



Business & Technology Update

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Remembering Ken Macken, Co-op Safety Stalwart



NRECA Director of Safety Programs Ken Macken was a valued member of our Business and Technology Strategies team. He is being remembered by co-op colleagues as a dynamic, positive presence with a gift for connecting with people and inspiring them to talk openly about safe work practices. Macken, 64, passed away Saturday in Oklahoma. Read about Ken and the impact and legacy he leaves on our co-op family.

• [Tribute Article](#)

New Resources and Opportunities

Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise - Project Guardian

Join us **next week on Thursday, April 30 at 1 p.m. ET** for an immersive tabletop exercise, Guardian: Under Siege. This session meticulously deconstructs a real-world ransomware attack on a utility cooperative. Participants will analyze how tactical decisions, even minor ones, impact the safety and security of our vital infrastructure. Explore immediate protocols, available resources, and leadership roles needed to navigate a crisis. As threats grow more sophisticated, collaborative preparation is essential. This deep dive into expert crisis management and coordination is the first of the tabletop exercises to be offered to co-ops through our Project Guardian, a DOE federally funded effort.

• [More Information & Registration](#)

- [Project Guardian Website](#)
 - Contact: membersecurity@nreca.coop
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2026 National Compensation System Available: Same-day Access to Data

One of the most useful salary benchmarking resources in the industry, the National Compensation System (NCS) provides the most comprehensive co-op-specific salary information compiled from NRECA member electric co-ops across the country. Accessible anywhere via your secure cooperative.com login, our point-of-sale feature allows access to the data within minutes! Simply place your order online and pay with a credit card. Order today for \$895.

- [Order the 2026 Distribution NCS](#)
 - [Order the 2026 G&T NCS](#)
 - Contact: [Beth Wray](#)
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Podcast: Unpacking the Surge in U.S. Electricity Demand

After decades of stagnant growth, U.S. power demand is set to jump in the years ahead. Data centers will be a big part of the increase, but other sources could rival those gains. In the latest episode of *Along Those Lines*, we take a closer look at these demand growth drivers with NRECA's Lidija Sekaric and EPRI's David Porter. For a related topic, read RE Magazine's April cover story, *Transmission for Tomorrow*, and learn how many co-ops are bringing transmission projects online to serve the increasing strain on the grid.

- [Podcast](#)
- [RE Magazine April Cover Story: Transmission for Tomorrow](#)

Find more resources on serving large loads and data centers on our topic webpage on cooperative.com. Also, apply to join NRECA's Large Loads and Data Centers Task Force, a peer network focused on helping co-ops navigate the rapid growth of large commercial and industrial loads, particularly data centers.

- [Serving Large Loads Website](#)
 - [Large Loads and Data Centers Task Force Information](#)
 - Contacts: [Lidija Sekaric](#) and [Allison Hamilton](#)
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Cyber Goals Guidance for Co-op Leadership and Practitioners

NRECA has added a new resource to assist co-ops in their participation in our Co-op Cyber Goals Program. This Guide is designed for leadership and practitioners of co-ops to work together, to create shared understanding. Members are encouraged to use this Guide and the other program resources to support their completion of the 20 Cyber Goals.

- [Guide](#)
- [Cyber Goals Program](#)
- Contact: membersecurity@nreca.coop

Upcoming Conferences

NRECA Broadband Leadership Summit

Register today for the NRECA Broadband Leadership Summit, **June 1-3, Washington, D.C.** A free benefit of NRECA Broadband participation, this annual event will provide critical updates on the issues impacting broadband deployment and offer meaningful engagement with peers, NRECA leaders, federal agency staff and other key contacts.

- [More Information and Registration](#)
- Contact: [Loriane Ngarambe](#)

AREGC Conference

Celebrating 75 years of cooperative collaboration, the Association of Rural Electric Generating Cooperatives (AREGC) provides opportunity for industry stakeholders to discuss generation challenges and solutions with their peers. This year's milestone event, happening **June 1-4 in Branson, Missouri**, is hosted by Associated Electric Cooperative and will feature a technical program developed by Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Join more than 200 cooperative and industry professionals for focused discussion on the most pressing issues facing generation. Each day will center on a critical industry priority, with expert-led sessions and panel discussions designed for practical application. Prior to the kick-off Welcome Reception on June 1, there is opportunity to participate in a golf outing at Big Cedar's premier course, [Ozarks National](#), or enjoy a golf cart tour through the [Lost Canyon Cave and Nature Trail](#).

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- [AREGC Website](#)
- Contact: [Dan Walsh](#)

Strengthen Your Organization's Cyber Defenses at Co-op Cyber Tech 2026

Join us for NRECA's Co-op Cyber Tech, **June 3–5, 2026, in Indianapolis**. This three-day conference brings together cybersecurity professionals from electric cooperatives to explore and address the latest cybersecurity challenges facing the industry. With eight workshops and 30 breakout sessions, attendees will gain practical strategies to strengthen systems, safeguard critical infrastructure and build greater cyber resilience. The Cyber Tech Learning Village features new activities focused on skill-building and hands-on learning, while the interactive badges enhance both learning and networking. Don't miss this opportunity to collaborate with peers and connect with industry experts—register today! Secure your reservation at the JW Marriott Indianapolis **by May 7** to take advantage of NRECA's discounted hotel rate.

- [More Information and Registration](#)
- Contact: membersecurity@nreca.coop

2027 TechAdvantage Call for Proposals

TechAdvantage brings together technology leaders, engineers, IT professionals, operations experts, supply chain leaders, broadband professionals and cooperative executives to explore the innovations shaping the future of electric cooperatives. We invite you to share practical solutions, real-world experiences and forward-thinking ideas that will help co-ops navigate rapid technological change at 2027 TechAdvantage, **Feb.14-17, San Diego, Calif.** Your expertise can make a real impact. We encourage you to submit a proposal **by May 22** and be part of this premier industry event.

- [More Information - Overall Review and Selection Criteria](#)
- [Submit Your Proposal](#)
- Contact: [Alison Kent](#)

Professional Development Courses & Webinars

2026 Introduction to Distribution Engineering

Register today for Introduction to Distribution Engineering (IDE) and advance your engineering expertise with a program designed to build practical, real world skills. Developed for early career engineers and experienced electrical technicians, this two part program delivers practical, real-world applications through hands on learning led by seasoned engineering professionals.

- [Introduction to Distribution Engineering](#)
- Contact: [Alison Kent](#)

2026 Power Quality Key Accounts Webinar Series

Register now for the Power Quality Fundamentals for Key Accounts Professionals webinar series and build the confidence to identify power quality issues, interpret symptoms and guide members toward the right solutions. Participants will learn to shift conversations from complaints to collaboration and reinforce your cooperative's value through real-world scenarios.

- [Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Alison Kent](#)

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:

- [751.1 Creating and Supporting a Respectful Workplace](#), May 11 & 12, 1–4 pm ET, Last day to register: May 7
- [723.1 Team Dynamics](#), May 18 & 19, 1–4 pm ET, Last day to register: May 14
- [753.1 Emotional Intelligence Essentials for Supervisors and Managers](#), June 8 & 9, 1–4 pm ET, Last day to register: June 4

- [724.1 Restoring Emotional Safety and Trust in the Workplace](#), June 22 & 23, 1–4 pm ET, Last day to register: June 17

LMS-based courses/ Self-paced, instructor-guided:

- [710.1 Stepping into Your Supervisory Role: Learning to Lead](#), Access Dates: July 1 - 30 (30 days). Last day to register: June 29
- [711.1 Everyone Communicates; Few Connect: Tools for Bridging the Gap](#), Access Dates: July 1 - 30 (30 days). Last day to register: June 29
- [712.1 You Can't Do It Alone: Building a Strong Team](#), Access Dates: July 1 - 30 (30 days). Last day to register: June 29

Self-Paced, On-Demand Courses:

Available for 30 days from date of purchase. Group rates are available.

- [\(760.05\) 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](#) and [Ashley McCants](#)

Discover the value of NRECA membership. Learn More.
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