

# Business & Technology Update



Thursday, February 24, 2022 | [coop.com](#) | [BTS Portfolio](#) | [Contact](#) | [Archive](#) |

## Business and Technology Strategies Sessions at TechAdvantage and PowerXchange 2022 Begin March 6

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](#)

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### 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.*

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### 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 7-9, 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: NRECA Threat Analysis Center: [Ryan Newlon](#), [Will Hutton](#) and [Meredith Miller](#)
- 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](#)
- Spark Session: How Are You Attracting New Talent to Your Cooperative? [Leigh Taylor](#) and [Desiree Dunham](#)
- 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](#)
- 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](#)
- Ask the Expert: Cybersecurity: Attack & Defense: [Will Hutton](#)
- Ask the Expert: Creating a Data Strategy & Using Data Analytics for Decision Making: [Henry Cano](#)
- Ask the Expert: Carbon Capture, Potential Hydrogen Use in Power Generation, and Repurposing Fossil Assets: [Dan Walsh](#)
- Ask the Expert: UAS/Drones – How To, Lessons Learned: [Stan McHann](#)
- Ask the Expert: Research Funding Opportunities: [Tolu Omotoso](#)

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On March 8, come hear a discussion with a group of cooperative advisors and NRECA about their recent efforts on a potential framework and high-level process for Integrated Distribution Resource Planning (IDRP):  
11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m. (lunch provided) - Convention Center Room 203 AB.

- Contact: [Fathalla Eldali](#)

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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](#)
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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](#)

## Data Acquisition & Analytics Opportunities with UAS – Demonstration at TechAdvantage Expo

As the number and types of sensors on the grid increase, the value for electric cooperatives through data acquisition, management and analysis likewise increases. These sensors include Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), such as drones, which are a popular and powerful means of acquiring a wide variety of field data for analytics and decision-making. NRECA has resources to assist our members in taking full advantage of the data opportunities, including those available with UAS. NRECA **UAS Flight Services** help utilities select the right drone technology and platform to meet their needs and our **UAS Skills Assessment** courses help utilities successfully integrate UAS technology into their operational practices. Find out more through the links below and come **visit NRECA at Booth #223 at TechAdvantage Expo** for a demonstration. You will see how complex field inspections can be accomplished with UAS, including sample videos and images, and examples of the types of data gathered with UAS technology. In addition, industry experts on LiDAR and BVLOS will be at the booth to answer detailed questions.

- [NRECA UAS Course Schedule and Registration](#)
- [More Information on NRECA UAS Course and Flight Services](#)
- [Listing of Sessions at TechAdvantage and PowerXchange with BTS Staff](#)
- Contacts: [Stan McHann](#), [Henry Cano](#) and [Tony Thomas](#)

## Expanded RC3 Cybersecurity Program for Cooperatives

NRECA's *Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities* (RC3) program has evolved from the initial 3-year collaborative partnership between NRECA and the U.S. Department of Energy to become a broader NRECA initiative with a variety of measures aimed to help our members advance their cybersecurity posture. Visit our new website to find an array of resources focused around six key steps to cybersecurity preparedness: Assessment; Incident Response; Exercise Your Skills; Share Information Regularly; Share Information When a Victim; and Train & Repeat. Also, come join us for several workshop sessions and Ask the Expert discussions about cybersecurity at **TechAdvantage® Experience** and **PowerXchange** on March 6-9.

- [RC3 Website](#)
- [Listing of BTS Sessions at TechAdvantage and PowerXchange](#)
- Contacts: [Emma Stewart](#), [Ryan Newlon](#), and [Will Hutton](#)

## 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](#)

## Opportunities to Advance EV Infrastructure

- **RAISE Grant Opportunities for EV Infrastructure**

The 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, and communities eligible for 100% federal grant funding have now been expanded to include rural and persistent poverty areas. While eligible applicants must be a government agency, electric cooperatives may benefit from coordinating with their local government agencies to see how EV infrastructure may be included in projects within their areas. Find out more in this advisory:

- [Advisory](#)
- **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](#)

## DOE Funding Opportunity for Pilot and Full-Scale Carbon Capture Projects

The U.S. Department of Energy has announced a funding opportunity for pilot scale testing and full-scale Front-End Engineering and Design Studies (FEED) at existing natural gas combined cycle (NGCC) plants. FEED studies will complete detailed engineering and cost estimates for retrofitting post combustion CO2 capture technology on an existing natural gas fired unit. NRECA is available to support cooperatives' applications.

Interested cooperatives are asked to contact [Emma Stewart](#), NRECA Chief Scientist, by March 7. More information is available in this advisory:

- [Advisory](#)
- Contacts: [Dan Walsh](#) and [Will Morris](#)

## Infographic: Electrifying Ag

Farms have historically run on fossil fuels, from diesel tractors and irrigation pumps to propane space and water heating for barns. But farmers are beginning to see the cost, convenience and environmental benefits of going electric. Around 80 percent of U.S. farms are in counties served by electric cooperatives, and co-ops across the country are working to help them switch to efficient electric devices. This new infographic in *RE Magazine* details some of the key systems co-ops are promoting for electrifying agricultural operations.

- [Infographic](#)
- Contacts: [Brian Sloboda](#) and [Scot Hoffman](#)

## Co-op Forum: Beneficial Electrification

Increased efficiency, new technologies and a changing fuel mix are making electricity a better, cleaner option for powering homes, farms and businesses. From heat pumps and controllable water heaters to electric-powered light trucks and irrigation systems, transitioning to electricity can lower costs for members, grow load, help the environment and improve the quality of life in local communities. In a recent *RE Magazine* issue, NRECA asked cooperatives about the ways and reasons they are promoting beneficial electrification to their members. Read the insights shared by four cooperatives on the topic:

- [Article](#)
- Contacts: [Brian Sloboda](#) and [Scot Hoffman](#)

## 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](#)

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

## Research Funding Opportunities Webinar – Mar. 16

Join us on **Mar. 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](mailto:ResearchFunding@nreca.coop).

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

## Business Insights Webinars: Indeterminant Loads, Workforce Revolution and Market Segmentation

Join us for our next three Business Insights webinars. In *Assessing Indeterminant Loads* (**March 24, 2-2:50 p.m. ET**), NRECA's Director of Market Rates, Allison Hamilton will lead a discussion on evaluating indeterminant loads and establishing business processes to account for them. 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: [Allison Hamilton](#), [Delaine Orendorff](#) and [Mike Sassman](#)

## 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: [Brianne 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
- [RUS Engineering Seminar - Associated with TechAdvantage](#)  
Virtual Event  
March 29: 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET
- [Cooperative University](#)  
Nashville, TN  
June 20-24

## WEBINAR AND PODCAST OPPORTUNITIES

### Webinars & Virtual Seminars

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

- **Business Insights Webinar: *Assessing Indeterminant Loads***  
March 24, 2-2:50 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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