

SPECIAL EDITION

The Impacts of COVID-19 on Electric Cooperatives and Our Resources to Help

We Are Here for Our Members

NRECA has always been committed to assisting our member co-ops in their business success and in serving their consumer-members' needs. It is never truer than during this unprecedented time with the COVID-19 pandemic. Co-ops are being challenged in ways like never before, and we are here to help. Our Business and Technology Strategies team is working hard to monitor the economic and operational impacts of the pandemic, and to offer business and technology resources to help our members adjust to the new demands of this time. The following are some key topics, and our full [Portfolio](#) of work is provided on cooperative.com. We welcome you to reach out to our team and let us know how we can support you through this difficult time.

Jim Spiers

Senior Vice President, Business and Technology Strategies
NRECA

Business and Technology Resources to Use Virtually During This Time of Physical Distancing

NRECA's Business and Technology Strategies group has a wealth of resources for co-ops to access online and use virtually with staff during this time of physical distancing, including reports, guides, articles, advisories, webinars, podcasts, and toolkits. We are here to help you stay engaged and advance your business and technology expertise. Find out more in this advisory:

- [Advisory](#)
- [Business and Technology Strategies Website](#)

Financial Impact of COVID-19 on Electric Co-ops

The economic impact of COVID-19 will have immediate and lasting effects on electric co-ops. NRECA's analysis shows that the impact of lost load and unpaid bills is projected to total \$10 billion through 2022; electric co-op operating revenues are expected to decline by \$7.4 billion as electricity sales fall by 5% over the 2020-2022 period; and a surge in unemployment, combined with the effects of suspending disconnections, is expected to increase balances of unpaid bills to \$2.6 billion through 2022. Additional details are in the following factsheet:



- [Fact Sheet](#)
- **Contacts:**
 - [Russell Tucker](#), Chief Economist
 - [Joseph Goodenbery](#), Lead Economist

At Risk Job Sectors in Co-op Areas

Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program recently published an article highlighting the industries most vulnerable to job losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the metropolitan areas with the highest shares of these types of jobs. Based on methodology from Moody's, five "high risk" sectors were identified: extraction, travel, transportation, employment services, and leisure & hospitality. NRECA estimates that a total of nearly 2.5 million jobs in the most at-risk sectors are in co-op areas. Read more in this advisory:

- **Advisory**
- **Contacts:**
 - [Michael Leitman](#), Senior Economics & Business Analyst
 - [Russell Tucker](#), Chief Economist
 - [Joseph Goodenberg](#), Lead Economist

Managing Changes and Postponement of Annual Meetings and Boards

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many electric co-ops have canceled, postponed, or modified their annual member meetings and director elections, and modified board meetings. On April 22, over 750 co-operative members joined [NRECA's Electric Cooperative Bar Association](#) for a webinar regarding legal and practical issues associated with these actions. Listen to the discussion on demand:

- **Webinar On Demand**
- **Contacts:**
 - [Ginny Beauchemin](#), Managing Director, Business Optimization
 - [Kim Christiansen](#), Managing Director, Product & Business Strategy
 - [Melissa DePuy](#), ECBA Operations Manager

Tools to Help Consumer-Members Manage Energy Costs

Electric co-ops pioneered the use of prepaid metering, proactive bill notifications and energy assistance programs to help consumer-members budget their energy expenses. Programs like these can help consumer-members manage their electricity bills and help to avoid unpaid bills during these extraordinary times. Find out more in this advisory:

- **Advisory**
- **Contact:** [Brian Sloboda](#), Director, Consumer Solutions

COVID-19 Puts A Spotlight on the Need for Broadband in Rural America

Physical distancing due to COVID-19 has created a greater reliance on internet connectivity for many essential areas, including work, healthcare and education. There is a spotlight now on the impact of the digital divide, and how a lack of broadband connectivity limits options and strains resources in a crisis. Bridging this gap is critical as we all adjust to this new, challenging environment. NRECA has several resources available to help co-ops understand and plan for broadband deployment in their areas, including:



- **Advisory**

- [Broadband Case Studies](#)
- [Insights from Broadband Cases Studies](#)
- [Broadband Overview and Key Contacts](#)
- Contacts:
 - [Paul Breakman](#), Vice President of Cooperative Business Solutions
 - [Brian O'Hara](#), Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs
 - [Kelly Wismer](#), Director, Legislative Affairs



The Importance of Cybersecurity Heightens

As more people are working, learning, and engaging remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of cybersecurity could not be greater. NRECA's Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities (RC3) program offers several resources to help co-ops improve their cybersecurity posture. These resources are available online and can be used individually and with staff virtually. Additional resources will be published soon specific to cybersecurity for working remotely.

RC3 Online Cybersecurity Self-Assessment – to understand your current cybersecurity posture and help you create an Action Plan for improvements.

- [Advisory with More Details and Link to Application](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit – contains incident scenarios with real world applications to evaluate your response preparedness.

- [RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit](#)
- [RC3 Website](#)

Contacts:

- [Cynthia Hsu](#), Principal, Cybersecurity Solutions
- [Adaora Ifebigh](#), Senior R&D Engagements Manager

Subject Matter Experts Are Here to Help

NRECA's Business and Technology Strategies team has experts with decades of industry experience ready to help you through the challenges of today's unprecedented situation. We look forward to hearing from you!

- [Business and Technology Strategies Subject Matter Experts Listing](#)

NRECA's Hub for COVID-19 Information for Co-ops

NRECA's [COVID-19 hub](#) provides additional resources for co-ops, including guidance on business continuity planning and communication.

See past issues of *Business and Technology Update* in our [archive on cooperative.com](#).

Discover the value of NRECA membership. Learn more.

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