



Save these Dates!

PMEA Spring Superintendents/ Foremen Meeting
March 26 & 27, 2026 @ The Nittany Lion Inn, State College
Registration closing soon

PMEA Reception – June 1, 2026
5:00 – 7:00 pm @ PSAB Conference, Hershey Lodge

PMEA 2026 Annual Conference – September 9 – 11, 2026
Omni Bedford Springs, Bedford

PMEA Business Workshop
– September 9, 2026 @ Omni Bedford Springs, Bedford

2026 Training for Line Crews
Registration opens prior to each class

Customer Service (*open to all municipal departments*)
March 10 – Grove City
March 12 – Chambersburg
March 13 – Lansdale

Overhead Troubleshooting
April 9 & 10 – Grove City
April 13 & 14 – Chambersburg
April 15 & 16 – Lansdale

Advanced Transformer
June 4 & 5 – Grove City
June 8 & 9 – Chambersburg
June 10 & 11 – Lansdale

Underground Troubleshooting & Grounding
September 14 & 15 – Grove City
September 21 & 22 – Chambersburg
September 23 & 24 – Lansdale

Safety for Lineworkers
October 22 & 23 – Grove City
October 26 & 27 – Chambersburg
October 28 & 29 – Lansdale



Governor Shapiro Calls for “People First” Approach to AI and Data Centers in Budget Address



In his fourth budget address before a joint session of the General Assembly on February 3rd, Governor Josh Shapiro cast Pennsylvania as a leading contender in the national race for artificial intelligence supremacy — but warned that the state must be deliberate about how it welcomes that growth.

Shapiro pointed to Amazon's \$20 billion commitment to build two data center campuses in Luzerne and Bucks counties as proof of Pennsylvania's appeal, calling it the largest private investment in the

Commonwealth's history. With dozens of similar projects proposed across the state, he acknowledged the promise of new jobs and tax revenue, but made clear that opportunity comes with real tradeoffs. "We need to be selective about the projects that get built here," Shapiro said. "I know Pennsylvanians have real concerns about these data centers and the impact they could have on our communities, our utility bills, and our environment. And so do I."

Holding Utilities Accountable

A central thread of Shapiro's address was affordability. Hyperscale data centers consume electricity at unprecedented rates, and the Governor expressed concern about who ultimately foots the bill for the new power plants and transmission lines that growth will require. He called on utility companies to work with lawmakers and regulators to eliminate fees that can make up as much as 20% of a consumer's utility bill.

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Governor Budget Address *(continued)*

"Our utility companies in Pennsylvania make billions of dollars every year — while at the same time, they've increased the cost for consumers with too little public accountability or transparency," Shapiro said. "That has to change."

New Standards for Data Center Developers

To ensure development benefits communities rather than burdening them, Shapiro announced the Governor's Responsible Infrastructure Development Standards — a framework that would require data center developers to meet a set of conditions before they can access state support like expedited permitting and tax credits.

Under the standards, developers would be required to provide their own power generation or pay for the generating capacity their projects demand, rather than passing those costs on to households and small businesses. They would also be held to strict transparency and community engagement requirements, expected to hire and train local workers, and required to meet stringent environmental standards, particularly around water quality.

The Lightning Plan

Shapiro also renewed his push for the Lightning Plan, his 2025 energy and climate proposal that he said has support from labor leaders, environmentalists, consumer advocates, and energy producers. The plan would create a Pennsylvania-only carbon credit program that returns money to consumers through utility bill rebates, streamline permitting for energy projects, offer tax credits for adding reliable energy to the grid, and modernize the state's renewable energy standards to include nuclear power and battery storage. Shapiro said the plan would save consumers \$664 million and create 15,000 energy-sector jobs.

He drew attention to the legislative inaction, noting that RGGI had long been used as an excuse to avoid energy policy discussions. "For the last several years I've heard people on the other side of this building making excuses for why they couldn't talk about energy," he said, adding: "If you don't like it — stop making excuses, put your proposal on the table, and let's get to work. Because Pennsylvanians can't afford another delay from Harrisburg."

Shapiro framed the moment as one requiring bipartisan urgency. "I know everyone in this room wants to see our economy grow and create more jobs and more opportunity," he said. "But I also know this is uncharted territory — so let's come together, codify these principles, and take advantage of this opportunity."

PJM Agrees to Extension of Price Cap

Electricity grid operator PJM Interconnection agreed to extend a cap on wholesale electricity prices for two years as surging demand brings greater costs for consumers, Gov. Josh Shapiro's office said Thursday.

The announcement follows efforts by Shapiro and other governors across PJM's territory who have called on the organization to reform its electricity markets to speed the construction of new power plants and transmission lines.

"It is essential that as you continue that work to ensure future reliability, you take this critical short-term step to preserve affordability by extending the price collar at current levels," Shapiro said in a letter to PJM interim CEO David Mills this week.

The Shapiro administration sued PJM, which manages the electricity supply and transmission for Pennsylvania and 12 other states, late in 2024. It demanded a limit on prices for generators after an auction in July of that year reached a record of \$269.92 per megawatt-day.



PJM and Shapiro reached a settlement — later approved by federal regulators — in January 2025 that would cap bids at \$325 per megawatt-day in the 2025 and 2026 auctions.

Extending the cap for another two years will save PJM's 67 million customers an additional \$27 billion on their energy bills, Shapiro said in a statement. His office estimates total savings of \$45 billion over the four years the cap will be in effect.

The extension would mean about \$575 in savings for every Pennsylvania household over the next four years, the administration said.

"Pennsylvanians can't afford higher prices, and I will always stand up for them against companies trying to jack up their prices and screw them over," Shapiro said.

PJM's board said it made the decision based on feedback from stakeholders, the Trump administration and state governors. In a statement, the board noted that current one-year commitments to provide generating capacity "may not match the current investment climate that may be required to incentivize new generation."

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PJM Price Cap (continued)

It said it would begin preparing a filing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) which it would present at the next members meeting Feb. 19. FERC must approve the price limit, which the Trump administration has already endorsed.

PJM has been working with the electric power and tech industries to develop rules for large electricity users – mainly artificial intelligence data centers – to connect to the grid.

Dozens of data centers, which each house thousands of computers, are proposed across PJM's footprint from New Jersey to Chicago and Pennsylvania's northern border to North Carolina.

Each massive warehouse-sized building could consume as much power as a small city, driving forecasts that summertime peak demand could increase by 35% over the next decade. PJM has proposed rules to FERC encouraging data center owners to build their own power plants by offering an expedited process to connect to the grid.

Shapiro and all 12 of the governors from the other PJM states reached an agreement with the Trump administration last month on principles to reform PJM. It includes a plan to allocate additional generating and transmission costs to data centers by creating rate structures for large load users under new regulations in each state.

The cap extension would help to protect consumers from runaway energy costs while the market reforms are taking place.

PJM holds its base residual capacity auction each summer. It allows owners of generating stations to bid to provide standby capacity that can be called on during summer and winter demand peaks. The payments ensure generators are paid for keeping their power plants ready to start quickly when electricity use increases on the warmest and coldest days.

Each auction is for capacity to be delivered in the following two years. The extension would keep the \$325 megawatt per day cap in place for the 2028-2029 and 2029-2030 auctions.

By: Peter Hall, *PA Capitol Star*, February 13, 2026

PJM Board Approves \$11.8B Transmission Expansion Plan

The PJM Interconnection's board last week approved \$11.8 billion in baseline transmission projects, with Dominion Energy's Virginia utility landing roughly \$4.8 billion in those projects.

The projects are part of PJM's 2025 Regional Transmission Expansion Plan (RTEP) Window 1, which is designed to bolster grid reliability that is strained by accelerated load growth in multiple areas across its Mid-Atlantic and Midwest footprint.

The projects are also needed to handle new generation in southern Virginia, future generation in western PJM, delays to New Jersey offshore wind projects and increased regional flows toward the eastern parts of PJM's footprint, the grid operator said Friday.



PJM will monitor load and generation in its footprint to make sure needed transmission development is progressing in a timely manner, the grid operator said in its board-approved plan.

"PJM also clarified that siting, routing and regulatory processes, as well as construction, take a long time, and PJM needs the plan to be ready and advanced for the forecasted conditions proactively rather than bringing needed development late, which introduces impediments to

development and reliability risks to stakeholders," the grid operator said.

Meanwhile, transmission costs are making up a growing share of the price of wholesale electricity in PJM.

In 2024, transmission contributed \$17.71/MWh to the cost of wholesale power in PJM, up 23%, or 5.8% a year, from \$14.40/MWh in 2022, according to reports from Monitoring Analytics, PJM's market monitor.

Transmission costs totaled \$13.9 billion, or 32% of total wholesale costs of \$43.6 billion, in 2024, the last full year of Monitoring Analytics' reporting. Energy costs made up nearly 59% of the cost of wholesale power that year and capacity accounted for 6.6% of the total.

As part of PJM's transmission expansion plan, Dominion Energy Virginia intends to build a \$2.3-billion, 525-kV underground "backbone" transmission line in Virginia. The project, set to be online by June 2032, also calls for building two high-voltage direct current converter stations at each end of the 185-mile line for about \$1.5 billion.

The project is designed to deliver 3,000 MW into Loudoun County in northern Virginia, the area with the most data center capacity in the world.

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Transmission Expansion (*continued*)

Like other multi-zone projects in the RTEP, the costs of the project will be shared across PJM's footprint.

The just-approved plan also includes a \$1.7-billion transmission line across central Pennsylvania proposed by NextEra Energy Transmission and Exelon. The project was opposed by Pennsylvania's Office of Consumer Advocate, which argued that there were less expensive alternatives to the project.

The project addresses system-wide, structural reliability needs in PJM's northeastern region that cannot be met with incremental upgrades or "terminal-only" solutions, NextEra and Exelon said in a Jan. 29 letter to PJM's board.

"PJM's own analyses and the convergence of independent developer proposals, demonstrates that new high-voltage backbone infrastructure is required to maintain reliable service under plausible future conditions," the companies said. The project is slated to be operating by June 2031.

The transmission plan includes a \$1.1 billion project in central Ohio proposed by Grid Growth Ventures, a joint venture between Transource Energy — a partnership between American Electric Power and Evergy — and FirstEnergy Transmission. The project includes 300 miles of 765-kV lines.

Under the plan, PPL Electric will build transmission projects totaling about \$580 million, while Exelon subsidiaries Commonwealth Edison and Potomac Electric Power Co. will build projects totaling about \$276 million and \$292 million, respectively.

PJM's RTEPs for 2024 and 2023 included \$5.9 billion and \$6.6 billion in baseline projects.

By: Ethan Howland, Senior Reporter, [Utility Dive](#), February 17, 2026

Mark Your Calendars

Mark your calendars for an exceptional networking opportunity this June! PMEA is pleased to host an exclusive reception on **Monday, June 1, at the Hershey Lodge** during the PA State Association of Boroughs Annual Conference.

Whether you are attending the full PSAB Conference or simply available that evening, we extend a warm invitation to all elected and appointed officials to join us. This is your chance to connect with fellow municipal leaders, exchange insights, and strengthen relationships.

We look forward to seeing you there! Complete event details will be shared as the date approaches.

PJM Videos Available

PMEA's annual 2025 Business Workshop included an essential session on PJM, giving attendees a comprehensive look at how PJM operates and its critical role in managing the regional power grid. [Click here](#) to view on PMEA's private YouTube channel.

PMEA's Public Power Governance 101 educational video is available exclusively to member municipalities. Designed for elected officials and staff across Pennsylvania's 35 public power communities, this comprehensive module delivers invaluable insights into the management and operation of municipal electric systems. Individuals who complete the course may request a **certificate of completion** from PMEA. To receive your private viewing link, contact Diane Bosak at bosak@papublicpower.org.

Registration Open



FALLEN LINEMEN
FOUNDATION

2026 PA/NJ Fallen Lineman Golf
Tournament Thursday, May 14th,
8:00am or 1:30pm Shotgun Start
Golden Oaks Golf Course in Fleetwood, PA.

Registration - <https://fallenlinemenfoundation.com/pa-nj-fallen-linemen-foundation-golf-tournament/>

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Please share with us your exciting new projects, photos, personnel updates, and any other news! Your submissions should be sent to bosak@papublicpower.org at any time and we will use them in upcoming editions. We also welcome your suggestions for topics of interest for our newsletters.