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ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 1-2-24

(News clips from the previous month)

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[A Coal Refuse Power Plant Is Pioneering an AI-Driven Overhaul](#) - An iconic coal refuse power plant in West Virginia that burns gob—basically dirt—and pond fines as part of a complex environmental solution to address coal waste is stepping up efforts to improve its efficiency, reliability, and cost reductions by embracing cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI).

[US eastern grid operator PJM expects to clear 300 new power projects in 2024](#) - PJM Interconnection, the biggest U.S. power grid operator, said on Thursday it expects to clear 300 new power generation projects totaling 26,000 Megawatt (MW) in 2024 under its overhauled review process.

[Electric-gas coordination, planning vital to grid recovery after blackouts: FERC-NERC report](#) - The electric and gas sectors should collaborate on a “blackstart system restoration plan” to bring the grid back online in the event of a system collapse, a new report concludes.

[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Provides \\$8 Million to States and Tribes to Update Abandoned Mine Land Inventories](#) - The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement today announced an \$8 million investment through President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for states and Tribes to update their abandoned mine land inventories, to support future remediation efforts.

[PJM prepares shift to scenario-based long-term transmission planning](#) - Under the new approach, PJM will consider three scenarios, including one that factors in state energy policies and another that accounts for expected demand growth from EVs and other developments.

[PJM Launches Update to Planning Tool To Visually Assess Potential Impacts of New Generation on the Grid](#) - PJM has launched an update to its public Queue Scope planning tool that lets users visually evaluate the potential impacts of new generation on the power grid.

[Why the U.S. needs a grid that’s ‘bigger than the weather’](#) - Abe Silverman’s Christmas Eve quickly went from low-key to frantic when Winter Storm Elliott brought a power grid emergency to much of the Eastern seaboard.

[Global coal use at all-time high in 2023](#) – IEA - Global coal use is expected to reach a record high in 2023 as demand in emerging and developing economies remains strong, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said in a report on Friday.

[Rising peak demand, 83 GW of planned retirements create blackout risks for most of US: NERC](#) - NERC’s 10-year reliability assessment warns environmental regulations and energy policies “that are overly rigid” can jeopardize “the orderly transition of the resource mix.”

[COP28 Concludes with Landmark Decision to Shift Away from Fossil Fuels](#) - Negotiators from nearly every country in the world closed COP28 with a decision that—for the first time—formally recognizes the necessity of moving away from fossil fuels to achieve the Paris Agreement targets.

[PJM Makes Multiple Reliability-Focused Improvements To Prepare for Winter](#) - PJM Interconnection has implemented its winter readiness steps for 2023–2024 and, along with its member utilities, is prepared to serve the forecasted demand for electricity this winter under expected conditions.

[As NERC members risk missing weatherization standards deadline, board vows to act on its own](#) - NERC faces a February deadline to revise cold weather standards, but proposed rules failed the most recent stakeholder vote.

[EIA projects wind and solar to outpace coal generation for the first time in 2024](#) - The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that coal-fired power plants will generate less electricity in 2024 (599 billion kwh) than the combined generation from solar and wind (688 billion kWh) for the first time on record.

[US electricity load growth forecast jumps 81% led by data centers, industry: Grid Strategies](#) - Data from FERC Form 714 shows grid planners expect nationwide power demand to grow 4.7% over the next five years, compared to a previous estimate of 2.6%.

[Extreme cold still poses reliability challenge for N. American power generators -NERC](#) - The North American Electric Reliability Corp (NERC) anticipates that "freezing conditions" still remain a reliability concern for power generators, it said in a report released on Monday.

[PJM Board of Managers Approves Critical Grid Upgrades](#) - The PJM Board of Managers has approved a set of proposed projects to expand the regional transmission system to accommodate electricity demand growth, generator retirements and future capacity needs in the area PJM serves across 13 states and the District of Columbia.

[N.D. researchers find cost-effective way to extract rare-earth elements from coal](#) - In a large warehouse in Grand Forks, Nicholas Dyrstad-Cincotta marvels at how far his team has come. Two years ago, they set out to test the economic viability of extracting critical metals from lignite coal, an abundant soft rock sediment found throughout North Dakota.

[Major grid operator warns legal agreement to shutter coal plant will devastate electric reliability](#) - A major power grid operator that oversees electricity supplies across the mid-Atlantic repeated its warning that the looming shutdown of a coal-fired power plant in Baltimore will threaten the region's grid reliability and may have devastating impacts on consumers.

[A new era: Coal usage and emissions in the global power sector to peak in 2023](#) - According to a recent release from Rystad Energy, global coal-fired power generation is on track to peak in 2023, as new sources of renewable and low-carbon energy expand rapidly.

[Federal appeals court upholds FERC action on PJM capacity market rule, sets precedent](#) - The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit upheld the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's action that saw the PJM Interconnection's "focused" minimum offer price rule, or MOPR, take effect by operation of law when commissioners deadlocked on the issue.

[Former Ohio public utilities chairman Sam Randazzo indicted by federal grand jury for bribery, embezzlement](#) - The former chairman of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio has been indicted by a federal grand jury on bribery and embezzlement charges, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Ohio announced in a news release Monday.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[5 big funding questions awaiting Congress in January](#) - Congress is, yet again, ramping up the risk of a government shutdown — with less than a month left until the first deadline.

[As fatalities rise, MSHA adopts rule to protect miners from powered equipment](#) - Federal regulators have issued a rule aimed at protecting mine workers from hazards stemming from a wide range of powered equipment amid a rise in mining fatalities.

[Environmental groups want stronger rules for use of coal ash fill after EPA reveals new risks](#) - Coal ash, what's left over after coal is burned to generate electricity, is one of the largest waste streams in the U.S., with hundreds of millions of tons of it lying in hundreds of sites across the country.

[Supreme Court will hear challenge to EPA rule limiting downwind power plant pollution in 10 states](#) - The Supreme Court will hear arguments in February on whether the Environmental Protection Agency can continue enforcing its anti-air-pollution “good neighbor” rule in 10 states, an effort to restrict smokestack emissions from power plants and other industrial sources that burden downwind areas with smog-causing pollution.

[Capito, Barrasso: FERC Must Fix EPA’s Proposed Clean Power Plan 2.0](#) - Today, U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.), Ranking Member of the Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee, and U.S. Senator John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee, sent a letter to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Chairman Willie L. Phillips and Commissioners James Danly, Allison Clements, and Mark C. Christie.

[Senate starts recess, punts debate on EPA air nominee](#) - President Joe Biden’s nominee to lead EPA’s air office will have to wait a few weeks longer for a confirmation vote.

[US FERC okays \\$1.2 billion PJM settlement for outages during 2022 storm](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on Tuesday approved a \$1.2 billion settlement between PJM Interconnection and more than 80 parties that resolved complaints stemming from a massive outage during a 2022 winter storm.

[DOE tabs \\$890 million for three carbon capture projects at U.S. power plants](#) - The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced up to \$890 million for three large-scale carbon capture demonstration projects in the power sector.

[EPA Names Martha Shimkin New Director Of Chesapeake Bay Program](#) - On December 15, the the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Martha Shimkin will lead the Chesapeake Bay Program Office in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

[House Democratic bill aims to spur interregional, offshore transmission](#) - House Democrats on Tuesday introduced a bill to spur transmission development, with a focus on interregional and offshore wind lines.

[FERC Approves Potential Reduction of Stakeholder Input in Reliability Standard Development](#) - FERC recently issued an order approving revisions to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Rules of Procedures to modify the rules for developing mandatory reliability standards.

[Final SEC climate disclosure rule pushed to April 2024](#) - The long-awaited timing update comes via the Biden administration’s regulatory agenda for next year, which also unveiled new timetables for other ESG-related proposals.

[Biden regulatory plan set to shake up energy sector](#) - The White House released a regulatory plan Wednesday that could shape President Joe Biden’s energy legacy — as well as influence greenhouse gas emissions and the electricity mix — amid partisan gridlock in Congress.

[EPA lays groundwork for stronger climate rules](#) - The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) this weekend took action that is expected to justify stricter climate regulations.

[Democratic lawmakers call for urgent action on climate finance and fossil fuel phase-out](#) - The letter, signed by 34 Democrats, said the U.S. has failed to adhere to its climate action commitments and must halt all public financing of international fossil fuel projects.

[Republicans bash Biden methane rule, COP28 funding promise](#) - Congressional Republicans are railing against President Joe Biden’s environmental agenda as lawmakers from both parties prepare to join world leaders later this week at the annual U.N. climate summit in the United Arab Emirates.

[US joins in other nations in swearing off coal power to clean the climate](#) - The United States committed Saturday to the idea of phasing out coal power plants, joining 56 other nations in kicking the coal habit that’s a huge factor in global warming.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[Year in Review: Pennsylvania energy policy](#) - Pennsylvania has had a significant year for energy development, with hundreds of millions of federal dollars coming into the commonwealth.

[Pa. lawmakers debate proposal to raise state's renewable energy goal](#) - A bill in the state House would increase the amount of electricity Pennsylvania gets from renewable sources

[Public Utility Commission Highlights 2023 Accomplishments](#) - During its final public meeting for 2023, the Public Utility Commission continued a tradition of highlighting major accomplishments over the past year.

[Governor's Office Releases List Of DEP, Other Agency Permits Included In PAYback Permit Fee Refund Program And Review Deadlines](#) - On December 19, in response to a Right To Know Request, the Governor's Office released the list of state permits, licenses and authorizations covered by the Shapiro Administration's PAYback Permit Fee Refund Program.

[Pennsylvania's budget impasse ends as legislature agrees to boost child care tax credit, fund public defense](#) - Pennsylvania's budget impasse ended Wednesday after the divided state legislature agreed to send millions of dollars to community colleges and libraries, fund public legal defense, and create a student teacher stipend.

[Pennsylvania House back to a 101-101 partisan divide with the resignation of a Democratic lawmaker](#) - The Pennsylvania House of Representatives is back to a 101-101 partisan split with the resignation of a Democratic lawmaker Thursday, teeing up another special election to determine the chamber's majority early next year.

[Yaw: Senate ERE Committee Oks Bill to Create Independent Energy Office in Pennsylvania](#) - The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee today approved legislation to establish an Independent Energy Office (IEO) within the Commonwealth, according to Chairman Gene Yaw (R-23), sponsor of the measure.

[ReliabilityFirst talks future of power grid with state lawmakers](#) - Legislators got an education on Tuesday on the risks and concerns facing the region's power grid as the energy transition progresses.

[State shares details about funding to cut emissions](#) - The state Department of Environmental Protection stopped in Williamsport recently as part of a tour spreading the word and gaining insight about new federal funding for projects that would cut emissions in the state.

[Water damage to close Pa. House chamber temporarily, push lawmakers elsewhere](#) - A ruptured heating coil above the ornate ceiling of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives is forcing the chamber to be closed for business for the early part of 2024.

[PUC Approves Joint Settlement Regarding Consolidation of FirstEnergy Utilities in Pennsylvania](#) - The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) today approved a joint settlement that addresses all issues related to the proposed consolidation of four Pennsylvania electric utilities – Metropolitan Edison Company (Met-Ed), Pennsylvania Electric Company (Penelec), Pennsylvania Power Company (Penn Power), and West Penn Power Company (West Penn Power) – into the FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company (FE PA).

[State Republicans urge DEP to withdraw updated environmental justice policy](#) - Several Pennsylvania Republicans slammed an updated environmental justice policy recently put into effect by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that they say will increase costs and slash new investments and jobs.

[State alerts business owners to new federal law](#) - The Shapiro Administration is alerting Pennsylvania companies to a new federal requirement.

[Pa. governor, Legislature wrapping up remarkably unproductive year. What happened?](#) - The approaching end of 2023 will close a remarkably unproductive chapter in the history of the Pennsylvania Legislature.