



2010 Skill Builder Programs

Training, information, and professional development for electric cooperatives.

NRECA Credentialed Director Courses

The Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) curriculum demonstrates NRECA's commitment to directors, ensuring they have an opportunity to develop the competencies they need to succeed in a new and uncertain environment. The CCD certificate is awarded upon the successful completion of all five CCD courses in the curriculum. The two courses listed below will be offered in the 2010 rotation. The remaining three will be offered in 2011.

At the August 2008 WECA board meeting, the board approved a motion to allow any directors who have already earned their CCD or BL certification to audit those courses they have already taken at a reduced rate of 50% of the full fee if space permits. In order to receive this reduction, the member cooperative must note this on their registration form prior to attending the program.

Board Roles and Relationships (Course 2620.1) — 1½ Credits

May 18, 2010

Holiday Inn Express, Black River Falls, WI

The success of the cooperative is based on its ability to nurture and maintain effective relationships with consumers, community leaders, media, public officials, and others. This course explains how the director and the full board each play a key role in developing plans and in implementing actions to maintain and manage these relationships.

Key topics include:

- Identifying the individuals and groups with whom the board must maintain effective working relationships
- Understanding, working with, and responding to members
- How public officials and opinion leaders impact the cooperative and the board's role in building and maintaining effective relationships
- Lessons and guidelines regarding key internal relationships: with the chair, with the attorney, and with itself

Financial Decision Making (Course 2640.1) — 1½ Credits

August 17, 2010

Stoney Creek Inn, Mosinee, WI

This course helps directors understand the role of the board in financial planning, including identifying the basic documents used in financial planning and reporting, assessing the issues that drive financial decisions, balancing competing goals, and taking responsibility to monitor and evaluate results.

Key topics include:

- Identifying the key financial decisions boards must make
- Explaining the uniqueness of the cooperative business model
- Recognizing three key financial documents and three key financial ratios
- Understanding the basics of allocating and retiring capital credits policy
- Understanding key elements of an equity management policy



Directors who have earned their CCD certificate are eligible for the Board Leadership (BL) certificate. However, directors do not need to have their CCD in order to enroll in these courses. The BL certificate is earned by completing a total of 10 NRECA course credits from the NRECA 900-level courses. These courses are designed to be “challenger” workshops on key current issues.

Getting Involved: The Director’s Role in Shaping Energy Policy (Course 916.1) — 1½ Credits

January 7, 2010

Holiday Inn Express, Black River Falls, WI

Electric cooperative directors have a unique opportunity to voice the concerns and success stories of cooperatives and their members and to participate in the energy policy debate. This course is designed to show directors how the NRECA member-owned resolutions process works and how to get involved. The use of technology to strengthen the cooperative’s political clout, streamline communications with elected officials, and help co-ops become a part of the new grassroots era is a major focus of this course.

Key topics include:

- How to participate in the debate on energy policy
- How to use technology to communicate effectively with your members of Congress
- How to participate in the resolutions process
- How resolutions determine what legislative initiatives NRECA pursues on behalf of its members

Effective Boards: Why Some Succeed and Some Fail (Course 938.1) — 1½ Credits

March 17, 2010

The Plaza Hotel & Suites, Eau Claire, WI

Boards of electric cooperatives and other corporations are composed of community and business leaders who want to do a good job. But as demonstrated in recent corporate scandals, boards can fall into habits and modes of behavior that lead to failure. This course is for experienced directors who will work in small groups to analyze actual case studies in corporate governance. The groups will review news articles and governance documents involving real corporate boards that came to receive a great deal of public scrutiny and lawsuits brought by owners and investigations by committees of Congress.

Key topics include:

- The relevant facts in the case that are significant from a board perspective
- The critical governance issues
- What the board did that caused it to get into trouble
- What the board should have done
- What could be done to decrease the risk of lawsuits or investigations by legislative or regulatory bodies



**NRECA Board
Leadership Courses**

Energy Efficiency, Conservation, and Demand Response in Today's Cooperative (Course 972.1) — 1½ Credits

April 21, 2010

The Plaza Hotel & Suites, Eau Claire, WI

Unprecedented growth in demand for energy will deplete resources and push prices higher, affecting consumers and utilities everywhere. This course helps directors understand the basics of energy efficiency technologies and how they must be integrated into the utility's strategic plan and coordinated with power suppliers. Special emphasis will be placed on understanding the potential impacts on utility revenues and expenses.

Key topics include:

- Fundamental changes to the utility industry as a result of worldwide economic forces
- How cooperatives will be directly affected by these forces
- Technology and rate-based strategies that can help cooperatives address these challenges

Appraising and Compensating the CEO (Course 935.1) — 1½ Credits

July 20, 2010

Holiday Inn Express, Black River Falls, WI

The board is responsible for appraising and compensating the chief executive. Appraisal is the process of using agreed-upon measures to evaluate the CEO's performance. Compensation is the process of developing a salary range and approving a salary based on the appraisal. This course focuses on helping directors to fulfill these responsibilities to ensure a sound board-CEO relationship.

Key topics include:

- Identifying the role of the board in CEO appraisal and compensation
- Identifying goals for the chief executive in the strategic planning process
- Recognizing how to reach consensus in performance appraisal
- Using tools for determining fair and equitable compensation
- Communicating with the CEO during the appraisal process



The Management Essentials Certificate (MEC) program is designed for experienced supervisors and mid-level managers. The program explores how to maintain technical expertise while demonstrating the right type of leadership. MEC provides the personal, interpersonal, and group skills to be influential in one-on-one situations, facilitate group performance, and become effective leaders.

Managing Successful Projects (Course 650.1) — 1½ Credits

September 21, 2010

The Plaza Hotel & Suites, Eau Claire, WI

Whether you are new to project management or you have been managing projects for a long time, this course will help you identify the skills you have and the skills you need, build on your strengths, and give you a clear path for organizing and managing your projects. During the course, you will have the opportunity to practice some critical skills so that you can put them to work right away.

Key topics include:

- Principles and techniques of project management methodology
- Key activities that successful project managers perform in each phase of a project
- The variables of project success and strategies for managing them to avoid typical project problems and pitfalls
- Project management tools and techniques
- Strategies for keeping project support with your sponsors, stakeholders, and team members

Negotiating and Managing Contracts (Course 651.1) — 1½ Credits

September 22, 2010

The Plaza Hotel & Suites, Eau Claire, WI

The purpose of this course is to convey the overall process of negotiating and managing contracts to a wide cross-section of participants from all experience levels in the procurement management process. Attendees follow the process of contract negotiation and management from the onset of writing a request for proposal (RFP) to managing a contractor's performance through a combination of lecture and hands-on group exercises. Participants will also learn how to write an effective RFP, negotiate favorable contract terms, and avoid critical mistakes that could put the cooperative at risk.

Key topics include:

- A request for proposal that utilizes accurate terminology and strengthens the cooperative's competitive edge
- Acceptable factors and methods for evaluating proposals
- Internal controls to minimize legal and financial risks associated with contracts
- Defining quality, delivery, service, and price terms
- The difference between cooperatives' and contractors' responsibilities
- Identifying and correcting contractors' performance issues
- Mitigating contract disputes
- Identifying the cooperative's safety enforcement role with their contractors.



**NRECA Management
Essentials Courses**

NRECA Supervisory Certificate Courses

The NRECA's Cooperative Supervisory Certificate recognizes the educational development of co-op professionals who have or are working toward a supervisory role. NRECA's 300-level series covers the range of issues faced by supervisors and builds the skills necessary to address those issues effectively. Upon completion of all nine courses in the curriculum, participants will receive their Cooperative Supervisory Certificate. The nine supervisory courses qualify for Certified Cooperative Communicators and Certified Key Account Executives continuing education requirements.

Getting Started as a Supervisor (Course 380.05) — 3/4 Credit

Morning of February 24, 2010

Riverland Energy Cooperative, Arcadia, WI

This course will help a newly promoted supervisor get started, understand the co-op business, clarify roles and responsibilities, gain acceptance, and create a long-term development plan. You will learn the practical skills necessary to make your transition into management a success.

Key topics include:

- The difference between being an employee and a boss
- The roles and responsibilities of your employees
- Characteristics of successful work groups
- How to encourage initiative

Personal Time Management (Course 381.05) — 3/4 Credit

Afternoon of February 24, 2010

Riverland Energy Cooperative, Arcadia, WI

This course will help you to analyze how you currently use your time and teach you to identify time wasters. By implementing a time-management system, you will discover how to better organize information in the co-op workplace. You will also determine which time-management tool works best for you and begin the planning process for your next work week.

Key topics include:

- How to use time logs at your co-op
- Tools for personal time management
- Obstacles to effective time management



Motivating Employees (Course 385.05) — 3/4 Credit

Morning of March 25, 2010

Oakdale Electric Cooperative, Oakdale, WI

Motivation can lift your employees' level of performance, increase job satisfaction, and promote teamwork. This course will explore the co-op supervisor's role, value, and rewards in motivation. You'll review a self-evaluation tool to help identify your motivational strengths and weaknesses.

Key topics include:

- The supervisor's role in motivation
- The value and types of motivation
- Specific ways to motivate co-op employees

The Supervisor and Human Resources (Course 386.05) — 3/4 Credit

Afternoon of March 25, 2010

Oakdale Electric Cooperative, Oakdale, WI

To successfully manage co-op employees, you need to understand the human resource function and your liability with regard to employment laws. This course focuses on the co-op supervisor's role in compensation and benefits, training and development, employee and labor relations, and interviewing.

Key topics include:

- The functions of a human resources department
- A supervisor's human resources responsibilities
- Human resources knowledge in the co-op workplace
- Compliance with all applicable laws and co-op policies



**NRECA Supervisory
Certificate Courses**

The Making Differences One Member at a Time four-part series, which provides an introduction and reinforcement of practices to create a member-focused culture within a utility, has been offered since 2005. After discussion with the WECA Education Committee in June, we have decided to discontinue the series after sessions three and four are held in 2010. Hopefully, this will allow all interested employees an opportunity to complete the series.

Session 3

Improving Customer Service by Harnessing Stress and Change for Peak Performance — 1/3 Credit

February 9, 2010

Riverland Energy Cooperative, Arcadia, WI

In this session, discover how customer service says more about your business than your marketing or even your products do.

Key topics include:

- Reducing stress in the workplace to a healthy level
- Gaining the acceptance of members to the utilities long-term strategy
- Improving listening skills

Exercises:

- Four-step formula for eliminating worry
- Six points of truly effective time management
- Psychology of achievement

Session 4

Maximizing the Effectiveness of Member Care and Billing — 1/3 Credit

May 6, 2010

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, Fall Creek, WI

Utilities are realizing the need to move their members beyond merely being “satisfied.” They need to make them loyal.

Key topics include:

- Taking your members to the next level
- Utilizing target-based data mining to expand service offerings
- Reinforcing your utility’s leadership focus in the community

Exercises:

- Excellence and quality
- Communicating for results
- Sales training



Electric Industry Updates

3 Credits per co-op or \$1,350/co-op

The pace of change in our industry is greater than any of our current generation of employees has witnessed. The regulatory and member views on issues such as climate change, energy efficiency, smart grid technologies, and rising energy costs have put us on the front page and even Super Bowl commercials. This industry update course is designed to allow employees to gain a better understanding of the current national issues, but more importantly, arm them with skills they can use to carry the cooperative's message back to the membership.

Key topics include:

- An industry update on the national energy issues such as carbon legislation, energy efficiency, climate change, renewable energy, and smart grid technology.
- The types of messages our members receive on energy issues from various media and separating fact from fiction.
- A fact sheet on the popular "energy savings" tips and tools our members are hearing about.
- Developing a real cost calculation for local renewable energy options with rate and installation cost sensitivities.
- Why cooperative energy costs are not rising as fast as neighboring IOUs.
- Debunking energy myths associated with popularly advertised "miracle energy savings" devices.

As with any course delivered by Bryan Singletary, the session will be fast-paced, interactive, and based upon over 20 years of cooperative experience. The employees will leave the session informed and energized with positive data to make them better able to serve the needs of your membership.

The dates, times, and locations are as follows:

January 25, 2010

8:00–11:45 a.m.

Kalahari Resort
Wisconsin Dells, WI

January 25, 2010

1:00–4:45 p.m.

Ramada White House Lodge
Richland Center, WI

January 26, 2010

8:00–11:45 a.m.

Radisson Hotel
La Crosse, WI

January 27, 2010

8:00–11:45 a.m.

Sleep Inn & Suites
Eau Claire, WI

January 28, 2010

8:00–11:45 a.m.

Barron Electric Cooperative
Barron, WI

January 29, 2010

8:00–11:45 a.m.

Stoney Creek Inn
Mosinee, WI



**Other Courses
& Events**

Understanding How Your Utility Works: The Basics from Generation Through the Distribution of Electricity — 1 Credit

February 4, 2010

Jackson Electric Cooperative, Black River Falls, WI

This course is a Continuum course in the Administrative Professionals Series. It is designed to acquaint non-technical utility employees with the basics of their industry from the generation to the distribution of electricity. The course places emphasis on understanding various words, terms, and phrases unique to the electric power industry. Participants will gain a clear insight into how electricity works for the end use customer.

Key topics include:

- The basic science of electricity and why it exists
- The three fundamental methods of electrical generation and how an electrical generator works
- How electricity is transmitted and distributed to homes and businesses
- Understanding various electrical terms and devices: i.e. transformers, capacitors, relays, etc.
- The function of electrical metering devices
- Understanding the computation of power usage and electric bills

Credit Issues/Collections Workshop — 1 Credit

March 9, 2010

Holiday Inn Express, Black River Falls, WI

Daily attention should be paid to credit and collection operations to ensure the co-op's long-term financial health and to avoid costly mistakes. This workshop is designed for credit managers, office managers, and finance employees. All attendees will receive materials containing valuable information, practical answers, helpful tips, and techniques that can be put to work every day.

More information will be provided at a later date.



Your System's Bills, Bucks, and Business — 1 Credit

March 10, 2010

Holiday Inn Express, Black River Falls, WI

This course is designed for electric co-op directors, managers, and employees. The workshop describes how every task performed in a utility impacts the bill sent to the consumer. Learn how the impact of these tasks can be measured and evaluated. Participants will learn skills that help the utility achieve financial security and long-term benefits for consumers.

Key topics include:

- Analysis of the financial report
- Review of the utility's key ratios
- Accounts turnover ratio, write-offs, over 90 day accounts
- Inventory turnover ratio, inventory as a percentage of total plant, and acceptable inventory variances
- Impact of pole replacement, depreciation, vintage accounting, idle services, overtime ratio
- Equity changes, capital credits, TIER, general funds, cash management, and capitalization ratio
- Marketing, annual meetings, services
- Budgeting, cash flow, and the importance of tracking expenses

Education Day — 1 Credit

March 2, 2010

Concourse Hotel & Governor's Club, Madison, WI

This event is currently in the development process. More information will be provided at a later date.



**Other Courses
& Events**

NRECA Retirement Planning Seminar
February 25–26, 2010
Holiday Inn Express, Black River Falls, WI

NRECA Investment Workshop
March 18, 2010
Jackson Electric Cooperative, Black River Falls, WI

Co-ops Yes! Youth Leadership Conference
April 19–20, 2010
The Plaza Hotel & Suites, Eau Claire, WI

NRECA Youth Tour
June 11–17, 2010
Washington D.C.

WECA Youth Leadership Congress
July 7–9, 2010
UW–River Falls, River Falls, WI

National Institute on Cooperative Education (NICE)
— Youth Program
July 31–August 4, 2010
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

Employment Law Workshops
Dates & Locations to be Announced

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**Non-Skill Builder
Programs**