

2021 NRECA Annual Report

#### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**



- 4 Letter from NRECA President Chris Christensen
- Letter from NRECA CEO Jim Matheson
- 2021 NRECA Board of Directors
- Advocating for Co-ops and Communities We Serve
- Expanding Benefit Programs to Care for Your Workforce
- Protecting the Nation's Energy Supply
- 14 Creating Workforce Solutions for Today and the Future
- Continuing Our Reputation for Leadership
- Delivering Education That Works for You
- 20 Driving Energy Innovation
- Supporting Rural Broadband
- Keeping You Ahead of the Curve
- Financials
- Thank You to Our Members
- Photo Credits and Disclaimers
- NRECA Contact Information



## TRUSTED PARTNER

This past year saw many challenges for our cooperatives—the continuing pandemic, a fractured political climate and numerous natural disasters wreaking havoc on our systems. Through it all, I am proud of the resilience of our network and how our national association has adapted to provide much-needed leadership and services to meet those needs.

I am pleased to share with you the results of this leadership in 2021 to assist our co-ops by fighting for co-op priorities in Washington; leading the cooperative response to growing cyber threats; adapting healthcare benefits; educational opportunities and communications in the face of a pandemic and working hand-in-hand with co-ops to create new tools that support future-forward strategies.

This report is a reminder of the immense value that comes from being part of NRECA and the cooperative network. I am thankful for NRECA's leadership and staff, who work diligently each day to meet the evolving needs of our nearly 900 electric cooperatives. I'm also grateful for all those in our co-op family who continue to build on our strong relationships and demonstrate cooperation among cooperatives.

I heard a speaker at a recent NRECA conference say that the pace of change has never been this fast and never again will be this slow. In these times, our association is a trusted partner in navigating change, and our continued commitment to the co-op principles will help guide NRECA and ultimately make us stronger.

**Chris Christensen, NRECA President** 



#### SHARED STRENGTH

The strength of electric cooperatives was on full display in 2021. Together, we secured important wins on Capitol Hill, accelerated energy innovation across rural America, empowered the cooperative workforce and much more.

As a result, we enhanced the standing of America's electric cooperatives in Washington and in the thousands of communities you serve across the nation. And the fact that we achieved this during the pandemic makes it all the more noteworthy.

All of this was possible because NRECA members worked together to find a common voice and solve important problems, a direct reflection of the co-op business model in action.

A sharp focus on meeting today's needs and assessing future possibilities has made NRECA stronger. This annual report reflects our cumulative work on your behalf and reflects our commitment to serve your cooperative with excellence.

The past year was an extraordinary test of leadership on many levels: of resilience, of change management, of collaboration and of vision for our future at a complex time in our history. Our connection to you—our members—and a strategic focus on organizational effectiveness and managing change has significantly strengthened our national organization.

The cooperative business model is well positioned to realize value for co-op members and the communities they serve. I'm excited to join you in building that future.

Jim Matheson, NRECA Chief Executive Officer

#### **2021 NRECA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

(As of Dec. 31, 2021)



From left to right: Anthony Anderson, Chris Christensen and Joe Martin.

#### **BOARD OFFICERS**

**Chris Christensen**President | Montana

**Anthony Anderson** Vice President | Michigan

**Joe Martin** Secretary-Treasurer | Colorado

**Anthony Anderson** | Michigan Barry Bernstein | Vermont **Danny Berthelot** | Louisiana Mike Brown | Delaware Phil Carson | Illinois Bryan Case | Idaho Chris Christensen | Montana **Ken Colburn** | New Hampshire **Mel Coleman** | Arkansas Olin Davis, III | Maryland Marion Denger | lowa Kevin Doddridge | Mississippi Norris Fowler | South Carolina Scott Hallowell | Maine Chris Hamon | Missouri David Hembree | Alabama Gene Herritt | Pennsylvania Mark Hofer | South Dakota **David Iha** | Hawaii **Lynn Jacobson** | North Dakota Kerry Kelton | Texas J. Ingrid Kessler | Oregon Randy Kleaving | Indiana Meera Kohler | Alaska

John Lee, Jr. | Virginia Tom Madsen | New Jersey Joe Martin | Colorado Tom McQuiston | Ohio Galen Mills | Georgia Patrick Morse | Kansas Fred Nelson | California Curtis Nolan | Arizona Randy Papenhausen | Nebraska Mike Partin | Tennessee Jeff Peterson | Utah Reuben Ritthaler | Wyoming **Daniel Saulsgiver** | New York C.B. Sharp | West Virginia **Chuck Simmons** | Wisconsin Kelley Smith | Florida Tim Smith | Oklahoma **Donnie Spivey\*** | North Carolina David Spradlin | New Mexico Carolyn Turner | Nevada Tim Velde | Minnesota **Steve Walter** | Washington Mike I. Williams | Kentucky Jeffery Wright | Rhode Island

Curtis Wynn\* | North Carolina

\*Donnie Spivey completed the director's term for former NRECA President Curtis Wynn upon his resignation on Dec. 13, 2021.

## ADVOCATING FOR CO-OPS AND COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

NRECA served as a powerful voice for America's electric cooperatives in Washington in 2021, yielding progress on co-op priorities. None was more significant than passage of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The legislation provides billions in funding and programs to help meet critical needs of electric coops and communities we serve.

#### \$1.2 TRILLION **INFRASTRUCTURE BILL**

NRECA worked tirelessly to ensure co-op priorities were addressed in the final legislation, ultimately yielding 27 funding opportunities for the advancement of key co-op programs and tremendous potential for members and their communities.

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE RESOURCE HUB**

To help co-op leaders stay informed and evaluate funding opportunities, NRECA launched a voting member reference section on cooperative.com. Through this resource and other efforts, NRECA is a strong partner and advocate for co-ops seeking to leverage these funds.

> **\$65 BILLION** Broadband Mapping Projects

\$10 BILLION Grid Modernization & Resiliency Grants

BILLION **EV** Charging Infrastructure & **Electric School** Bus Funding

Deployment &

ALLEVIATING SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTION

NRECA's outreach to the White House and federal agencies helped identify potential stress points and ease some supply chain shortages for cooperatives.

> \$250 **MILLION**

**TRILLION** 

**INFRASTRUCTURE** 

BILL

**Grants for Physical** & Cybersecurity Programs for Rural & Municipal Utilities

BILLION Carbon Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS) Demonstration

**Projects** 

**f** f am writing...to urge your administration to take immediate action to alleviate supply chain delays and bottlenecks negatively impacting electric cooperatives...

-Jim Matheson, CEO December 2021 letter to President Joe Biden

8 | 2021 NRECA Annual Report

# EXPANDING BENEFIT PROGRAMS TO CARE FOR YOUR WORKFORCE

NRECA continuously evaluates the marketplace and member feedback to provide benefit products and resources that can help improve quality of life for plan participants. After analyzing participant medical claim data reflecting high incidences of joint and spine care and an increasing need for mental health care access, NRECA expanded the medical plan's Centers of Excellence and Life Strategy Counseling programs.



### NRECA'S LIFE STRATEGY COUNSELING PROGRAM

Comprehensive Online Resources and 24/7 Phone Access to a Counselor or Representative

Through this program, callers can be referred to a local counselor for up to five in-person consultations with no participant cost.

PROGRAM USAGE INCREASED BY MORE THAN 15 TIMES over prior year's engagement through unique website visitors and calls to program counselors.



## NRECA MEDICAL PLAN'S CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

Joint and Spine Surgery Option

Through the new joint and spine surgery option, participants have access to a dedicated care coordinator, renowned doctors and medical facilities across the country, along with travel benefits to help ensure high-quality treatment options for orthopedic procedures.

#### **■** CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR CO-OP COMMUNITIES

In 2021, NRECA continued to cover the administration costs for FDA-approved COVID-19 tests and vaccines as they became available, with no participant cost share.



Over 37,000 COVID-19 vaccines administered\*



Over 49,000 COVID-19 tests administered\*

\*Actual numbers may be higher due to the administration process for tests and vaccines and reporting to NRECA.

Note: All numbers reflect data through the end of 2021 as reported to/through NRECA and its vendors.

# PROTECTING THE NATION'S ENERGY SUPPLY

NRECA increased cybersecurity awareness and education efforts in 2021 with cyber threats on the rise worldwide, new vulnerabilities ushered in by hybrid work and utilities becoming targets for adversaries. Government funding and advocacy wins facilitated the advancement of NRECA's Essence 2.0 tool, including expansion of the technology for use across all utilities to help detect threats and defend the nation's energy supply.





## FIRST NON-GOVERNMENT SYSTEM TO CONNECT WITH DOE'S CYBER RISK PROGRAM

The Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) awarded NRECA a two-year, \$3.9 million grant to support deployment and information sharing using Essence as the first system to connect to PNNL's Cybersecurity Risk Information Sharing Program (CRISP).

### EXPANSION TO THE BROADER INFRASTRUCTURE COMMUNITY

To help defend America's energy supply, Essence 2.0 technology was expanded for use by other utility cybersecurity and operating engineers to help protect information technology and operating technology systems against unknown, emerging threats.



## \$5 MILLION DOE AWARD TO ADVANCE GRID SECURITY

In 2021, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced it would award \$5 million to NRECA to further the administration's 100-day initiative to secure the grid. The award will enable NRECA member co-ops and technology vendors to deploy technologies that provide cyber visibility, detection and response capabilities for industrial control systems.

## ESSENCE MEETS BIDEN ADMINISTRATION'S 100-DAY CYBERSECURITY REQUIREMENTS

Following a White House Executive Order to modernize federal government defenses and address escalating cyber threats, the administration's voluntary 100-day initiative was launched to improve the security of critical infrastructure, beginning with efforts to protect the nation's grid. Essence 2.0 is one of two technologies meeting all government requirements at that time to support the program.

## CREATING WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS FOR TODAY AND THE FUTURE

With co-op culture, talent acquisition and workforce development top of mind across the co-op network, NRECA and Touchstone Energy® Cooperative launched Phase 2 of the Young Adult Member Engagement (YAME 2) initiative. The program helps co-ops develop and nurture a workforce that can meet evolving member expectations and adapt to the changing energy industry.

MEMBER USE OF THE YAME 2 RESOURCE HUB

communications resources. —Co-op Communications Survey Respondent

YAME—particularly part 2 with internal

Thank you for all the work on

4,839 unique visitors



### CUSTOMIZABLE RESOURCES ON COOPERATIVE.COM/YAME

Resources for co-op leaders, communicators and HR professionals include:

- Recruitment and onboarding tools.
- Checklists and sample plans.
- Communication resources for new and tenured employees.
- Examples of successful co-op programs.



## YAME PHASE 2 TRAINING SNAPSHOT

NRECA and Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, Inc. empowered co-ops to use YAME 2 resources through a combination of webinars, national conference programming, statewide conference training sessions and individual co-op education.

## **CONTINUING OUR** REPUTATION FOR **LEADERSHIP**

The political climate in 2021 proved tumultuous and exceptionally partisan. Despite these conditions, a Ballast Research policymaker study revealed NRECA's reputation score as the highest among energy industry associations, ranking NRECA as one of the most influential trade organizations in Washington. With a commitment to elevating issues most important to our members and their communities, we explored new ways to cement NRECA as the trusted industry resource among policymakers, journalists and other influencers.





Focusing on energy influencers and policymakers inside the Beltway, NRECA used display ads, direct advertising and social media to position America's electric cooperatives among national opinion leaders.

America's Electric Cooperatives

Electric cooperatives are partnering with consumer-members to expand energy innovation in their communities.

COMMUNITY.



TOTAL REACH: 4.6 million views (April-October)



**Energy Association Peers** 

NRECA continues to be one of the most influential associations in Washington.

-Ballast Research 2021

#### **TOP-RANKING INDUSTRY** VOICE

Across all associations studied, NRECA ranks 3rd out of 34 in representing the voices of members and the entire industry.

Source: Ballast Research 2021

#### **INFLUENCE THROUGH EARNED MEDIA**

NRECA's media outreach efforts led to:

135 media placements including online, print and broadcast news.

\$1.3 million in value for broadcast media coverage.

113 million people reached.

#### **VOICES FOR COOPERATIVE POWER**

NRECA launched a modern grassroots strategy to build a network of advocates who support co-op priorities. Leveraging social media to recruit electric co-op champions across 36 states by year's end yielded:

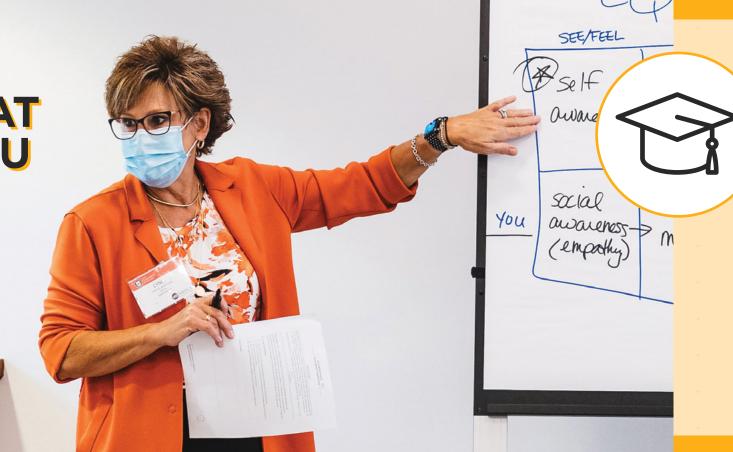
**77,310** advocates.

**16.6** million impressions.

**3.9** million views.

DELIVERING EDUCATION THAT WORKS FOR YOU

Choice and flexibility were essential elements of NRECA's education and events strategy as we designed and delivered high-quality learning experiences to help our members achieve professional and organizational development goals in 2021. Keeping pace with member preferences, we expanded our portfolio to offer more online options, including new hybrid and blended learning solutions. In August, we resumed high-impact, in-person learning and events that empower co-op leaders and staff to effectively guide their organizations into the future.



EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EVENTS METRICS

31,964

Total NRECA education program participants.

158%

Year-over-year increase in NRECA's online program offerings.



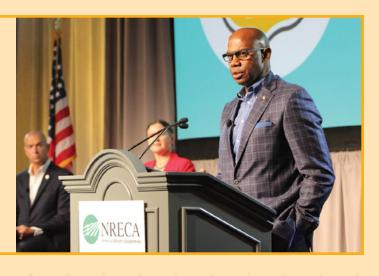


## NEW BLENDED LEARNING FORMAT FOR MIP AND CLCP

NRECA's Management Internship Program (MIP) and Certified Loss Control Professional Program (CLCP) shifted to a blended learning format, combining a mix of in-person sessions and online learning components to add variety and enrich the member learning experience.

#### HYBRID REGIONAL MEETINGS FACILITATE INTERACTION AND ENGAGEMENT

The hybrid format of the regional meetings enabled voting members to choose in-person or online participation, delivering a fully interactive member experience across nominating committees, regional resolutions committees and business meetings.



## DRIVING ENERGY INNOVATION

NRECA partnered with co-ops, technology providers and research entities to boost innovation in 2021. With the abundance of data available through grid modernization and advanced technology, the collaborations focused on solutions that helped enable co-ops to leverage data as an asset and decision-making tool.





#### **■ DRONES HELP MITIGATE WILDFIRES**

NRECA supported our members' wildfire mitigation efforts, connecting unmanned aerial systems technology and co-ops' geographic information systems to fly light detection and ranging (LiDAR) and RGB data acquisition missions to help locate vegetation and equipment issues before they cause a fire.



## PREDICTING ELECTRIC VEHICLE ADOPTION

NRECA joined forces with two generation and transmission members and the University of California, Davis to develop an interactive tool that predicts and maps EV adoption. The scenario-based technology helps co-ops strategically plan for infrastructure development and consumerfacing EV programs with access to 15 years of adoption forecasting data.

## DATA STRATEGY AND TECHNOLOGY PLANNING

NRECA offers customizable technology management solutions to effectively address challenges and leverage opportunities associated with the integrated grid. NRECA Consulting Services assisted Continental Divide Electric Cooperative (CDEC) in the development of a comprehensive data and technology plan, leveraging broadband deployment and the transition toward a modernized and more secure grid. The technology strategy will help CDEC improve reliability, increase metering accuracy and achieve higher consumer-member satisfaction.



NRECA joins CDEC staff at their office in Grants, New Mexico for a technology planning discussion.

## SUPPORTING RURAL BROADBAND

Demand for high-speed internet access across rural America continued in 2021, fueled by remote work, distance learning and social use of virtual meeting technology. As a result, interest grew across the coop network regarding entry into the broadband space. NRECA supported member co-ops in varying stages of broadband development for their community, from advocating for co-op access to a record level of federal and state funding to providing insights and timely guidance on utility and community digitalization issues.

#### **IELECTRIC CO-OP BROADBAND PARTICIPATION**

200+ Co-ops Offering Broadband in 39 States\* 100+ Co-ops Exploring Deployment Feasibility



## RAISING STANDARDS, EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR RECONNECT

NRECA successfully advocated for key program changes that will better position co-ops seeking funding in round three of the ReConnect loan and grant program, including:

- Modifying the definition of a served area to 100/20 Mbps from 10/1 Mbps.
- Prioritizing applications from cooperatives and other not-for-profit entities.
- Allowing applications to serve previously funded areas if they lack 100/20 Mbps service.

### HELPING CO-OPS LEVERAGE OPPORTUNITIES

To meet the needs of members in varying stages of broadband readiness, NRECA provided:

- Guidance on broadband issues through statewide briefings, webinars and events.
- Feasibility resources, including planning tools, market analysis and mapping assistance.
- Regulatory compliance strategies.

## 2021 BROADBAND AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUMMIT

Nearly 300 participants attended the interactive event, held in partnership with the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative (NRTC) The summit helped co-ops assess the value of leveraging high-bandwidth backbone investments to deliver broadband to the communities they serve.

broadband as of Dec. 2021.

## KEEPING YOU AHEAD OF THE CURVE

NRECA continued its commitment to keep members informed and engaged in 2021, delivering timely information and expert guidance through multiple channels. We convened members with purpose, facilitating valuable dialogues and shared experiences to support co-op business continuity in uncertain times.





## CONTINUED GROWTH FOR "ALONG THOSE LINES" PODCAST

NRECA launched Along Those Lines in 2018, providing listeners a convenient, engaging way to stay informed on issues that matter most to America's electric cooperatives. From battery storage to storm recovery to diversity, equity and inclusion, the podcast has helped elevate energy industry issues and educate thousands of listeners nationwide.

## RE MAGAZINE REDESIGNED WITH MEMBERS IN MIND

NRECA launched the first edition of this reimagined flagship publication in April. Based on member feedback, RE Magazine's design and content changes include a monthly infographic, additional visuals and more focus on small and mid-sized co-ops.

The redesign drove a surge in RE Magazine-related traffic on cooperative.com (April-December 2021):

166,636 total pageviews | 33% increase year-over-year.

105,044 article views | 31% increase year-over-year.



### LEVERAGING VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT

NRECA provided subject matter expertise on key issues and strengthened relationships across our membership with recurring, strategic touchpoints, including:

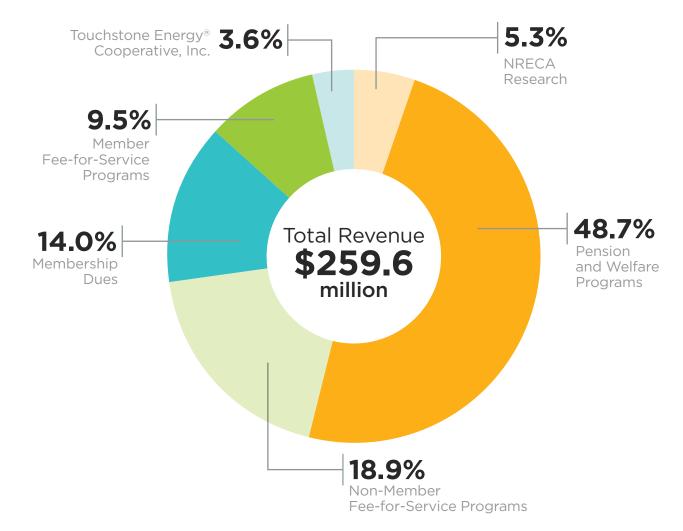
- Leadership Town Halls with Jim Matheson.
- Power Hour: Communications Webinar Series, a Collaboration with Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, Inc.
- Cooperative Leadership Meetings: Statewide Leaders/Generation and Transmission Leaders.

## 2021 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

[THE ASSOCIATION]

#### **SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS (REVENUE BY SOURCE)**

NRECA ended 2021 with total revenue of \$259.6 million and total operating expenses of \$254.8 million before the Retirement Security (RS) Plan Voluntary Contribution Acceleration Program (VCAP) payment. After the VCAP payment, NRECA ended 2021 with a net margin of \$96,000.



### **REVENUE**



Membership Dues \$36.3 million

Membership programs consist of government relations, communications, business and technology strategies and other programs. Dues and other income for the year of \$36.3 million partially funded the \$40.3 million cost of these programs. NRECA funded the remaining \$4.0 million from margins earned on fee-for-service programs.



\$24.7 million

Non-Member Programs

\$49.0 million

Revenue of \$24.7 million was generated from member fee-for-service programs, including annual and regional meetings, TechAdvantage®, training and conferences, consulting and *RE Magazine*. These programs ended the year with a net expense of \$679,000.

Revenue of \$49.0 million was generated from non-member fee-for-service programs, including the buildings owned by NRECA, fees for managing the Homestead Funds and NRECA International. These non-member programs ended the year with a net margin of \$9.5 million.



Pension and Welfare Programs

\$126.4 million

Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, Inc.

\$9.5 million

NRECA Research

\$13.7 million

NRECA is the plan sponsor and plan administrator of three multiple employer plans. NRECA provides plan administration services on a cost reimbursable basis. Office space is provided at market rates.

NRECA provides administrative services to Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup> Cooperative, Inc. on a cost reimbursable basis. Office space is provided at market rates.

NRECA Research conducts research to accelerate technological innovation, which is primarily funded by member research dues, federal contracts and cooperative agreements. Revenue is recognized to the extent program expenses are incurred.

Financial information is preliminary and may change. Expanded financial information is available at electric.coop/annualreport.

## 2021 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

#### [NRECA MULTIPLE EMPLOYER PLANS]

The pension and welfare programs administered by NRECA consist of three multiple employer plans: the RS Plan, the 401(k) Pension Plan and the Group Benefits Program. During 2021, NRECA remained committed to controlling costs while delivering high-quality products and services to member cooperatives and participants.

		Retirement Security Plan	401(k) Pension Plan	Group Benefits Program	Totals
	Net Assets	\$11.6 billion	\$15.3 billion	<b>\$748.9</b> million	<b>\$27.6</b> billion
	Contributions/ Premiums	<b>\$1.0</b> billion	<b>\$913.1</b> million	<b>\$707.4</b> million	<b>\$2.6</b> billion
	Benefits Paid	<b>\$2.1</b> billion	<b>\$1.1</b> billion	<b>\$673.5</b> * million	<b>\$3.9</b> billion
	Plan Paid Administrative Expenses	\$30.7 million	<b>\$40.6</b> million	<b>\$34.3</b> million	<b>\$105.6</b> million

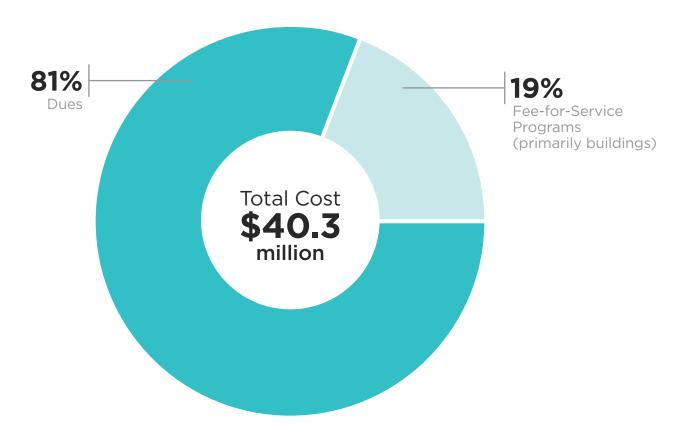
\*Includes \$37.9 million in insurance premium payments.

Financial information is preliminary and may change. Expanded financial information is available at electric.coop/annualreport.

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

Dues paid to the Association cover approximately 81% of the cost to run these programs, and the remaining approximately 19% is subsidized by fee-for-service programs, primarily rental income margins from the buildings.

#### **FUNDING SOURCES**



#### THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS

To the valued members of our electric cooperative family:

Thank you for your continued trust, partnership
and commitment to make a difference in
the communities you serve in 2021.















### **PHOTO CREDITS**

FRONT COVER PHOTO BY: Roger Lawien
Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative

2 Trucks on Bridge: Tim Webb

**8** Electric Vehicle: Joey Calabrese; Jim Matheson: Denny Gainer; Transformers: RESCO

**10** Man on Computer with Headset: Getty Images/fizkes

**12** Essence 2.0 Cybersecurity Technology Simulation: Leanna Crumpler, Wake Electric Membership Corporation

14 Office Meeting: Kevin Heptig

16 U.S. Capitol: Denny Gainer

**18** Instructor Leading Class: Stephen Reasonover; Woman on Computer: Scott Van Odsol; Curtis Wynn: NRECA

**20** Person Flying Drone: John Hansen, Tri-State G&T; Drone Near Power Pole: Amanda Jean Finnerty; NRECA and Continental Divide Electric Cooperative Meeting: Henry Cano

22 Fiber Spools: Alexis Matsui

24 Podcast Recording Session: Alexis Matsui

**31** SVEC Lineworker: Ashley Kreis; Spotlight Award Winners: NRECA; NRECA Staff Providing Guidance: NRECA; Students at Co-op University: Stephen Reasonover; Co-op Employee: Linda Mathiasen; YAME Phase 2 Presentation to Virginia, Maryland and Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives: NRECA; Regional Meeting Attendees: NRECA

#### **DISCLAIMERS**

This document summarizes the consolidated financials and general activities of NRECA and its related companies. It is intended to be informational only. For ease of use, references to NRECA may include entities owned by or affiliated with NRECA; and references to NRECA programs, events, or activities may include NRECA-owned or affiliated entity programs, events or activities.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

cooperative.com electric.coop



4301 Wilson Blvd. Arlington, VA 22203



twitter.com/NRECANews

facebook.com/NRECA.coop

in linkedin.com/company/nreca

youtube.com/NRECANews

instagram.com/electriccoops

## 

