



Business & Technology Update

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DERMS Toolkit to Assist Co-ops with Decision-Making

To better understand current Distributed Energy Resource Management Systems (DERMS) offerings on the market today, the DER Operational Alignment Working Team — a subgroup of the G&T DER Subcommittee — led the development of a DERMS capabilities survey. With support from NRECA, this survey was issued to vendors with a focus on multitenancy, interoperability, and integration with operational systems like SCADA, AMI, and ADMS. NRECA standardized and analyzed 15 vendors' responses into a new DERMS Toolkit to support consistent co-op-led DERMS evaluation across the country.

- [DERMS Toolkit](#)
 - Contact: DERMS@nreca.coop
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Startup Alley Opportunity at PowerXchange and TechAdvantage

NRECA has an exciting opportunity for small businesses to connect with our co-op members during 2026 PowerXchange and TechAdvantage. Startup Alley will provide a dedicated space in the Expo to early-stage small companies with products and services of value to electric co-ops. This is an unparalleled opportunity to connect with over 8,000 conference attendees, including more than 2,000 co-op leaders and staff. A maximum of 15 companies will be chosen through an application process. Interested startup companies are encouraged to visit our website for more information, and co-ops are encouraged to share this opportunity with startup businesses in their areas. **Deadline for application is November 3 at 10 p.m. CT.**

- [Startup Alley Website](#)
- Contact: startup.alley@nreca.coop

Understanding Large Loads

Electric co-ops are experiencing a new era of load growth – driven by three major types of large electricity user: data centers, new or expanding industrial facilities, and the electrification of transportation vehicle fleets for people and goods. These emerging large loads are arriving faster and at a greater scale than traditional growth, creating significant challenges. Understanding the specific needs of data centers, industrials, and electric vehicle fleets is key to offering tailored solutions that balance competitiveness with long-term system integrity. In addition, internal coordination between distribution cooperatives and their generation and transmission cooperative or other power providers is critical. NRECA's Serving Large Loads report series provides particular focus on the impacts, opportunities and challenges around these three areas for electric cooperatives. The first three reports in the series are now available.

- [Report Series on Understanding Large Loads](#)

Visit cooperative.com for more resources on [Serving Large Loads](#).

- Contacts:
- [Allison Hamilton](#) (Data Centers)
- [Jennah Denney](#) (Electrification of Transportation)
- [Jeffrey Groenewold](#) (Industrial Loads)

Evolving Capabilities and Challenges of Inverter-Based Resources

Historically, most transmission-connected power plants in the United States have been natural gas, coal, nuclear, and hydropower. These synchronous generators typically support grid reliability and stability by providing voltage support, frequency response, inertia, and other services to the grid. Over the last decade, the number of transmission-connected inverter-based resources (IBRs), which include solar, wind, and battery energy storage, has grown rapidly, presenting new challenges to grid reliability and stability. This new article discusses IBRs, including grid-following and grid-forming inverters, and provides important considerations for co-ops when deciding whether this technology could be beneficial for their systems.

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

Insights to the DER Landscape

The growth of distributed energy resources (DER) is increasing grid complexity and changing member expectations. Co-ops are evaluating infrastructure and operations to accommodate the modernization and electrification of these emerging technologies. Our new report provides an overview of the state of DER and the related opportunities and challenges for electric co-ops.

- [Report](#)
 - Contact: [Jeffrey Groenewold](#)
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TDEC Guide for Transmission Line Grounding

The recently updated *Guide for Transmission Line Grounding - Signposts for Designing Effective Grounding Systems* was developed by the Transmission & Distribution Engineering Committee (TDEC) Transmission Subcommittee. It is meant to provide useful, practical information applicable to designing effective grounding systems for electric transmission lines to: (1) manage steady state and fault currents, and (2) enhance safety and reliability by reducing lightning outages due to insulator flashover. It contains recommendations and signposts to help guide the engineer in designing effective grounding systems. An overview is provided in this new advisory and the full Guide is available through the link below.

- [Advisory](#)
 - [Guide](#)
 - Contact: [Patti Metro](#)
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NRECA Membership in NEETRAC Brings Value for Co-ops

The National Electric Energy Testing Research and Applications Center (NEETRAC) is a self-supporting, membership-based center within the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Georgia Tech that aims to help the electric utility industry solve the everyday problems associated with the complex task of transmitting and distributing electric energy reliably and efficiently. NRECA has an established membership with NEETRAC, allowing our members to benefit from this organization's research and reporting and have engagement opportunities. Find out more in this new advisory, and visit our updated website to access the NEETRAC resources.

- [Advisory](#)
 - [NRECA NEETRAC Website](#)
 - Contact: [David Farmer](#)
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New Executive Search Website

Are you a board looking for your cooperative's next CEO? Are you an experienced utility professional looking for your next career opportunity? NRECA's Executive Search services offer personalized solutions tailored to your cooperative's needs. We help boards find the most qualified CEOs and senior staff and connect high caliber candidates with leadership opportunities that are the right fit. Visit our new Executive Search website, designed to provide you with the information you need in a format that is easy to navigate. Here you can learn more about the services our Executive Search team offers, including executive coaching, performance management and a variety of services that can be customized to meet your unique needs. Check it out and let us know what you think by emailing: Leigh.Taylor@nreca.coop.

- [NRECA Executive Search Website](#)
 - Contact: [Leigh Taylor](#)
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2025 National Benefits Survey Results Now Available

Conducted bi-annually, NRECA's National Benefits Survey (NBS) collects data from NRECA member distribution systems, G&Ts and statewide associations to help benchmark the benefits these systems provide and the costs

associated with those benefits. In addition to the comprehensive data included in previous editions, the 2025 reports take a deeper look into the employee experience, including alternative work schedules and innovative benefit programs. NRECA members who participated in the survey received a complimentary executive summary and are eligible to purchase the full NBS results at a discounted rate of \$550. Non-participating NRECA voting members may purchase the 2025 NBS for \$950.

- [More Information & Order Form](#)
- Contact: NBS@nreca.coop

2025 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 \$795.

- [Order the 2025 Distribution NCS](#)
- [Order the 2025 G&T NCS](#)
- Contact: [Beth Wray](#)

Upcoming Webinars

Energy Storage for Rural Resilience – Lessons Learned: Sept. 23

Join us for this free webinar on **September 23 at 1 p.m. ET** to learn how five NRECA member co-ops began planning their first-ever energy storage projects through the Energy Storage for Rural Resilience initiative. With support from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, co-ops received tailored technical assistance, regulatory guidance, and techno-economic analysis to assess feasibility and shape bold ideas into actionable plans.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Steph Joven](#)

Fire Mitigation Through System Hardening: Sept. 25

Wildfires have become an increasing threat to public safety and grid infrastructure. To help mitigate these risks, utilities are adopting advanced recloser controller settings that allow real-time adjustments based on changing conditions. Sponsored by NRECA Associate Member, G&W Electric, register for next week's session, **September 25 at 2 p.m. ET**, to review recloser strategies that can provide flexibility and adaptability, allowing you to better face the challenges of diverse grid environments and evolving wildfire risk conditions.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Patti Metro](#)

Co-op Economic Outlook Webinar: Oct. 8

Join NRECA economic and investment professionals **October 8, 2-3 p.m. ET**, as they lead the next session of the Co-op Economic Outlook Webinar Series. They'll highlight the issues that are shaping the economic health of electric cooperative communities served by electric co-ops in 2025 including macroeconomic drivers and their implications for local economies, insights on economic growth and more. Don't miss this popular free series covering the latest trends and implications for rural areas and the broader U.S. economy.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Michael Leitman](#)

EVs and Electric Co-ops – Planning for the Future: Oct. 9

Electric vehicles present both challenges and opportunities for electric cooperatives — from new loads that can strain distribution systems to new avenues for member engagement and flexible demand management. Join us for this webinar on **October 9 at 2 p.m. ET** for insights into current EV adoption, examine the impacts on co-op systems and highlight scenario planning methods that help utilities anticipate tipping points before they occur. Drawing on real co-op projects, speakers will share practical insights on forecasting, regulatory adaptation and member programs designed to support a smooth transition to electrified transportation.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Jennah Denny](#)

Powering Data Centers – Navigating the Full Life Cycle: Oct. 9 & 30, Nov. 13

Join us for an upcoming webinar designed to provide key accounts professionals with insights on how best to support data centers from initial inquiry through long-term operation. Participate in three focused panel discussions featuring distribution and generation and transmission cooperatives actively engaged in this space. Whether you're managing your first colocation site or working with hyperscale clients, you'll explore practical strategies, lessons learned and challenges to help you better understand the development process and make informed decisions for your cooperative. Continuing education credit hours for Certified Key Account Executive certification are available.

- Panel 1: Intake and Initial Evaluation Process – Oct. 9 at 1 p.m. ET
- Panel 2: Infrastructure Development and Project Execution – Oct. 30 at 1 p.m. ET
- Panel 3: Rates, Billing, and Long-Term Supply – Nov. 13 at 1 p.m. ET

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Charu Gupta](#)

Cooperative Tech Insights Webinar Series: Oct. 23

Join us **October 23 at 2 p.m. ET** for our next free Cooperative Tech Insights webinar and hear Adrian McNamara, Cybersecurity Program Manager, review NRECA's Industrial Control Systems for Rural Electric

- [Co-op Tech Insights Webinars Website](#)
- [ICS-REC Program Website](#)
- Contact: [Adrian McNamara](#)

The Best of 2025 Co-op Cyber Tech: Oct. 30

Register for this webinar happening **October 30 at 1 p.m. ET** when we will highlight three standout sessions from NRECA's recent 2025 Co-op Cyber Tech. Whether you're looking to elevate your communication, support your team's well-being, or transform your training programs, don't miss this powerful blend of expert insight, practical tools, and forward-thinking strategies to help co-ops enhance their cybersecurity posture. Plus, we will be joined by this year's Science Fair winner, who will present and discuss her award-winning poster.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Ryan Newlon](#)

GridEx VIII in Action – Uncanny Valley REA Simulated Exercise: Nov. 18

Join NRECA's Cybersecurity Member Advisory Group (CSMAG) on **November 18 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET** for this immersive webinar designed specifically for electric co-op leaders new to GridEx. Don't miss this opportunity to observe the CSMAG as they play fictional utility — Uncanny Valley REA — as it navigates a GridEX VIII simulation tailored to the realities of small and medium-sized co-ops. **Stay with us immediately following the simulated exercise** for a one-hour roundtable discussion and Q&A session, hosted by the NRECA Cybersecurity team in collaboration with our CSMAG. Separate registration required.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Meredith Miller](#)

Upcoming Conferences

2025 Cooperative University: Build Your Professional Network and Your Skills

Join us **October 6-10 in Plano, Texas** for the professional development and networking event for all electric co-op employees. With courses offered across three NRECA professional programs (SMDP, CCEP and CKAE®), you can select from various co-op-specific courses based on core, role-specific and supervisory, management and leadership competencies to enhance your business and technology skillset all in one location—minimizing cost to your co-op.

- [Schedule of Courses](#) *(Note that some classes are full)*
 - [Information and Registration](#)
 - Contact: [Diane Rhodes-Michaely](#)
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2025 G&T Resource Planning Association Conference

Register for the [G&T Resource Planning Association Conference](#), **October 14-16 in Denver, Colorado**. Hosted by [Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association](#), presentation topics include modeling software, resource adequacy, emerging technologies and more. Network with co-op colleagues and gain insight into the top issues within the G&T industry.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Allison Hamilton](#)

2026 Power Resilience Forum

The Power Resilience Forum, which will be held **January 21–23, 2026 in Houston, Texas**, is bringing together utilities, technology companies, policymakers, and investors to discuss solutions for strengthening the power grid against extreme weather and wildfire risks. NRECA is proud to be a partner for the event and has secured a 25% discount for our members - use code “NRECA25” at checkout.

- [More Information & Registration](#)
- Contact: [Lidija Sekaric](#)

Professional Development Courses for Cooperatives

Career Essentials and Management Development Programs

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

Learning Management System online courses:

- [5307.05 Improve Your Relationships: Strategies to Overcome Challenging Behavior and People](#) – September 24 at 12-4 p.m. ET. Last Day to Register: September 23.
- [5308.05 Getting Comfortable Giving and Receiving Feedback](#) – October 15 at 12-4 p.m. ET
- [744.05: Coaching Your Team Members: Unlocking Potential and Facilitating Growth](#) – November 3 at 1-4 p.m. ET. Last day to register: October 30 (Note that this course is a ½-credit course; one session only.)
- [754.1: Advanced Application of Emotional Intelligence: Strategic Leadership Development](#) – November 3 & 4 at 1-4 p.m. ET. Last day to register: October 30 IMPORTANT: Participants must take the prerequisite course (753.1) Emotional Intelligence Essentials for Supervisors and Managers before enrolling in this course.
- [725.1 From Hire to Fire: Connecting Law, Ethics, and Teams](#) – new course – November 17 & 18, 1-4 p.m. ET. Last day to register: November 13

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](#)
- [\(5112.05\) The Data-Driven Electric Co-op: Using Analytics to Make Better Decisions](#)
- [\(5113.05\) Ratemaking for Electric Cooperatives](#)
- [\(5135.05\) 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](#)

- [5110.1 Fundamentals of Business Writing](#) – Available October 1-31 *Note: This is an instructor facilitated course. Registrants will have assignments throughout the course that will receive feedback from the instructor throughout the duration of the class.

The [full schedule](#) is available for the 2025 [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.

- [Full 2025 Course Schedule](#)
- Contact for SMDP: [Diane Rhodes-Michaely](#)
- Contact for CCEP: [Danielle Jackson](#)

Discover the value of NRECA membership. Learn More.
Newsletter provided by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
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