bill to account for cleanup when developing renewable energy projects](#) - State lawmakers are considering cleanup requirements for renewable energy projects when they reach the end of their useful lives—which in most cases is decades away.

[House passes change to Clean Streams Law; critics say it will weaken enforcement](#) - Lawmakers are advancing a measure to change the state's Clean Streams Law.

[Democrats could make sizeable gains in Pennsylvania legislature under proposed new maps](#) - A panel of Pennsylvania's most powerful lawmakers released new proposed maps for the state's House and Senate districts Thursday that could dramatically alter the balance of political power in Harrisburg for the decade to come — with the advantage swinging to the Democrats.

[Battery metals from mine waste: Potential economic benefits for the commonwealth](#) - Pennsylvania has a long history of mining and metallurgical activities dating to the Industrial Revolution that helped fuel the economy of the commonwealth and the nation.

[Gov. Tom Wolf not looking to impose a statewide mandate to curb spread of COVID-19: 'Vaccine is our strategy'](#) - Despite the uptick in COVID-19 cases particularly in Central Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf has no intention of imposing a statewide mask or vaccine mandate but will continue to urge Pennsylvanians to get vaccinated.

[Proposed constitutional amendment seeks to cut executive branch out of the process](#) - Legislation that seeks to put the responsibility for advertising future constitutional amendments in the legislative branch's hands cleared a Senate committee on Tuesday in a bipartisan 8-3 vote.

[DEP adjusts proposed methane rule, but critics say it's not enough](#) - The Wolf Administration is proposing tighter controls for pollution that leaks from oil and gas sites.