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ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 2-1-24

(News clips from the previous month)

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[The US Wants to Know How Much Electricity Crypto Miners Use](#) - The mining of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies uses more electricity than some countries. Is all that demand raising your power bill?

[PJM Review: System Performed Well During Winter Storm Gerri](#) - A preliminary review of system operations during Winter Storm Gerri Jan. 13–18 revealed strong generator and transmission performance, accurate load forecasting, and successful coordination with other regions.

[Electrification, manufacturing to propel 1.5% annual US electric demand growth through 2026: IEA](#) - After falling 1.6% last year on mild weather, U.S. electricity use is set to grow 1.5% per year from 2024 through 2026, driven by increased manufacturing and electrification in the transportation and building sectors, the International Energy Agency, or IEA, said Wednesday.

[Global Emissions From Electricity Set to Fall Even as Power Demand Climbs, IEA Predicts](#) - Starting this year, record generation from renewables and nuclear will cover rising power demand from growth in emerging markets, AI and data centers, the agency says.

[NERC issues 3-year plan for setting reliability standards for wind, solar, storage](#) - The plan responds to a FERC order driven by concerns about inverter-based resources tripping offline. The new reliability standards are scheduled to take effect by the end of the decade.

[Utility Business Outlook: Power prices stay elevated as elections sow uncertainty for clean energy plans](#) - For utilities and the clean energy sector, 2024 could bring “an exceptional level of volatility and opportunity,” according to Bank of America Global Research analysts.

[Transition Cycle 1 of New Interconnection Process Begins Jan. 22](#)

- Transition Cycle 1 of PJM’s reformed interconnection process officially starts Jan. 22 when PJM will begin performing System Impact Studies on 308 projects representing 46,000 MW of new, mostly renewable, generation.

[In most U.S. regions, 2024 wholesale electricity prices will be similar to 2023](#) - We expect average wholesale electricity prices for 2024 in most areas of the country to be close to or slightly lower than in 2023 because of relatively stable generation fuel costs. However, periods of high demand or power market supply constraints could lead to temporary spikes in wholesale prices.

[Global coal exports and power generation hit new highs in 2023](#) - Worldwide electricity generation from coal hit record highs in 2023, while thermal coal exports surpassed 1 billion metric tons for the first time as coal's use in power systems continues to grow despite widespread efforts to cut back on fossil fuels.

[Severe US cold snap prompts peak power and natural gas demand](#) - Freezing temperatures in several U.S. regions triggered peak power demand in parts of the country on Wednesday, after homes and businesses consumed a record amount of natural gas for heating and power generation.

[Robot worms, lasers, drones and AI: How ARPA-E wants to move the US power grid underground](#) - The U.S. Department of Energy on Tuesday announced \$34 million in funding to explore novel approaches to undergrounding to increase resiliency.

[PJM Urges Delayed Retirement of 840-MW Fossil Fuel Power Plant, Citing Reliability Impacts](#) - PJM has urged Talen Energy to delay its deactivation of two of four units at the 840-MW coal, oil, and gas-fired Herbert A. Wagner Generating Station in Maryland until transmission upgrades are put into service around 2028.

[9 US power sector trends to watch in 2024](#) - The U.S. march toward a decarbonized electric system will continue in 2024 as policymakers and others work to balance, climate, reliability, affordability and other goals.

[PJM triples annual load growth forecast to 2.4% driven by data centers, electrification](#) - The PJM Interconnection's fastest-growing zones include ones served by Dominion Energy and FirstEnergy's Metropolitan Edison and Jersey Central Power & Light utilities.

[2023 in Review: Market Reforms Serve Reliability Needs of the Energy Transition](#) - PJM acted on multiple fronts in 2023 to evolve market rules as part of its ongoing initiative, Ensuring a Reliable Energy Transition, which outlines PJM's concerns over long-term reliability, documents the actions to be taken immediately and in the future, and tracks those results.

[2023 in Review: PJM Urges United Action To Sustain Grid Reliability Through the Energy Transition](#) - PJM and its stakeholders spent 2023 tackling a variety of challenges facing the evolving electricity industry, all with the goal of maintaining the reliability of the bulk electric system as more renewable resources connect to the grid.

[Energy cases to watch in 2024](#) - Energy regulators' power to address planet-warming emissions is in the crosshairs in federal courts in 2024.

[A Multi-Dimensional Crisis: Six Global Power Sector Trends to Watch](#) - Fifty years after the first global oil shock in 1973, the world's energy sector is again facing high geopolitical tensions and uncertainty—though this time around, “pressures are coming from multiple areas,” Dr. Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA) wrote as he introduced the latest World Energy Outlook (WEO2023).

[Enhancing the U.S. Electric Grid to Meet the Nation's Growing Power Needs](#) - The U.S. power grid is in need of an upgrade and the federal government knows it. Much of the electric grid was built in the 1960s and 1970s, according to a paper published by the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Deployment Office (GDO).

[Capturing Progress: The State of CCS in the Power Sector](#) - The growing urgency to address climate change by policymakers, industry, and investors appears to have reinvigorated carbon capture and storage (CCS) deployment. More than 50 CCS facilities at power plants are in various stages of development worldwide. Why has it taken so long, and is it sustainable?

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[FERC Outlook: Danly exit could boost transmission reform, but smaller commission poses risks](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission enters 2024 with Willie Phillips starting his second year as the agency's head and at least one issue — transmission planning and cost allocation reform — teed up for early action.

[Chairs of Energy and Commerce, Science, and Natural Resources Committees Open Investigation into Chinese Influence in American Energy and Environmental Policy](#) - House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Chair Frank Lucas (R-OK), and House Natural Resources Committee Chair Bruce Westerman (R-AR) sent a letter to Energy Foundation China (EFC) President Zi Chou, requesting documents related to grants and financial resources provided to American organizations.

[New EPA rule could save 4,200 lives a year. Industry warns it could cost Biden his reelection.](#) - The Environmental Protection Agency is preparing to significantly strengthen limits on fine particle matter, one of the nation's most widespread deadly air pollutants, even as industry groups warn that the standard could erase manufacturing jobs across the country.

[Extreme weather shows need for dispatchable resources, new transmission: FERC commissioners](#) - FERC Chairman Willie Phillips expects the agency will soon issue new transmission planning and cost allocation rules, which he said could bolster grid reliability.

[Congressional watchdog to probe idled ‘zombie’ coal mines](#) - The Government Accountability Office (GAO) will investigate the environmental impact of idled “zombie” coal mines in response to an October request from several congressional Democrats, a GAO spokesperson confirmed.

[Congress speeds through short-term government funding bill before Friday shutdown deadline](#) - Congress will have until early March to finish work it was supposed to complete last fall — and will avert a partial government shutdown — under a bill both chambers approved with broad bipartisan support Thursday.

[Supreme Court appears ready to erode Chevron doctrine](#) - The Supreme Court appears to be seeking a way to diminish the Chevron doctrine — without completely overruling the 40-year-old legal theory that helps federal agencies defend their rules on public health, food safety and climate change.

[Smith, Wyden Announce Agreement on Tax Framework to Help Families and Main Street Businesses](#) - House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jason Smith (MO-08) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) announced a common sense, bipartisan, bicameral tax framework that promotes the financial security of working families, boosts growth and American competitiveness, and strengthens communities and Main Street businesses.

[End of an era: Who comes after Kerry?](#) - John Kerry has been many things as America’s special presidential envoy for climate change.

[‘Maximum urgency and de facto risk’](#) — EPA braces for 2024 - In 2024, EPA will be on the defensive and rushing to meet deadlines as the agency aims to wrap up far-reaching regulations and distribute billions of dollars across the country.

[4 things to know about EPA’s new climate damage metric](#) - As 2023 drew to a close, EPA sharply increased its estimates for what climate change costs society

[Senate Republican: ‘Grand bargain’ needed for energy permitting reform](#) - Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) said a bipartisan “grand bargain” would likely be necessary for energy permitting reform at an energy industry conference Wednesday morning.

[McMorris Rodgers wants FERC details on power plant retirements, transmission plans](#) - U.S. Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), chair of the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee, joined a fellow committee colleague in questioning the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) about the increasing retirements of power plants across America and the impacts they have for the nation’s electric grid reliability.

[DOE \\$70M grid security and resilience funding targets cybersecurity, wildfires, other risks](#) - The U.S. Department of Energy on Thursday announced it will make up to \$70 million available to public and private sector stakeholders, universities and the national laboratory system, to research new security and resilience technologies for the U.S. power sector.

[A Review of Air Quality Rules and a Look at 2024](#) - Federal regulators in 2023 proposed a variety of new air quality rules, and 2024 is likely to see these proposals become final and enforceable. Here’s a look at the past year, and a look ahead at the major air regulations that will impact power generation in 2024.

[What a three-person FERC will mean for key decisions in 2024](#) - The little-known agency in charge of regulating U.S. energy transmission systems is slated to operate with a bare quorum of just three commissioners heading into the new year.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[Shapiro unveils 10-year economic development strategy for Pennsylvania](#) - The governor made the announcement in the Lehigh Valley area, ahead of next week’s budget address.

[Lawmakers seek to reduce coal companies’ taxes while increasing rates on wind power plants](#) - At the same time, but on opposite sides of the West Virginia Capitol, two legislative committees approved two bills that would tip the scales in favor of fossil fuels. One would reduce the taxes for coal companies while the other would increase taxes on wind power projects.

[State Sen. Gene Yaw elected to chair Pa. Delegation of Chesapeake Bay Commission](#) - Sen. Gene Yaw is known for various activities relating to waterway restoration and conservation, most notably championing awareness about the Eastern Hellbender and serving as Chair of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

[Democrats propose budget language to return Virginia to carbon market](#) - Two Democratic party leaders have introduced budget amendments that would require Virginia to rejoin a regional carbon market, despite the continued push by Republican Governor Glenn Youngkin to withdraw from it.

[Pennsylvania's Governor Promised 30% Renewable Electricity by 2030. Will That Happen?](#) - Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro (D) waffled on hot-button climate issues on the campaign trail — walking a fine line on fracking and neglecting to take a stance on a state cap-and-trade program for the power sector. But on one issue, he was resolute: By 2030, 30% of the energy sold in Pennsylvania would come from renewable sources, up from 8% now, he pledged.

[Virginia legislation aims to unleash competition to speed progress on clean electricity](#) - The proposal would erode investor-owned utilities' monopoly on power generation by requiring more than a third of clean power to come from customers or third-party developers.

[The Shapiro Administration Awards \\$101.1 Million in Grants for Environmental Restoration Projects](#) - The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced up to \$101,110,178 in funding for 16 environmental restoration projects of abandoned mine lands (AML) as a part of the Abandoned Mine Lands and Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) Grant Program.

[Shapiro offers peek at 2024-25 budget plan priorities](#) - A day shy of the one-year anniversary since he took office, Gov. Josh Shapiro on Wednesday gave a sneak peek at some of his top priorities for the upcoming budget.

['Weaponized' DEP blasted for regulatory nightmares](#) - Rural Pennsylvania keeps losing population and has a worker shortage that limits economic growth.

[Michael A. Braymer Appointed DEP Chief Counsel](#) - Michael A. Braymer was appointed Chief Counsel to the Department of Environmental Protection effective December, 2023.

[States with big climate goals strip local power to block green projects](#) - Clean energy developers had planned a 75-turbine wind farm in mid-Michigan's Montcalm County before local voters shot down the idea in 2022 and recalled seven local officials who had supported it.

[Fiscal, political woes dim environmental hopes in Bay states for legislative action](#) - As state legislative bodies reconvene for their spring sessions in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia, environmental advocates are expecting to see red — or purple.

[Interim DEP Secretary Shirley Tells Citizens Advisory Council Priorities Of Permitting Reform, Environmental Justice, Customer Service, Moving Forward](#) - On January 9, Interim Acting DEP Secretary Jessica Shirley told DEP's Citizens Advisory Council the initiatives started by former DEP Secretary Richard Negrin are moving forward.

[Partisan split on energy, environment makes compromise unlikely](#) - As energy and environmental issues remain central in Pennsylvania for 2024, the partisan divide in the General Assembly means compromise on major issues will be rare.

[School funding, permitting at top of Pa. legislature's 2024 agenda](#) - In the new year, Pennsylvania lawmakers plan to put a lot of their energy into changing permitting processes, getting a long-sought constitutional amendment over the finish line, and figuring out how to overhaul the commonwealth's education funding system.

[State Department of General Services updates definition of small business](#) - The state Department of General Services (DGS) updated the definition of a small business, effective Jan. 1.

[Why the Pennsylvania legislature is off to a slow start in 2024](#) - The Pennsylvania House is about to enter an extended post-holiday hibernation.