America’s Electric Cooperatives

From booming suburbs to remote rural communities, America’s electric cooperatives are energy providers and engines of economic development. Electric cooperatives play a vital role in transforming communities.

Cooperatives power 56% of the nation’s landmass.

Own and maintain 42% (2.7 million miles) of U.S. electric distribution lines that serve our communities.

Serve 42 million people across 2,500+ counties, including 92% of persistent poverty counties.

Power over 20 million businesses, homes, schools and farms in 48 states.

In 2019, America’s electric co-ops returned more than $1.3 billion in capital credits to their consumer-members.

832 distribution cooperatives are the foundation of the electric cooperative network. They were built by and serve co-op members in the community with the delivery of electricity and other services.

63 generation & transmission cooperatives provide wholesale power to distribution co-ops through their own electric generation facilities or by purchasing power on behalf of the distribution members.
Electricity use and energy mix

Co-ops rely on a diverse energy mix to ensure a reliable, affordable and responsible electricity supply that meets the needs of their consumer-members. More than two-thirds of the electricity delivered by co-ops to members comes from low- or zero-carbon sources.

Co-op Retail Fuel Mix 2014, 2016-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Coal</th>
<th>Renewable</th>
<th>Nuclear</th>
<th>Natural Gas</th>
<th>Oil, Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helping rural communities respond to COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, co-ops worked tirelessly to support their communities by keeping the lights on and finding new ways to lend a hand. Since the start of the pandemic co-ops have:

- Provided COVID testing and hosted vaccination clinics in high-demand areas
- Donated masks and hand sanitizer
- Established free wifi hotspots for students and families working from home
- Donated laptops to schools
- Delivered meals in their communities
Co-ops are reducing emissions …

Cleaner air
Cooperatives are meeting member expectations by reducing emissions through a combination of emission-reduction measures at power plants and fuel switching to natural gas and renewables.

Co-ops have:

- Reduced sulphur dioxide emissions 83.8% from 2005-2020.
- Reduced nitrogen oxide emissions 67.9% from 2005-2020.
- Reduced carbon dioxide emissions 23% from 2005-2020.

... and jump starting renewable energy growth

- From 2010 to 2020, co-ops nearly tripled their renewable capacity from 3.9 gigawatts to more than 11.4 gigawatts.
- Co-ops added more new renewable capacity in 2020, nearly 1.6 GW, than in any previous year.
- Electric co-ops have deployed enough wind and solar capacity to serve nearly 2.7 million homes.
- Co-ops have announced more than 6.4 GW of new renewable capacity additions planned from 2021-2024.
- Co-ops purchase 10 GW of hydropower from federal power marketing administrations and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Cumulative Co-op Renewable Capacity, Owned and Under Contract

![Graph of cumulative co-op renewable capacity](image-url)
Electric cooperatives are hubs of innovation

As co-ops meet tomorrow’s energy needs, they invest in the future of their communities.

**Broadband:** More than 200 co-ops are developing or planning to deploy broadband service to their members, giving them access to telehealth services, online learning, remote work and new possibilities for local businesses.

**Smart Meters:** Electric cooperatives lead the industry in smart meter deployment, with a 73% penetration rate of AMI meters, compared to 58% for the rest of the industry.

**Energy Storage:** Cooperatives have developed more than 50 energy storage projects, ranging from residential batteries to large utility-scale projects paired with renewable generation. Storage is an important element of microgrids, including on military installations.

**Carbon Capture:** Electric cooperatives are partners in more than $30 million in innovative carbon capture technology research projects.

The cooperative difference

Electric co-ops are local energy and technology partners. Consumer-owned and not for profit, they are shaped by the specific needs of the communities they serve. This local, member-driven structure is one reason why cooperatives enjoy the highest consumer-satisfaction scores within the electric industry, according to J.D. Power and Associates and the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

- Electric cooperatives are built by and belong to the communities they serve. They are led by members from the community and are uniquely suited to meet local needs.
- Co-ops earned the highest average score and had 5 of the top 7 satisfaction scores among all types of electric utilities in the J.D. Power and Associates 2020 Utility Customer Satisfaction Study.
- Electric cooperatives, on average, score higher than all other electric companies, according to the 2021 American Customer Satisfaction Index.

Source: NRECA