

Business & Technology Update



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Developments in Augmented and Virtual Reality Technology

As our industry continues to evolve and the grid incorporates increasingly complex systems, it is essential that co-ops have adequate tools for training and operations. Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) technology may be beneficial in providing enhanced data and information for a variety of essential functions, including emergency response, new employee training, safety protocol, among others. This article presents an introduction to AR/VR technology and some of the considerations co-ops may want to include in their investment decision-making.

- **Article**
- Contact for Questions: [Adaora Ifeigh](#)

Building A Cooperative Sourcing Alliance In Texas

Cooperation among cooperatives has been utilized as a way to procure equipment at reasonable prices since 1936. But, the stakes are higher today and that is opening new opportunities to utilize the cooperative business model to save money and increase efficiency. This new case study shares insights from the Texas Electric Cooperatives' strategic sourcing alliances that allowed it to capture significant market share and achieve cost-savings for its members.

- **Case Study**
- **Strategic Sourcing Case Study Series**
- Contact for Questions: [Lauren Khair](#)

Opportunity to Partner for Power Quality Phase Balance Project – Deadline June 27

Phase unbalance damages 3-phase motor loads and increases technical losses, causing real problems on equipment such as large commercial HVAC units. Argonne National Laboratory, in partnership with NRECA, is conducting a research project to develop control strategies for solar PV inverters that mitigate power quality issues related to phase unbalance. NRECA is looking for cooperatives to serve as technical advisors on the development and testing of related software. The following advisory provides full details on benefits and responsibilities of participation. **Letters of support are due by June 27.**

- **Advisory**
- Contact for Questions: [David Pinney](#)

“A Journey to Zero Contacts” Video Added to Safety Toolkit

Since its launch in April 2018, the Commitment to Zero Contacts safety initiative has 550+ CEO commitments across 43 states. A Journey to Zero Contacts, shows how CEO, Ron Salyer, and his teams at Pioneer Electric Cooperative have put their commitment into action – using the tools available in NRECA's Commitment to Zero Contacts Toolkit to take this nationwide safety initiative to the next level.

- **A Journey to Zero Contacts**
- **Commitment to Zero Contact Toolkit**

Upcoming Events

- **AREGC Conference**
June 23-26, Point Clear, AL
- **Beneficial Electrification – Electrify Wisconsin!**
June 27, Madison, WI
- **Technology Planning, Decision Making and Leadership: Enhancing Organizational Effectiveness**
October 22-23, San Antonio, TX

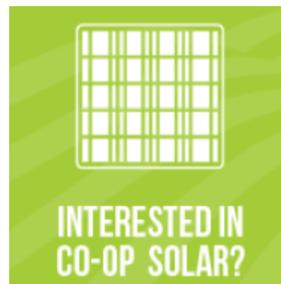


- [Podcast: Along Those Lines, Episode 7: Zero Contacts— Keeping Line Crews Safe](#)
- Contact for Questions: [Bud Branham](#)

Jackson County REMC's Broadband Creates the Foundation for Economic Growth

Jackson County REMC has embarked on a strategic initiative to extend fiber broadband access to 100% of its membership in parts of ten Indiana counties. The roughly \$64 million fiber investment the co-op has undertaken is intended in large part to stem the outward migration of people from the area by providing the infrastructure necessary for long-term economic growth. Read about this initiative and how it is achieving a four-to-one ratio of economic benefits to broadband investment costs.

- [Jackson County REMC Case Study](#)
- [Broadband Case Study Series](#)
- Contact for Questions: [Paul Breakman](#)



Battery Storage Prices Near 'Tipping Point' – Fastest Growth Expected Behind-the-Meter

With the price of lithium-ion battery energy storage systems (BESS) at \$175/kWh and falling fast, investments by both electric utilities and their customers may soon be cost-effective across a range of applications. Experts anticipate that \$150/kWh will be the tipping point for affordable stationary energy storage, much as \$1/W was the breakthrough mark for the widespread installation of solar photovoltaics. The recently updated Battery Energy Storage Overview report by NRECA, CFC, CoBank, and NRTC, serves as a resource for electric cooperatives considering the future of battery storage, whether as a utility-scale asset or the impact of behind-the-meter installations by residential and C&I consumer-members. Read more in this new advisory providing highlights, and the full report for details.

- [Advisory](#)
- [Report](#)
- Contact for Questions: [Jan Ahlen](#)

Advancing Energy Access for All

Electric cooperatives have always been the primary vehicle for enabling energy access in rural communities and continue to level the playing field for rural communities by offering energy services, high-speed internet access, and a wide array of other programs designed to create choice and opportunity within their communities. NRECA's new initiative Advancing Energy Access for All spotlights cooperatives involvement in facilitating healthy communities, explores the innovative ways they do it, and uncovers new directions community assistance programs are taking. Read more in this introductory advisory and first case study of our series.

- [Advancing Energy Access for All Website](#)
- [Advisory: Overview](#)
- [Case Study: Cherryland Electric Cooperative](#)
- Contacts for Questions: [Keith Dennis](#) and [Adaora Ifebigh](#)

Beneficial Electrification Event in Wisconsin

NRECA is proud to be a sponsor of *2019 Beneficial Electrification – Electrify Wisconsin!* on June 27. This session is a full-day meeting and networking reception for electric cooperative management teams interested in the rapidly evolving market opportunity of Beneficial Electrification specific to Wisconsin. Hear from national and respective state leaders on a variety of topics focused on the utilities' role in the accelerating electrification of residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural end-uses – water-heating, space-heating, process heating, and more. Stay tuned for similar events in other states around the country!

- **Registration**
- Contacts for questions: Keith Dennis and Maria Kanevsky

AREGC Conference To Present Best Practices in Plant Operation and Maintenance

The annual Association of Rural Electric Generating Cooperatives Conference is a national event designed to provide electric cooperative power plant operations, maintenance and engineering personnel with the skills and education needed to enhance the effectiveness of electric generating cooperatives nationwide. Join us in Point Clear, AL on June 23-26 to meet with industry experts, collaborate with peers, and gain knowledge and insight into new practices and technologies to help direct the future of your cooperative.

- **Registration**
- Contacts for Questions: [Dan Walsh](#) and [Lauren Khair](#)

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4301 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22203 | Tel: (703) 907-5500 | E-mail: nreca@nreca.coop

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