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● [Why Everything They Say About California Fires — Including That Climate Matters Most — is Wrong](#)

"We've looked at the history of climate and fire throughout the whole state, and through much of the state, particularly the western half of the state, we don't see any relationship between past climates and the amount of area burned in any given year."

Why this is important: California is burning again this year, but the problem does not appear to be a result of climate change. Historical failure to allow low-intensity fires to burn has resulted in the buildup of fuel in the forests that, when ignited, burns much hotter than the smaller fires that would have naturally occurred on a more regular interval. Failure to manage vegetation in the state, particularly around residences and other structures, has resulted in greater fire risk, and the threat of greater mortality. --- [David L. Yaussy](#)

● [Alliant Energy to Add 1 GW of Solar in Wisconsin by End of 2023](#)

"The solar additions are part of its 'Powering What's Next' plan, which also has a heavy emphasis on a transition to customer participation and grid modernization."

Why this is important: The Wisconsin public utility company, Alliant Energy, announced it would be adding a 1 MW solar power project as part of its plan to transition to cleaner energy for customers. Alliant has vowed to reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent from its 2005 level by year 2050. It plans to achieve this, in part, by increasing solar panel usage and modernizing its grid. Alliant's Iowa-based subsidiary is similarly developing a "Clean Energy Blueprint" for its customers. This is another example of utilities taking a leadership role in meeting consumers' growing demand for renewable energy and reductions in greenhouse emissions. --- [Dennise R. Smith](#)

● [Pakistan Looks Into Possibilities of Diesel Production from Coal](#)

"Pakistan was looking into possibilities of producing diesel from coal to bring down oil import bill, achieve self-sufficiency in this sector and encourage consumption of locally produced fuel."

Why this is important: Pakistan is examining the use of lignite coal to make diesel fuel. The country would follow China's lead in building plants to turn lignite coal into diesel fuel. The process would help increase worldwide consumption of coal and allow Pakistan to reduce its imports of oil. Pakistan has recently discovered lignite reserves of as much as 185 billion tons in its Thar province. The reserves

also could fuel electric power generation for 200 years. --- [Mark E. Heath](#)

● [As Dominion, Others Target 80-Year Nuclear Plants, Cybersecurity Concerns Complicate Digital Upgrades](#)

"While U.S. nuclear plants have been incorporating digital technology over time, many important systems designed to prevent the release of dangerous radiation are still typically analog."

Why this is important: Nuclear power plants, a reliable source of low carbon electricity generation, are cautiously investigating upgrades to digital controls. The drawback of moving away from analog controls, such as tubes and wires, is the increased susceptibility to cyberattack from someone who can hack into the system. The payoffs for making the necessary changes are lower costs and extended operational life. --- [David L. Yaussy](#)

● [With Coal in Decline, the U.S. Could Also Get Cut Out of the Global Natural Gas Market. China and India May be Key](#)

"The problem, of course, is that the current tariff battle between the United States and China could have long-term implications — on both natural gas and coal exports."

Why this is important: While it appears unlikely the U.S. will see a recovery in domestic coal demand, we are poised to profit economically with the increased demand for natural gas in China and India--but for the U.S. government's current trade war with China. Both China and India plan to reduce their coal usage by at least a third in the next several years, shifting some of that demand to LNG. China predicts a 30 percent increase in LNG demand between now and 2035, with some forecasters predicting an increase as high as 60 percent. India expects a 15 percent increase between now and 2030 and is investing \$60 billion in LNG pipelines and import facilities to achieve that goal. "Right now, the United States has the edge, but if the trade war is prolonged, it will lose its competitive advantages." --- [Dennise R. Smith](#)

● [Brits Take Their Cue from Poland and Open a New Coal Mine](#)

"The British decision follows on the heels of Germany opening a new coal-fired power plant in the Ruhr despite setting the broader goal of shutting all its coal power plants by 2038, a goal many critics say is unlikely to occur without massive amounts of debt and job losses."

Why this is important: European environmentalists continue to work toward eliminating coal. Two recent coal projects show economic pressures make the total elimination of coal very difficult. Germany has reopened a coal-fired electric generation plant in the Ruhr despite pledging to eliminate coal by 2038. England, for the first time in 30 years, has approved a new coal mine that will produce coal for steel making and other industrial projects. Strong economic factors support the mine in northwestern England that will create 500 jobs for 50 years. Approved locally, England's central government did not overrule the local approval. The mine will be operational in 2022. --- [Mark E. Heath](#)

● [Macron Says Europe-China Climate Cooperation 'Decisive'](#)

"If we want to be in compliance with the Paris agreement, we will need next year to enhance our commitments to reduce emissions, and we must confirm new commitments for 2030 and 2050," he said."

Why this is important: France and China are agreeing to cooperate on climate change strategies and to make new commitments for 2030 and 2050. China has not changed from its intention to bring greenhouse gas emissions to a peak sometime around 2030, and to raise its commitment of non-fossil fuels by 5 percent by then. This delay in compliance illustrates the increasing challenge to meeting Paris Climate Accord goals that many nations are experiencing. --- [David L. Yaussy](#)

● [China Coking Coal Rebounds on Prospects of Fresh Import Curbs](#)

"Coking coal futures in China gained the most in four weeks amid market talks about fresh import curbs on the steelmaking raw material, following brisk purchases in recent months by the world's biggest coal buyer and consumer."

Why this is important: Import prices for coking coal in China are up 2.1 percent as the country buys more iron ore and coal for steel production based on the likelihood of greater import curbs next year. Experts believe met coal imports could rise to 80 million tons this year. In 2018, met coal imports for steel making were 65 million tons. However, prices, which have dropped steadily since May, have now increased slightly. Any sales will help depressed metallurgical coal markets worldwide. --- [Mark E. Heath](#)

● [EIA Energy Statistics](#)

Here is a round-up of the latest statistics concerning the energy industry.

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