



2015 Chestnut Street, Camp Hill, PA 17011 Phone: (717) 763-7635, Fax: (717) 763-7455, Email: office@arippa.org

ARIPPA PERIODIC MEDIA NEWS – 3-1-24

(News clips from the previous month)

CFB, COAL REFUSE, ENERGY INDUSTRY

[2024 PJM Outlook: Tough choices loom on capacity market, plant retirements, transmission planning](#) - The top issues facing the PJM Interconnection this year are capacity market reforms, power plant retirements and the development of a new transmission planning paradigm, according to key stakeholders and industry consultants.

[Crypto miners, Biden administration appear to reach agreement over energy data collection](#) - The Biden administration appears to have reached an agreement with bitcoin mining companies over the U.S. Energy Information Administration's plan to collect energy usage and other data from the sector. A federal district judge on Thursday canceled a preliminary hearing on the matter and wrote that the parties "represented to the court that an agreement-in-principle was reached."

[PJM Board Approves Regional Transmission Enhancement Plan Updates](#) - The PJM Board of Managers has authorized changes to the Regional Transmission Expansion Plan (RTEP) to help ensure the most efficient, economical and reliable supply of power for the 65 million people PJM serves across 13 states and the District of Columbia.

[Federal Data Reveals a Surprising Drop in Renewable Power in 2023, as Slow Winds and Drought Took a Toll](#) - A big increase in utility-scale solar power was not enough to offset decreases in wind and hydropower.

[FERC Sets New Date for PJM 2025/2026 Capacity Auction](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued an order Feb. 26 granting PJM's request to delay the 2025/2026 capacity auction date by 35 days to July 17, 2024, along with a delay of the associated pre-auction deadlines.

[ERCOT, CAISO offer best grid interconnection processes; PJM, ISO-NE the worst, report finds](#) - The Texas and California grid operators' generator interconnection processes are the best among U.S. regional transmission system operators, according to an interconnection scorecard released Monday by Advanced Energy United.

[PJM Capacity Market Reforms Shake Resource Accreditation, Impose New Offer and Testing Requirements](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), in Docket No. ER24-99-000, recently approved a suite of tariff revisions submitted by PJM intended to "accommodate the energy transition while maintaining resource adequacy."

[MISO Warns 'Immediate and Serious' Challenges Are Threatening Reliability](#) - The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is warning reliability challenges have grown urgent as the nation's power system grapples with a "hyper-complex risk environment."

[Solar, battery storage will be 81% of new electricity generation capacity this year: EIA](#) - Solar additions will contribute 58% of new electricity generation capacity this year, while battery storage additions will make up 23%, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

[Retirements of U.S. electric generating capacity to slow in 2024](#) - Operators plan to retire 5.2 gigawatts (GW) of U.S. electric generating capacity in 2024, a 62% decrease from last year when 13.5 GW was retired and the least in any year since 2008, according to our latest Preliminary Monthly Electric Generator Inventory.

[Two fired utility execs and a former top Ohio regulator plead not guilty in bribery scheme](#) - Two fired executives of FirstEnergy Corp. and a former top state utilities regulator pleaded not guilty Tuesday to state charges related to a \$60 million bribery scheme that centered on securing a legislative bailout for two Ohio nuclear power plants with the help of a powerful House speaker.

[PJM Reports Natural Gas Power Plants Were Over Half The Forced Outages During Winter Storm Gerri In January; Special Procedures Used For Gas Generators Raised Questions About Market Impacts](#) - PJM Interconnection staff presentation slides for a February 8 meeting of the Operating Committee showed natural gas-fired power plants accounted for over half the forced outages of generating capacity during Winter Storm Gerri that occurred from January 14 to 22.

[Groups Want Coal Ash Regulated More Stringently](#) - More than 150 public interest groups have called for tighter regulation of coal ash after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a proposed risk assessment revealing an elevated risk of cancer from coal ash radiation.

[Power industry “at an inflection point” regarding EPA rules](#) - Speakers at POWERGEN International emphasized uncertainty last week as they discussed regulatory rules and proposals from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) aimed at the power industry.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: FEDERAL

[EPA delays rules for existing natural gas power plants until after the November election](#) - The Environmental Protection Agency said Thursday it is delaying planned rules to curb emissions from existing natural gas plants that release harmful air pollutants and contribute to global warming.

[Biden nominates 3 FERC commissioners](#) - The White House on Thursday named three nominees — two Democrats and a Republican — to be commissioners on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

[Congressional action on energy permitting remains stuck, but states, developers are finding solutions](#) - Despite at least 10 permitting reform bills before Congress, two major federal regulatory initiatives and a bipartisan House caucus call for action on permitting reform, progress remains delayed.

[State Coal Plants Meet A New EPA Standard, Except For One](#) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed stricter standards on non-mercury metal pollution, and one West Virginia power plant may not meet the new requirements.

[Officials Told Biden’s EPA That Its Aggressive Green Power Plant Scheme Has Serious Flaws, Docs Show](#) - Several Biden administration officials notified the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that the agency’s aggressive regulation to massively reduce power plant emissions has serious practical and legal flaws, according to internal documents obtained by the House Oversight and Accountability Committee.

[US Supreme Court raises doubts about EPA's 'Good Neighbor' ozone rule](#) - The U.S. Supreme Court's conservative justices on Wednesday appeared sympathetic to a bid by three Republican-led states and several energy companies to block an Environmental Protection Agency regulation aimed at reducing ozone emissions that may worsen air pollution in neighboring states.

[FERC OKs cold weather reliability standards, and 5 other takeaways from Thursday’s open meeting](#) - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission held its open meeting on Thursday at the Howard University School of Law, a predominantly Black institution in Washington, D.C.

[State officials blame federal regulation for higher energy prices: ‘Customers are getting hurt.’](#) - Proposed federal limits on fossil fuel power plants will further raise costs and weaken reliability, three state energy officials told a U.S. House subcommittee on Wednesday.

[Biden-Harris Administration Invests \\$17 Million to Strengthen Nation's Critical Minerals Supply Chain](#) - As part of President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced over \$17 million for three projects that will support the design and construction of facilities that produce rare earth elements and other critical minerals and materials from coal-based resources.

[Anxiety builds as deadline for Biden rules nears](#) - Some of President Joe Biden’s big-ticket environmental rules aren’t yet finished, and allies of the administration are getting antsy about the pileup.

[Supreme Court watchlist: Agency power, air rules, water rights](#) - The Supreme Court is halfway through another term that will have transformative consequences for environmental law.

[EPA Reports 'Widespread Noncompliance' With the Nation's First Regulations on Toxic Coal Ash](#) - A glaring loophole already had allowed at least a half-billion tons of the waste to go unregulated. Now the agency says many of the facilities that are subject to the rules do not comply.

[EPA soot rule puts new pressure on fossil fuels](#) - In a historic about-face, EPA has toughened one of its most far-reaching air pollution standards in a move expected to save thousands of lives and add to the long-term pressure for a shift away from fossil fuels.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY ISSUES: STATE

[It's 'Groundhog Day' for permitting reform in Pennsylvania](#) - Like Bill Murray's Phil Connors character in "Groundhog Day" repeating his day in Punxsutawney, the Senate's budget hearings with the Department of Environment Protection center on permitting reform year after year after year.

[Key Points from Senate Budget Hearings with Department of Environmental Protection, Liquor Control Board](#) - Preventing blackouts, meeting Pennsylvania's future energy demands and ensuring timely processing of permits were among the top issues discussed at today's Senate Appropriations Committee hearings on the 2024-25 state budget featuring the Department of Environmental Protection and the Liquor Control Board.

[DEP: Oil & Gas Regulatory Program Will Be In The Red By Fall; All Sectors Greenhouse Gas Reduction Program No Go; Update On Permitting Reform](#) - On February 28, DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley told the House Appropriations Committee funding for DEP's Oil and Gas Regulatory Program will be in the red by Fall and an "all sectors" greenhouse gas reduction program will not be recommended to implement the PA Climate Change Action Plan.

['There's got to be an all-of-the-above strategy': PA Senate GOP Leader Joe Pittman talks energy policy in Pennsylvania](#) - Pittman discusses the future of Pennsylvania's cap-and-trade plan and what energy issues could find bipartisan support in the General Assembly.

[PUC Vice Chair Barrow's Resolution Supporting States' Jurisdiction in Transmission Permitting Adopted by NARUC Board](#) - Nation's Utility Regulators Join PA in Supporting the Primary Role of States in Siting, Permitting, and the Exercise of Eminent Domain for Transmission.

[Independent Fiscal Office warns Shapiro budget misses revenue mark by \\$8 billion](#) - When Gov. Josh Shapiro gave his Feb. 6 budget address, he said it would include more than \$46 billion in revenue collections. But the number-crunchers in the state's Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) put a damper on Shapiro's lofty projections this week, dropping those projections by more than a billion dollars.

[Reconsidering the reckoning over RGGI](#) - As both sides dig in ever deeper over the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, fault lines and strategies become clearer, even as its future remains up in the air.

[Effort to rejoin RGGI survives House debate](#) - The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, or RGGI, is a multistate partnership that has seen hundreds of millions of dollars returned to Virginia. Governor Glenn Youngkin has called it a burdensome tax and tried to remove the state from the agreement.

[DEP Recommends 6 Major Legislative Proposals Be Adopted As Part Of 2024 PA Climate Action Plan](#) - On February 20, the Department of Environmental Protection presented six major legislative proposals to the Climate Change Advisory Committee it would like to see adopted to implement the 2024 PA Climate Action Plan.

[Floyd Judge Ponders Order to Return RGGI Tax](#) - A circuit court judge in Floyd County may soon order Virginia to rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and to reimpose the related carbon tax on Virginia's electricity consumers.

[Virginia Lawmakers Elect Pivotal Utility Regulators To Oversee Energy Transition](#) - Members of the State Corporation Commission review compliance with the Virginia Clean Economy Act, which mandates the utilities decarbonize the grid by 2050.

[Pa. environmental, religious and other groups criticize Shapiro plan for ignoring climate change](#) - More than 100 advocacy groups say Gov. Josh Shapiro's new 10-year economic development plan is not sustainable.

[Damage that closed Pa. House chamber repaired ahead of schedule](#) - Work to repair damage from a water leak above the state House chamber was completed more than a month ahead of schedule, Speaker Joanna McClinton's office quietly announced last week.

[State lawmakers want to peel back the curtain at the nation's biggest electrical grid operator](#) - Last year, Maryland state lawmaker Lorig Charkoudian was on her own when she filed legislation seeking to force her state's utilities to reveal votes at the grid operator that coordinates the flow of electricity for 65 million people in the Eastern U.S.

[Josh Shapiro's embrace of energy interests undermines climate promises, advocates say](#) - In June 2020, then-Pennsylvania attorney general Josh Shapiro appeared at a news conference in Harrisburg to announce the findings of a two-year grand jury investigation into the state's fracking industry.

[Virginia judge okay's fight over RGGI withdrawal](#) - A judge in Floyd County Monday allowed a non-profit group's suit against Governor Glenn Youngkin's effort to pull Virginia out of a regional environmental partnership to continue. At least one state senator is welcoming the ruling.

[Carbon tax repeal effort reignited](#) - The Legislature will take another stab at repealing Pennsylvania's pending carbon tax.

[Senate Appropriations Committee Approves Yaw Bill to Create Independent Energy Office in Pennsylvania](#) - The Senate Appropriations Committee today approved Senate Bill 832, sponsored by Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23) to establish an Independent Energy Office (IEO) within the Commonwealth.

[State energy policies exacerbating reliability, blackout concerns](#) - Pennsylvania's energy future isn't only a question of renewables versus fossil fuels — it's a question of whether the state can reliably provide enough energy to meet growing demand.

[Increasing alternative energy standards would bring billions in investment to Pennsylvania](#) - Three business groups crunched the numbers and found that, if a 30% by 2030 plan was enacted, more than \$13.1 billion could be invested in Pennsylvania in that time period and 129,000 jobs could be created.

[Pa. gets \\$101 million to clean up old mines](#) - More than \$101 million is going to help reclaim mine land and improve water quality in the state.

[Multimillion-dollar power line project needed to make up for closure of Springdale power plant](#) - The shutdown of the coal-fired power plant in Springdale is forcing Duquesne Light to spend between \$12 million and \$17 million to reconfigure a transmission line in Plum.

[Red tape closes power plants before replacements ready](#) - Despite the key positions states like Ohio and Pennsylvania hold to solve future energy problems, shifting the power grid from coal and natural gas to wind and solar isn't as easy as flipping a switch.