

Business & Technology Update



Thursday, February 10, 2022 | coop.com | [BTS Portfolio](#) | [Contact](#) | [Archive](#) |

NRECA To Host Infrastructure Bill Briefing for Co-op Leaders

Congress last year enacted a monumental \$1 trillion infrastructure package that provides widespread opportunity for electric co-op investment, and NRECA worked with our members and congressional champions to secure important wins for electric co-ops in the package. NRECA is now actively working to help our members prepare to take advantage of these funding opportunities.

Today, NRECA will host a briefing for co-op leaders on the infrastructure law, including information about potential partnerships and funding opportunities for electric co-ops; the federal agency process; and available helpful resources. NRECA CEO, Jim Matheson, and Senior Vice President of Government Relations, Louis Finkel, will lead this important discussion, moderated by Senior Director of Media Relations, Stephen Bell.

We also have developed a [resource hub](#) on cooperative.com to keep our members informed and help you evaluate opportunities for your co-op and membership.

All members are welcome to participate in our monthly [Research Funding Opportunities](#) webinars to hear from our Chief Scientist, Emma Stewart, about available infrastructure funding for cooperatives. In addition, we invite you to visit NRECA at the upcoming [PowerXchange](#) and [TechAdvantage® Experience](#) on March 4-9 in Nashville, TN to discuss these resources and how we can best support you in pursuing these opportunities.

- [Infrastructure Resource Hub](#)
- [Research Funding Opportunities Monthly Webinars](#)
- Contacts: [Emma Stewart](#) , [Paul Breakman](#) and [Stephen Bell](#)

In Person and Virtual Options for Business and Technology Sessions 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 Demand Option: TechAdvantage ® ENCORE

You can experience the TechAdvantage Conference right from your home or office with [TechAdvantage ENCORE](#). This exciting on demand option offers audio and slide recordings of conference sessions. Access

them anytime, anywhere – from your mobile device – so you won't miss out on the action! *Note: Registrants for the in-person TechAdvantage Experience will receive access to ENCORE as part of their conference registration.*

Highlights of BTS Sessions:

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](#)
- Ask the Expert: Distributed Wind and NRECA-DOE's "RADWIND" Project. [Michael Leitman](#)

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](#)

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

Cybersecurity While Working with Vendors

As cooperatives work with vendors, the interactions of systems and data present possible cybersecurity risk. Cooperatives who participated in our *Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities* (RC3) Program Summits discussed this issue and shared their perspectives. Our latest advisory in our series on Cybersecurity Information Sharing focuses on how cooperatives can help to ensure the appropriate procedures with vendors to share information both during daily operations and should there be a cyber incident.

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

Cryptocurrency Mining Presents Risk and Opportunities

Since China has banned the energy-intensive practice of cryptocurrency mining in 2021, the U.S. has taken the lead in new mining operations. Many cooperatives are experiencing new requests for large amounts of power from cryptocurrency miners with uncertain futures. This new advisory explains this development and how the high energy demand of cryptocurrency mining presents both opportunities and risks for electric utilities who choose to work with miners. The experiences and approaches of three electric utilities are provided as example.

- [Advisory](#)
- [Related Website](#)
- Contact: [Allison Hamilton](#)

NRECA Members Invited to Join New Interest Group on Electric Vehicles

The *Community Approach to Vehicle Electrification* (CAVE) is a network of electric cooperatives that have implemented or are planning to implement a variety of electric transportation programs. This group, known as the CAVE Funding Interest Group (FIG) seeks to work with federal agencies, foundations and vendors to provide grassroots electric transportation solutions for rural America. NRECA members are invited to join FIG and help advance EVs within their service areas.

- [More Information](#)
- [Join the Interest Group](#)
- Contacts: [Brian Sloboda](#) and [Tolu Omotoso](#)

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 third article in the series examines four problems and recommended solutions associated with balance of plant equipment, some of which could require the involvement of original equipment manufacturers or specialist third parties.

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

U.S. DOT Grant Opportunity to Support EV Infrastructure

U.S. Department of Transportation's annual *Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity* (RAISE) has \$1.5 billion in funding for transportation programs. Eligible programs can cover a wide variety of projects, including electric vehicle infrastructure which could facilitate EV expansion in cooperative areas. Communities eligible for 100% federal grant funding have been expanded this year to include rural and persistent poverty areas. Eligible applicants must be a government agency. Electric cooperatives are not eligible to apply directly, but may benefit from coordinating with their local government agencies to see how EV infrastructure may be included in projects within their areas. This new advisory explains more.

- [Advisory](#)
- Contact: [Brian Sloboda](#)

Business Insights Webinars: Workforce Revolution and Market Segmentation

Join us for our next two Business Insights webinars. In *Workforce Revolution: What's (Really) Behind Performance & Satisfaction* (**March 31, 2-2:50 p.m. ET**), NRECA's Director, Human Capital Planning & Compensation, Delaine Orendorff, will lead a discussion about leading during the "workforce revolution" that is currently underway. In *Market Segmentation: Amplifying Your Message for Success* (**April 7, 2-2:50 p.m. ET**), NRECA's Director, Consumer Analytics & Market Research, Mike Sassman will help us understand how to use consumer segmentation to align your programs and communications to your consumer-members' motivations.

- [More Information](#)
- Contacts: [Delaine Orendorff](#) and [Mike Sassman](#)

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](#)

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 talk with our experts at **TechAdvantage Expo booth #1762**.

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

2022 National Compensation System: Pre-order Now to Save

The National Compensation System (NCS) provides comprehensive salary information compiled from NRECA member systems across the country. Accessible anywhere via your secure cooperative.com login, it allows users to customize their data search and export individual reports into a variety of formats. Place your **pre-order by March 15** to access the NCS at the discounted price.

- [Website](#)

- Contact: [Beth Wray](#)

Technology Planning and Decision Making Available at 2022 Cooperative University

This one-day course helps attendees develop an understanding of, and gain practice with, the core competencies now required of everyone in the cooperative organization to ensure that technology is applied effectively. It introduces a proven technology planning process, best management practices, tools and resources crucial for effective technology planning and decision making. Join us on **Wednesday, June 22, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.**

- [Register](#)
- Contact [Brienne McIntyre](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **PowerXchange**
Nashville, TN
March 4 - 9, 2022
Online: March 6 - 15, 2022
- **TechAdvantage Experience**
Nashville, TN
March 6 - 9, 2022
Online: March 24 - April 30, 2022
- **Cooperative University**
Nashville, TN
June 20-24

WEBINAR AND PODCAST OPPORTUNITIES

Webinars

- **Research Funding Opportunities Series**
Feb. 16: 2:00 p.m. ET
Mar. 16: 2:00 p.m. ET
- **Business Insights Webinar. *Workforce Revolution: What's (Really) Behind Performance & Satisfaction***
Mar. 31: 2-2:50 p.m. ET
- **Business Insights Webinar: *Market Segmentation: Amplifying Your Message for Success***
Apr. 7: 2-2:50 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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