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Business & Technology Update

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BTS at PowerXchange and TechAdvantage

Our Business and Technology Strategies team will be at PowerXchange and TechAdvantage providing information and insights on a variety of topics for our members. Attend the preconferences and breakout sessions, and come visit us for one-on-one discussions at the Expo. Below is a sampling, and the full schedule is available on cooperative.com. We look forward to seeing you!

3/8 Preconferences and BTS Team Participants

- *Reliability Improvement Strategies Through Enabling Technologies* with Henry Cano and Ravindra Singh
- *Cooperative Incident Response in Action* with Carter Manucy and Ryan Newlon
- *Mission Critical: The Co-op Role in National Defense with* Lauren Khair, Carter Manucy and Michael Leitman
- *The Power of MultiSpeak: Integration, Analytics, and Risk Reduction* with Venkat Banunarayanan

3/9 & 3/10 Breakout Sessions and BTS Team Participants

- *Implementing Distribution Automation in Cooperatives: Lessons, Strategies and Use Cases* with Ravindra Singh
- *Using DERs to Keep Up with Increasing Demand* with David Farmer
- *Planning for What Shows Up: Flexible Strategies for EV Integration* with Jennah Denney and Chris Lee
- *AI 301: Making the Business Case* - Panel Discussion with Venkat Banunarayanan

- *The Right Pole for the Job: Supplier Perspectives on Materials and Performance* with Will Cox
- *Maturing Cooperative Cybersecurity: Ensuring No Co-op Is Left Behind* with Justin Luebbert, Meredith Miller, and Ryan Newlon
- *Simplifying Microgrids* with Lidija Sekaric
- *Tech Leadership Unlocked: Skills for Team Building, Coaching and Communication* with Delaine Orendorff
- *Powering Partnership: Electric Cooperatives and Data Centers Collaborate to Power the Future with* Allison Hamilton
- *Beyond Exercises: St. Paul's Real-World Cyber Response with the National Guard* with Carter Manucy
- *Economic Outlook: What's Ahead for Cooperatives* with Michael Leitman

Don't forget to stop by **Startup Alley at the Expo on March 10-11 at 11:30 am ET** (TechPark Booth A), where you can hear from early-stage companies with products and services of value to electric co-ops.

New Resources and Opportunities

TDEC Flicker Guide

The Design Guide to Limit Objectionable Voltage Drop (Flicker) was developed by the Transmission & Distribution Engineering Committee (TDEC) System Reliability and Power Quality Subcommittee. The Guide provides technical information for understanding, measuring and mitigating voltage fluctuations on the electric distribution systems to ensure power quality and customer satisfaction. This new advisory provides an Executive Summary of the Guide, and the full Guide is also available through the link below.

- Advisory & Guide
- Contacts: Henry Cano and Patti Metro

Flexibility in Serving Large Loads

Electric cooperatives are entering a new era of large-scale electric load growth, driven by data centers, industrial development, and electric vehicle (EV) transportation. NRECA is providing a series of reports about Serving Large Loads in these areas, with particular focus on the impacts, opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops. Part One examined the operational characteristics of these loads and Part Two focused on siting considerations. Part Three is now available and examines flexibility as a critical strategy for reliability and cost control. Also visit our Serving Large Loads and Data Centers topic website on cooperative.com for additional resources.

- Serving Large Loads Report Series
- Serving Large Loads and Data Centers Website
- Contacts: Allison Hamilton (Data Centers), Jennah Denney (EVs), Jeffrey Groenewold (Industrial Loads)

Read a related article about how NRECA is calling for swift action to address worsening grid reliability outlook stemming from power plant retirements and the surging demands of large loads:

- Article
- Contact: Blake Whitney

Liquefied Natural Gas Update

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is natural gas that has been purified and cooled to a liquid. In the United States, there are more than 170 LNG facilities, and we are the world's largest LNG exporter. An LNG facility at a natural gas–fired power plant can provide backup fuel to generate electricity and prevent service interruptions during high-demand periods, extreme weather events, gas pipeline outages, and other pipeline supply disruptions. It can help an electric utility avoid expensive electricity or natural gas purchases during price spikes. This new report provides an update on LNG, including three broad pathways that a utility can take to use LNG as a backup fuel supply at a power plant.

- Report
- Contact: Dan Walsh

Mitigating Wildfire Risk

Wildfire risk reduction is not "one size fits all," and there are a variety of long used and new technologies and strategies. A new report from the Wildfire Assessment and Resilience for Networks (WARN) Project offers NRECA members a comprehensive guide to customized mitigation—ranging from vegetation management to advanced sensors and drones—designed to harden infrastructure, provide real-time monitoring, and build a proactive, fire-safe culture. Read the full report to explore tailored solutions for your cooperative.

- Report
- Contact: Leslie Tate

Process to Reaffirm IEEE Microgrid Standard

IEEE standards have a 10-year cycle and must be reaffirmed or become inactive. IEEE Std 2030.7-2017, an important standard for microgrid controllers, is scheduled to become inactive December 2027. Under the sponsorship of the IEEE Transmission and Distribution Committee, authorization to update and reaffirm the standard – IEEE 2030.7-Rev was approved last March. This new advisory reviews the IEEE reaffirmation process and the importance of continuance of IEEE Std 2030.7 as microgrids continue to proliferate across utilities, independent operators, and commercial facilities. Co-ops are invited and encouraged to participate in the IEEE 2030.7-Rev Working Group by contacting Ravindra Singh, the NRECA Primary Representative, at Ravindra.Singh@nreca.coop.

- Advisory
- Contact: Ravindra Singh

Deadline Approaching for Co-op Response to NESC Preprint

The National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) was first established in 1913 by the National Bureau of Standards to provide "the practical safeguarding of persons during the installation and maintenance of electric supply and communication facilities, under specified conditions." The NESC undergoes review in a five-year cycle, and the final phase for the current cycle is underway. It is essential that the NESC reflects the needs and concerns of the

electric co-op community, and NRECA encourages all co-ops to participate in the review process. **Deadline for input to the proposed NESC is March 24**. In addition to co-ops having the opportunity to provide comments directly to the NESC process, NRECA is crafting a 'cooperative response.' **Input from co-ops is requested by March 13.** This advisory reviews the NESC process and provides instruction for co-ops to submit individual comments and to participate in the NRECA collaborative response.

- Advisory
- Contact: David Farmer

Upcoming Conferences

NRECA TechAdvantage and PowerXchange – Rising to Meet the Moment Together

In 2026, TechAdvantage and PowerXchange invite cooperative leadership and technology professionals to Rise to Meet the Moment—a call to action for those who embrace change as a pathway to progress. As electric co-ops confront seismic shifts in technology, workforce dynamics and energy demand, TechAdvantage and PowerXchange serve as a launchpad for bold ideas and collaborative solutions. It's where co-ops come together to build a strong future for their communities. Come to **Nashville, March 6-11,** for 2026 TechAdvantage and PowerXchange to explore the innovations, ideas and technologies that will help us rise to meet the moment and drive the electric cooperative industry forward.

- More Information & Registration **– TechAdvantage**
- More Information & Registration **– PowerXchange**
- Contact: Alison Kent

Safety Leadership Summit

Safety Leadership Summit provides co-op leaders the opportunity to strengthen their commitment to safety by learning from each other and networking with other professionals from across the country who are also working on making significant safety improvements. Join us on **April 14-16 in St. Louis, Missouri** for NRECA's premier industry, educational and networking event for electric co-op staff responsible for safety practices.

- More Information & Registration
- Contacts: Ken Macken and Rebecca Bittle

Registration is Open for Co-op Cyber Tech

NRECA's Co-op Cyber Tech returns **June 3–5, 2026 in Indianapolis**. This conference provides attendees with three days of learning and collaboration on cybersecurity issues unique to electric cooperatives. Designed for cooperative IT, security and technology professionals, Co-op Cyber Tech presents practical strategies that can be utilized to strengthen systems and safeguard critical infrastructure. Participants will have opportunities to collaborate with peers, engage with industry experts and explore tools that support stronger cyber resilience across the cooperative network. Register today!

- More Information and Registration
- Contact: membersecurity@nreca.coop

Professional Development Courses

Career Essentials and Management Development Programs

NRECA offers an extensive variety of courses, online and in-person, for co-op staff career development. Some upcoming highlights include:

Live, online courses:
• 720.1 Transforming Your Team from Dysfunction to Cohesion February 23 & 24, 1–4 pm ET. Last day to register: Feb 19.
• 735.1 Developing Others Through Servant Leadership March 9 & 10, 1–4 pm ET. Last day to register: March 5
• 5130.05 Effective Problem-Solving and Decision Making March 17, 12–4 pm ET. Last Day to Register: March 18
• 721.1 Productive Conflict for Supervisors March 23 & 24, 1–4 pm ET. Last day to register: March 19
• 5301.1 Customer Service Essentials March 25 & 26, 1–4 pm ET. Last Day to Register: March 24
• 744.05 Coaching Your Team Members April 13, 1–4 pm ET. Last day to register: April 9
• 722.1 Deliberate Decision Making April 14 & 15, 1–4 pm ET. Last day to register: April 12
• 745.1 Impactful Presentations Workshop: Techniques, Practice and Personalized Feedback (Note the week between session dates. Attendance in both sessions is required for course credit.) April 20 & 27, 1–4 pm ET. Last day to register: April 16

LMS-based / Self-paced, instructor-guided courses:
• 713.1: Engaging and Developing High-Performing Employees: Bringing Out Their Best. Access Dates: April 1 – April 30 (30 days). Last day to register: March 30
• 714.1 Change Is Hard: Guiding Your Team Through Complex Times. Access Dates: April 1 – April 30 (30 days). Last day to register: March 30

Self-Paced, On-Demand Courses:
Available for 30 days from date of purchase. Group rates are available.
• 5104.05 Electric Cooperative Fundamentals
• 5105.05 Electric System Fundamentals
• 5135.05 Project Management Basics
• (760.05) The Science of Emotional Intelligence
• (762.05) Co-op Members, Boards, CEOs and Employees: Building a Strong Foundation for Success

The full schedule is available for the 2026 Supervisor and Manager Development Program (SMDP) and Cooperative Career Essentials Program (CCEP) online courses. The schedule also includes the dates for the annual Cooperative University event, where SMDP and CCEP courses are held in person.

The CCEP focuses on the core skills that all employees need, regardless of their title or tenure. The SMDP focuses on the specific skills needed to supervise and manage others.

- Contact for SMDP: Diane Rhodes-Michaely
- Contact for CCEP: Danielle Jackson

U.S. Department of Energy Prize Competition for Utility Innovation

NRECA wants to make our membership aware of the following prize competitions for grid innovation that are currently being offered by the National Laboratory of the Rockies (formerly NREL) on behalf of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Electricity:

Digitizing Utilities Prize Round 3

For this **$2.4 million prize**, DOE invites utilities and other energy sector partners to connect with interdisciplinary teams of software developers, data experts, and risk and decision scientists to facilitate the transformation of digital systems, data analytics, and risk-informed resource integration for electric utilities. Non-utility teams must partner with an energy sector partner to be eligible to compete in the prize. **Submissions are due April 9.**

Beyond the Meter: Energy Storage Integration Prize

The Beyond the Meter Prize offers **$3.4 million in cash prizes and $800K in vouchers** for work with a national lab. Participants will form coalitions to deploy grid-edge technologies in energy storage systems, creating solutions that enhance flexibility and value for consumers and the grid. **Submissions are due April 30.** Register today for the informational webinar on Feb. 24 at 12 P.M. ET.

Energy Storage Innovations Prize Round 2

This single-phase, **$300,000** competition aims to gain insights on innovative, emerging, and next-generation energy storage solutions that address niche markets and inform the DOE's strategy on transformative storage technologies to accelerate grid modernization for all consumers, while achieving needed reliability, affordability, resilience, and energy security. **Submissions are due March 13.**

Contact for questions: NRL: Camryn Sorg, NRL Project Manager: camryn.sorg@nlr.gov

Discover the value of NRECA membership. Learn More.

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