

Business & Technology Update



Thursday, January 27, 2022 | coop.com | [BTS Portfolio](#) | [Contact](#) | [Archive](#) |

Business and Technology Offerings at TechAdvantage and PowerXchange 2022

Our Business and Technology Strategies team will be at this year's **TechAdvantage® Experience** and **PowerXchange** to provide a wide variety of educational sessions for members to learn about the opportunities and challenges facing our industry today. Find the link to the full listing below for details.

- **Listing of Sessions with BTS Staff**

On March 6, we will be holding several **Pre-Conference Workshops** at the TechAdvantage conference to provide in-depth education and insights on several important topics:

- *Cyber Strategy Summit*: Hear about key aspects of NRECA's cyber program and strategic partnerships with vendors.
- *Cyber Incident Response Plan*: Get details on how to build a plan and exercise it to test its capabilities.
- *Essence User Group Meeting*: Learn about this cyber monitoring and early warning system product and recent cyber security events as case studies. All are welcome.
- *Data Strategy and Analytics*: Learn how you can use open source and cloud tools to unlock data silos and transform data into value-driven analytics.
- *UAS Inspection Program Development*: Find out how to set up an end-to-end inspection program, including the process, procedures, and software.

On March 7-8, come talk with our experts in the following sessions at **TechAdvantage** and our members annual meeting, **PowerXchange**:

- Breakout: Fight Fire and Improve Your Inspections – With a Solid Data Acquisition Plan: [Stan McHann](#)
- Breakout: Deploying Batteries: Lessons Learned and Procedures: [Lauren Khair](#)
- Breakout: The Value of Reliable and Resilient Power: [Venkat Banunarayanan](#)
- Breakout: Build, Buy or Rent – Talent Strategies You Need: [Delaine Orendorff](#) and [Leigh Taylor](#)
- Breakout: Predictive Analytics Help Drive the Proactive Cooperative: [Henry Cano](#)
- Breakout: Power of Partnership with National Laboratories: [Emma Stewart](#)
- Breakout: How to Engage with Federal Research: [Emma Stewart](#)

- Breakout: Microgrid Planning: Taking the First Steps: [Matt Stevenson](#) and [Lauren Khair](#)
- Breakout: Beneficial Electrification: Retail Rate Scenarios: [Allison Hamilton](#)
- Breakout: EV- Public Charging in Rural Areas: [Brian Sloboda](#)
- Ask the Expert: Cybersecurity - Keeping Your Co-op Safe: [Will Hutton](#) and [Ryan Newlon](#)
- Ask the Expert: Preparing for Your CEO's Retirement: [Delaine Orendorff](#) and [Leigh Taylor](#)
- Spark Session: How Are You Attracting New Talent to Your Cooperative? [Leigh Taylor](#) and [Desiree Dunham](#)
- Ask the Expert: Electrical Contacts – Why do They Continue to Happen? [Bud Branham](#)
- Ask the Expert: Is Your Workforce Aligned with Your Strategic Direction? [Delaine Orendorff](#)

On March 9, join us for discussion about distributed wind and co-op opportunity to participate in our RADWIND project. See this advisory for details:

- [Invitation to Distributed Wind Discussion](#)

Throughout the event, visit our various booths at the Expo to hear more about resources and opportunities available to cooperatives. Find details in this full listing:

- [Listing of Sessions with BTS Staff](#)

We look forward to seeing you March 6-9, 2022 at the Music City Center in Nashville, Tenn.

- Contact for TechAdvantage Program: [Mary Ackleson](#)
- Contact for PowerXchange Program: [Kristen Wheeler](#)

NRECA Secures Opportunities for Co-ops in Infrastructure Bill

NRECA secured important wins for electric co-ops in the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill signed into law last November. The law includes significant investment and funding opportunities for co-ops and the communities they serve, but much work still needs to take place before federal agencies begin funding infrastructure projects. Federal agencies, including the Energy Department, Agriculture Department, Transportation Department, and Federal Communications Commission, are working to outline the programmatic elements of these programs. The timeline for federal agencies to stand up these programs will vary and is expected to take months. To best prepare our members to take advantage of 27 funding opportunities for electric cooperatives, NRECA has developed a [resource hub](#) on cooperative.com to keep you informed and help you evaluate opportunities for your co-op and membership. Similar to our engagement at the most recent CEO Close-Up, NRECA will also have a specific location at [PowerXchange](#) on March 4-9 in Nashville, TN to discuss these resources and how we can best support you in pursuing these opportunities.

- [Infrastructure Bill Resource Hub](#)
- Contacts: [Emma Stewart](#) and [Paul Breakman](#)

How Networking Among Cooperatives Helps Cybersecurity

Information sharing regarding cybersecurity threats is of paramount importance. Based on input from cooperatives who participated in our *Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities* (RC3) Program Summits, our

new advisory series reviews what information to share, when and how, as well as common barriers facing cooperatives and how to alleviate them. Our latest advisory in the series focuses on how information sharing by 'networking among cooperatives' is advantageous for cybersecurity.

- [Advisory Series Website](#)
- Contacts: [Emma Stewart](#), [Ryan Newlon](#), and [Will Hutton](#)

Podcast: Electric Vehicles Uptake in Rural America

While electric vehicle sales are skyrocketing in the U.S., their popularity has largely been centered on urban and suburban areas, and enthusiasm has been slower to catch on in rural America. Listen to our latest *Along Those Lines* podcast to hear about the reasons for this dynamic, and what electric cooperatives are doing about it. NRECA's Brian Sloboda, director of consumer solutions, joins Wendy Youngren, chief operating officer of WH Holding, a subsidiary of [Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association](#) in Minnesota, to discuss this issue. Also read about the latest developments with electric school buses and three related co-op case studies in our new *Surveillance* article.

- [Podcast](#)
- [Article on Electric School Buses](#)
- Contact: [Brian Sloboda](#)

Improving Cyclic Performance of Natural Gas Power Plants

The rise of competitive power markets together with growing variable renewable generation are forcing natural gas combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) power plants into a reactionary posture, where they operate in a cycling manner instead of running as baseload. CCGT power plants accumulate damage and degradation in key components during every start-up and shutdown – eventually leading to failure and reduced availability. This new NRECA *Surveillance* series summarizes CEATI's report *Optimization of Natural Gas Fired Combined Cycle Gas Turbines Power Plant Modifications to Improve Cycling Performance*, reviewing the adaptations that electric cooperatives can make to natural gas CCGT power plants to decrease failure mechanisms and improve their availability, and to rank those adaptations in terms of cost effectiveness. Our second article in the series focuses on cycling effects on forced outage hours and Group 2 modification.

- [Article Series](#)
- Contact: [Dan Walsh](#)

Research Funding Opportunities Webinar – Feb. 16

Join us on **Feb. 16 at 2:00 p.m. ET** for our next free monthly webinar highlighting funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) and other sources available for NRECA research with members. You will hear about current NRECA research initiatives and upcoming research funding opportunities in which cooperatives may want to participate, including new opportunities with the Infrastructure Bill. Past webinars are available to members [On Demand](#).

Also join our new **professional community** to stay up to date on research funding developments. Through this community, we will have member discussions and share ongoing updates on research and new funding opportunities as they become available. To participate, send an email request to

ResearchFunding@nreca.coop.

- [Webinar Registration](#)
- Contact: NRECA Team at ResearchFunding@nreca.coop

CEATI Membership Brings Value to Cooperatives

NRECA has been a member of CEATI international for years, representing cooperatives' interests and sharing the research and insights for the benefit of all NRECA members. In addition, through an agreement between NRECA and CEATI, cooperative representatives can be directly involved in CEATI research. Find out more in this advisory:

- [Advisory](#)
- Contact: [Dan Walsh](#)

Co-ops Continue to Lead the Industry in AMI

As advanced communications have become increasingly important for electric system operations, cooperatives have been transitioning from Automated Meter Reading (AMR) to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), and phasing out meters with no communications capability. According to updated analysis by NRECA, electric co-ops continue to lead the industry in AMI deployment. Read details in this new advisory.

- [Advisory](#)
- Contacts: [Joseph Goodenbery](#), [Michael Leitman](#) and [Tony Thomas](#)

New OASIS Program Provides Energy Storage Resources for Cooperatives

Electric cooperatives operate a large number of fossil power plants in the U.S. and can greatly benefit from advanced energy storage technologies but face various technical and financial barriers. Through a cooperative agreement between NRECA and the U.S. Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), the new Outreach for Advance Storage Integration and Support (OASIS) program is aimed at overcoming these barriers, increasing the adoption of storage technologies and contributing to the nation's power security and economic growth. Through OASIS, NRECA will provide its members with access to educational resources, to help empower them to integrate new energy storage technologies with their generation systems. Find out more in our new website, and revisit often for updates and new resources:

- [OASIS Website](#)
- Contacts: [Dan Walsh](#) and [Anantha Narayanan](#)

2021 Summary of Business and Technology Articles and Advisories

Throughout 2021, NRECA's Business and Technology Strategies department issued over 50 *Surveillance* articles and Advisories to assist cooperatives in addressing various opportunities and challenges facing our

industry. Here is a summary, including links to each document.

- [2021 Summary](#)
- [Additional Years' Summaries](#)

Contacts:

- Analytics: [David Pinney](#)
- Consulting Services: [Ginny Beauchemin](#)
- Cybersecurity: [William Hutton](#) and [Ryan Newlon](#)
- Distributed Energy Resources: [Brian Sloboda](#) and [Tolu Omotoso](#)
- Generation, Environment and Carbon: [Dan Walsh](#)
- Resource Adequacy and Markets: [Michael Leitman](#)
- Transmission and Distribution: [Patti Metro](#)

WEBINAR AND PODCAST OPPORTUNITIES

Webinars

- [Research Funding Opportunities Series](#)
Feb. 16: 2:00 p.m. ET
Mar. 16: 2:00 p.m. ET

On Demand

- [Research Funding Opportunities Series](#)
- [Leading Through the Workforce Revolution](#)
- [Co-op Economic Outlook Webinar Series: July 22, 2021](#)
- [Grid Operations & Innovation Series: Wood Pole Production and Quality Assurance](#)
- [Grid Operations & Innovation Series: Wood Poles: The Growing Need for a Supply Chain Strategy](#)
- [Business Insights Series: Enterprise Risk Management: It's a Good Fit for Your Co-op](#)
- [Business Insights Series: Market Segmentation](#)
- [Business Insights Series: Using Performance-Based Frameworks to Deliver Consumer Value](#)
- [Emerging Tech Series: Wind Hybrid Power Plants as an Emerging Energy Resource Option](#)
- [Emerging Tech Series: Utility Uses for Augmented and Virtual Reality](#)
- [Emerging Tech Series: EV Trends and Consumer Perspectives](#)
- [Broadband and Digital Infrastructure Summit](#)
- [New Funding Available for Co-ops Serving Military Communities](#)
- [The Power of Partnership: Solar Webinar Series – Vol. 1](#)
- [The Power of Partnership: Solar Webinar Series – Vol. 2](#)

- [Measuring Co-op Response to COVID-19: Key Take-Aways and Action Items](#)
- [RC3 Online Cybersecurity Self-Assessment Program](#)
- [Integrated Vegetation Management \(IVM\)](#)
- [Series: Mitigating Bird Issues](#)

Podcasts

- [‘A Cultural Reset’ — How the Pandemic Has Elevated the Value of Soft Skills at Co-ops](#)
- [What is the Beneficial Electrification League?](#)
- [How Data Is Revolutionizing the Electric Utility Industry](#)

Resources Regarding the Impact of COVID-19 on Co-ops

NRECA has completed several analyses on the impact of COVID-19 on electric cooperatives, including economic, job sectors, and broadband. The following are some resources that cooperatives may find helpful as our industry continues to address the challenges of the pandemic.

- **Podcast: ‘A Cultural Reset’ — How the Pandemic Has Elevated the Value of Soft Skills at Co-ops**
- **2021 U.S. Economic Outlook: A Focus on Rural America**
 - [Q1 - 2021](#)
 - [Q3 - 2021](#)
 - Contact: [Joe Goodenbery](#)
- **Measuring Co-op Response to COVID-19: Key Take-Aways and Action Items** (webinar)
 - Contact: [Mike Sassman](#)
- **Tools to Help Manage Energy Expenses**
 - Contact: [Brian Sloboda](#)
- **The Criticality of Broadband**
 - Contact: [Paul Breakman](#)
- **NRECA COVID-19 Hub**

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

Discover the value of NRECA membership. Learn more.

This is a promotion from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
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