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ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 1-3-23

(News clips from the previous month)

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[Intense cold strained, but didn't break, the U.S. electric grid. That was lucky](#) - On Dec. 23 and Christmas Eve, as the wind roared and the temperature plummeted, the U.S. electric grid — the complex network of power stations and transmission lines that keeps the country's lights on — started to creak.

[Bulk Power System Deficiencies During Winter Storm Elliot Prompt Inquiries](#) - Assessments are underway to pin down factors that prompted emergencies, tight grid conditions, and even load-shedding by major entities as Winter Storm Elliot bore down on the North American bulk power system (BPS) this past week.

[Crash In U.S. Natural Gas Prices Incentivizes Power Plants To Ditch Coal](#) - Global coal use jumped to a record high this year because of the sharp increase in natural gas prices. This prompted a wave of fuel switching away from NatGas by utilities for power generation, pushing up demand for price-competitive options, including coal, in many countries.

[Americans' Wallets Set for Hit From Winter Home-Heating Bills](#) - Wholesale power prices surged more than 6,000% in parts of the country during the worst of the recent brutal cold snap — a sign that Americans are likely to face significantly higher winter heating costs once the bills get mailed out.

[Record Output Slump for Top US Gas Basin Worsened Power Chaos](#) - A record production decline in the largest US natural gas basin came just as extreme cold sent demand booming for the commodity used to heat homes and fuel power plants, exacerbating the winter storm crisis that left millions in the dark.

[Viewpoint: RGGI members up in the air in 2023](#) - Political and legal fights over the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) will continue to affect the CO2 allowances market, as Pennsylvania and North Carolina mull joining and Virginia eyes exiting the power plant cap-and-trade program.

[3 Washington state electric substations vandalized](#) - Vandalism at three power substations in western Washington early Sunday initially cut power to about 14,000 utility customers, the Pierce County Sheriff's Office said.

[PJM seeks mid-auction capacity market rule change to address anomaly that led to 'unjust' price](#) - The PJM Interconnection plans to ask the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to approve a rule that would allow the grid operator to change a capacity auction parameter that led to anomalous results in its just-held auction, Stu Bresler, PJM senior vice president for market services, said Wednesday.

[Gas for coal? Debate rages on as electric companies invest.](#) - Some of the largest coal-burning power plants in the nation are being fast-tracked for retirement and replaced in part by cheaper, cleaner renewable energy — a trend that should accelerate following enactment of landmark federal climate legislation.

[Global coal use is on course to hit all-time high this year, IEA says](#) - Global coal use is on course to increase by 1.2% to hit a record high this year, according to a report from the International Energy Agency.

[US Grid Faces a New Threat as Regulators Balk at Higher Bills](#) - As Americans grapple with surging home energy bills, state regulators are starting to take a harder line on utilities proposing to hike household electricity rates.

[Most of US electric grid faces risk of resource shortfall through 2027, NERC finds](#) - Grid operators in California, Ontario and the parts of the Midwest face a “high risk” of resource adequacy shortfalls from 2023 to 2027 during normal seasonal peak conditions, the North American Electric Reliability Corp. said in its Long-Term Reliability Assessment released Thursday.

[After substation attacks, FERC orders NERC to consider increasing grid security requirements](#) - Following attacks on substations and other energy infrastructure, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on Thursday ordered the North American Electric Reliability Corp. to determine whether physical security grid reliability standards should be strengthened.

[GE’s New Energy Business Announces HQ Site](#) - General Electric (GE), which has restructured its operations in recent years and in July announced its energy and other businesses would have new brand names, on Dec. 15 said its energy group would be headquartered in Massachusetts.

[DOE hails fusion technology breakthrough on path to achieving abundant zero-carbon energy](#) - Scientists at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory have achieved net energy gain in a fusion experiment, paving the way for a technology that could someday provide clean and plentiful energy, the U.S. Department of Energy announced Tuesday.

[Coal was the largest source of electricity generation for 15 states in 2021](#) - In 15 U.S. states last year, coal was used to generate electricity more than any other energy source. Twenty years earlier, in 2001, coal was the largest source of electricity generation in 32 states.

[On-peak wholesale power prices this winter expected to be more than 60% higher in some regions, EIA warns](#) - Wholesale power buyers and residential consumers alike may anticipate higher costs this winter, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said Tuesday in its December Short Term Energy Outlook.

[Renewables to overtake coal and become world’s biggest source of electricity generation by 2025, IEA says](#) - Renewables are on course to overtake coal and become the planet’s biggest source of electricity generation by the middle of this decade, according to the International Energy Agency.

[More renewable energy may complicate regional power grid: MISO assessment](#) - Wind and solar generation are projected to span 60 percent of the regional energy capacity by 2041 — which could make it more complicated to plan and operate the power grid, according to a report released this week by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, or MISO.

[NYISO warns of narrower reliability margins in the next 10 years as gas plants retire, electrification advances](#) -The New York Independent System Operator warned Wednesday of narrower margins to maintain power grid reliability over the next 10 years as gas-fired generators are retired and buildings and transportation are increasingly electrified.

[Large Hydro Station Wins POWER’s Highest Honor, 21 Additional Outstanding Projects Recognized in 2022](#) - For more than four decades, POWER magazine has honored the top performers in the electricity-generating industry with annual power plant awards.

[Water Quality Management and Control—Managing the Second-Largest Waste Material in the U.S.](#) - Coal ash, or coal combustion residuals (CCRs), is the second-largest waste material in the U.S., just behind household garbage. The safe and sustainable management of coal ash poses one of the most complex challenges facing energy producers.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[EPA finalizes water rule that repeals Trump-era changes](#) - President Joe Biden’s administration on Friday finalized regulations that protect hundreds of thousands of small streams, wetlands and other waterways, repealing a Trump-era rule that federal courts had thrown out and that environmentalists said left waterways vulnerable to pollution.

[Democrats take climate victory lap as Congress leaves town](#) - The 117th Congress was hugely consequential for energy and climate policy.

[Appalachian Voices: Final FY2023 Federal Budget Includes STREAM Act, Abandoned Mine Land Economic Program Increase, Not Black Lung Benefits](#) - On December 23, Appalachian Voices said Congress gave final approval to the federal FY2023 appropriations legislation and secured two major victories for coal-impacted communities.

[Report: Environmental enforcement has fallen off under Biden](#) - Federal environmental enforcement, as measured by Environmental Protection Agency civil cases closed against polluters, hit a two-decade low in 2022, per a report released last week by a national environmental group that blames budget cuts, staff shortages and the U.S. Senate's failure to confirm key leaders.

[How the \\$1.7T omnibus affects energy, from CCS to hydrogen](#) - The year-end spending package released by Congress on Tuesday could deliver an influx of funding to several Department of Energy programs that may be pivotal for hitting the Biden administration's climate targets.

[FERC Chairman Glick to exit agency by early January, setting up possible tied-vote deadlocks](#) - The energy agency, seen as key to the energy transition, will be shorthanded until Chairman Richard Glick's seat is filled, which could take months.

[Senate rejects Manchin's energy permitting amendment to defense bill](#) - The Senate has bucked Sen. Joe Manchin's (D-W.Va.) latest effort to get his energy deal with Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) attached to must-pass legislation.

[DOE releases record funding for removing carbon](#) - A high-stakes race that will shape the future of direct air capture technology has officially begun.

[US FERC to act on backstop transmission siting, long-running gas pipeline disputes](#) - The US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is poised to act on transmission siting, key pipeline rate disputes, and two important natural gas pipeline certificates at its last meeting of the year Dec. 15, potentially Democrat Richard Glick's final session as chairman.

[Manchin calls for Senate vote on permitting reform, warns of billions of dollars stranded without it](#) - Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., wants the Senate to advance his energy permitting reform proposal as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, or NDAA, and said Thursday that the issue has "become personal."

[Sinema switches to independent, shaking up the Senate](#) - Arizona Sen. Kyrsten Sinema is changing her party affiliation to independent, delivering a jolt to Democrats' narrow majority and Washington along with it.

[Warnock defeats Walker, giving Democrats 51-49 majority in Senate](#) - U.S. Sen. Raphael Warnock fended off a challenge from Republican Herschel Walker to win a full six-year term that broadens the Democratic majority in the chamber after a turbulent runoff campaign that sharpened partisan divides in one of the nation's most politically competitive states.

[FERC urged to set interregional transfer capacity requirements to boost reliability, lower costs](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission should require minimum levels of the amount of electricity that can flow between regions, a move that could increase grid reliability and lower power prices, some panelists at an agency workshop said Monday.

[Biden won't ask Congress to tweak climate law](#) - The Biden administration is in talks with European leaders about how to address concerns with the new U.S. climate and clean energy law, but the White House doesn't plan to ask Congress for changes.

[FERC approves PJM's 'first-ready, first-served' interconnection reform plan, steps to clear backlog](#) - The PJM Interconnection will move to a "first-ready, first-served" interconnection review process that groups proposals and assigns upgrade costs in clusters under a plan approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[Top stories of 2022: Pa. pushes climate measures forward, meets delays and lawsuits](#) - Pennsylvania took big steps in 2022 to limit greenhouse gas emissions, but the regulations were met with several challenges.

[The Pennsylvania legislature is getting a major infusion of new blood this January](#) - One of the biggest classes of first-time lawmakers in recent memory will be sworn in to the Pennsylvania legislature as leaders in the lower chamber grapple for power, complicating incoming legislators' expressed desires to find common ground.

[Pennsylvania certifies election results after recount delay](#) - Pennsylvania's top elections official fully certified results from the November vote late last week after recount petitions in some counties had delayed the process, the Department of State said Tuesday.

[Pennsylvania politics are heated. It soon could be utter chaos](#) - The state House is a mess, with each side claiming they are in the majority and Republicans potentially passing amendments after Democrats won more seats.

[PUC Highlights 2022 Accomplishments](#) - During its final public meeting for 2022, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) continued a tradition of highlighting major accomplishments over the past year, including a major milestone for the agency.

[Closed-door talks fail to settle state House control fight](#) - A day of closed-door negotiations failed Wednesday to settle a dispute between Republican and Democratic leaders in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives about when to hold three special elections that will determine control of their chamber.

[Pennsylvania State Department argues against delay in filling 3 House vacancies](#) - Pennsylvania's statewide elections agency said in a court filing Friday that it is moving ahead with plans for special elections to fill three Allegheny County state House vacancies in early February unless a court orders otherwise

[Pennsylvania No. 6 state with most power outages: study](#) - Pennsylvania saw a record number of power outages in 2021 thanks to severe weather.

[Electric utilities in Pa. monitoring grid in the wake of North Carolina attacks](#) - Pennsylvania utilities are monitoring for threats after an attack on two electric substations left thousands of people without power in North Carolina.

[Democrats do not have majority control of Pa. House, legislative service agency opines](#) - Pennsylvania House Democrats' claim to holding the majority of seats in the 203-member chamber in the ongoing power struggle under way in the narrowly divided chamber has been rejected by a legislative legal body and may be headed to court for resolution.

[Virginia's exit from regional emissions trading group advances as air board opens public comment](#) - On Wednesday, the Virginia Air Pollution Control Board voted 4-1, with two abstentions, to move ahead with Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin's proposal to exit the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, advancing the proposed repeal to the public comment process.

[Incoming Shapiro-Davis Administration Names Members Of Environment/Energy Transition Advisory Committee](#) - On December 2, Governor-Elect Josh Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor-Elect Austin Davis announced the members of seven Transition Advisory Committees, which will advise the incoming Administration and prepare to advance Governor-Elect Shapiro's top priorities: growing our economy, making our communities safer, and ensuring all Pennsylvania students receive a high-quality education.

[DEP Announces Effective Date of Volatile Organic Compound Regulations for Conventional Oil and Gas Industry](#) - The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is providing notice that the emergency certified final-omitted rulemaking to control volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from conventional oil and gas sources is final and effective as of today, December 2, 2022.

[Court declines to order release of opinion from Attorney General's office that withdrawing Virginia from RGGI would violate law](#) - Yesterday the Charlottesville Circuit Court upheld the withholding of an opinion from the Attorney General's office advising that the Youngkin administration's efforts to withdraw Virginia from the emissions reduction program known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) would be unlawful.