

Business & Technology Update



Thursday, November 4, 2021 | coop.com | [BTS Portfolio](#) | [Contact](#) | [Archive](#) |

Advancing Cybersecurity with the 100 Day Program

Through a cooperative agreement between NRECA and the DOE National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), the "100 Day Program" was created to deploy cyber and cyber-physical solutions for rural electric cooperatives. The program, directed by NRECA's chief scientist, Emma Stewart, focuses on enabling a partnership with NRECA rural electric cooperative members and technology vendors to deploy technologies and systems that will provide cyber visibility, detection, and response capabilities for industrial control systems (ICS) of electric utilities. Read more about this program and DOE's recent award of \$10M to NRECA and APPA in support of this effort:

- [100 Day Program Website](#)
- [DOE Announcement](#)
- Contact: 100 Day Team at 100days@nreca.coop

Emerging Tech Webinar: Electric School Buses – Nov. 16

Join NRECA's director of consumer solutions, Brian Sloboda, on **Nov. 16 from 2-2:50 p.m. ET** for the next session of our Emerging Tech webinar series. In *Electric School Buses: Collaborating with Communities*, Brian talks with Travis Mathes of Lewis County REC and Andy Turgeon of the Knox County School District about how co-ops are working with school districts to deploy electric buses and the value they bring to their communities.

- [More Information and Registration](#)
- Contact: [Brian Sloboda](#)

New Webinar Series: Research Funding Opportunities – Nov. 17

Join us **Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. ET** for NRECA's new monthly webinar series highlighting funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) and other sources available for NRECA research with members. These free, 30-minute sessions focus on sharing current NRECA research initiatives and upcoming research funding opportunities in which cooperatives may want to participate. Series dates: Nov. 17, Dec. 15, and Jan. 19.

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.

- [Webinar Registration](#)

- Sign-up for Professional Community: Send an email to ResearchFunding@nreca.coop
- Contact: NRECA Team at ResearchFunding@nreca.coop

Safety is a Priority as Broadband Expands

Rural broadband build-outs, which gained momentum during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, are expected to accelerate as billions in new federal and state monies are distributed to help close the digital divide. Nearly 200 electric cooperatives in 39 states are already providing or committed to providing internet service, and another 200-plus are investigating such projects. Read in this new *RE Magazine* article how co-ops are emphasizing crew safety as new fiber technicians work near electrified lines.

- [Article](#)
- Contacts: [Paul Breakman](#), [Brian O'Hara](#) and [Scot Hoffman](#)

Improving Cyclic Performance of Coal-Fired Power Plants

The rise of competitive power markets together with growing variable renewable generation are forcing coal-fired power plants into a reactionary posture, where they operate in a cycling manner instead of the traditional lengthy runtimes at or near rated load. Coal-fired power plants accumulate damage and degradation in key components during every start-up, shutdown, and ramping between load states – eventually leading to failure and reduced availability. This new NRECA *Surveillance* series summarizes CEATI's report *Optimization of Coal-Fired Power Plant Modifications to Improve Cyclic Performance*, providing guidance on the adaptations that electric cooperatives can make to coal-fired power plants to improve their availability. The fourth and final article in this series has just been published and explains the calculation of cost estimates for three categories of plant modifications, as well as their economic value.

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

Find Out Your Co-op's Microgrid Potential with New Tool

NRECA Research developed a mapping tool, so that cooperatives and rural communities can answer some of their first big questions on what their options or pathways are to implementing a community microgrid. The tool brings together data about possible technology sources for a microgrid, as well as weather data to highlight areas of concern for resiliency. All data are federally sourced and selected based on available assumptions about source-specific capacity to support a microgrid.

- [Microgrid Potential Explorer Tool](#)
- Contact: [Katherine Loving](#)

Hands-On Drones Course

As unmanned aerial vehicles become more sophisticated and capable, some electric cooperatives are using drones for field operations. NRECA has partnered with a top drone service provider, PrecisionHawk, to offer utility-specific training designed to help co-ops get more value from their investments in the technology. A new

RE Magazine article discusses this opportunity, and the schedule of dates and locations for the course is available on our website. In addition, NRECA offers a variety of UAS Flight Services to help utilities select the right drone technology and platform to meet their needs and to successfully integrate the technology into their inspection and assessment processes. Find out more through the links below:

- [Article](#)
- [Course Schedule and Registration](#)
- [More Information on NRECA UAS Course and Flight Services](#)
- Contact: [Stan McHann](#)

Cybersecurity Awareness Month Resources Are Relevant All Year

While October's *Cybersecurity Awareness Month* has passed, cybersecurity remains a priority for cooperatives year-round and NRECA resources can help. Here is a sampling:

- **[NRECA's Cybersecurity Awareness Month Website](#)**
Visit our Cybersecurity Awareness Month website to find information and resources for cooperatives to use to advance cybersecurity awareness with their staff and members.
- **[NRECA Winter School for Directors – New Course for Directors: Cybersecurity: The Board's Oversight Role \(BLC 927.1\)](#)**
Boards face a balancing act with cybersecurity and continued pursuit of digital innovation, transformation, and meeting member needs. This course is designed to help distribution cooperative directors find that balance and fulfil their cybersecurity oversight responsibilities. [Register here](#) and contact **Pat Mangan**, NRECA director of governance education, with questions.
- **[Essence](#)**
NRECA's cybersecurity tool, Essence, accelerates the detection of cybersecurity incidents from the typical **months to seconds**.
- **[Podcast: How to Avoid Being a Victim of Ransomware](#)**
Hear from NRECA's principal of cybersecurity, Ryan Newlon, as well as Dave Eisenreich, an FBI special agent in the Cyber Division about how electric co-ops can avoid becoming victims of this sophisticated malware and what should they do if they are attacked.
- **[Podcast: Amid Rise in EVs, New Cybersecurity Considerations Emerge](#)**
The growing web of connected electric vehicle charging stations will create a host of new cybersecurity vulnerabilities. To learn more about what those vulnerabilities are and how to mitigate them, listen to this discussion between NRECA's director of consumer solutions, Brian Sloboda, and Shannon Murry of the FBI's Cyber Division.
- **[Cybersecurity Information Sharing Advisory Series](#)**
Information sharing regarding cybersecurity threats is of paramount importance. Based on input from cooperatives who participated in our Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities (RC3) Summits, this series of advisories reviews what information to share, when and how, as well as common barriers facing cooperatives and how to alleviate them.

- **Contacts:** [Emma Stewart](#), [Ryan Newlon](#), [Doug Lambert](#) and [Will Hutton](#)

WEBINAR AND PODCAST OPPORTUNITIES

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**

Webinars

- **Emerging Tech Series: Electric School Buses: Collaborating with Communities**
Nov. 16: 2-2:50 p.m. ET
- **Research Funding Opportunities Series**
Nov. 17: 2:00 p.m. ET
Dec. 15: 2:00 p.m. ET
Jan. 19: 2:00 p.m. ET
- **Co-op Economic Outlook Series**
Jan. 20: 2-2:50 p.m. ET

On Demand

- **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**

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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