



THE COOPERATIVE CONNECTION

For new employees and first-term directors

Sept. 2-3, 2026

The Cooperative Center | NDAREC headquarters | 3201 Nygren Drive NW | Mandan, N.D.

“The Cooperative Connection” is designed especially for new employees and first-term directors who want to learn more about their cooperatives, the electric cooperative network and the electric utility industry.

Sept. 2

We Are Cooperative

Bryan Singletary, Practical Energies

During this opening session, participants will be introduced to the electric cooperative business model, the importance of member ownership, democratic governance and local accountability. Participants will also gain insight into the fundamentals of electric operations, industry trends and challenges — all through a member-centric lens. This member-centric lens will focus on safely delivering value, reliability and responsiveness.

Key Topics

1. The Cooperative Difference

- Overview of the Seven Cooperative Principles and how they guide decision making
- Governance structure: role of the board, management and member-owners
- Historical development of electric cooperatives and their impact on rural America
- Importance of democratic control and member engagement
- Distinction between electric cooperatives, investor-owned utilities and municipal systems

2. Electric Operations 101

- Basics of how electricity is generated, transmitted and distributed
- Key components of cooperative infrastructure: substations, lines, poles and meters
- Overview of system planning, maintenance and reliability standards
- Importance of safety, outage response and restoration procedures

3. Industry Trends & Challenges

- The evolving regulatory landscape
- Cybersecurity, electrification and electric vehicles
- Supply chain and workforce challenges in a rapidly changing utility environment
- The role of cooperatives in bridging the digital divide and supporting rural resilience

4. Being Member-Centric

- Understanding the member experience: reliability, affordability and transparency
- Tools for improving communication, trust and responsiveness to member needs
- Aligning operations and services with member values and community impact
- Measuring success through member satisfaction, engagement and feedback
- Reinforcing a culture of safety, service and pride in meeting cooperative obligations

Bus Tour

The Milton R. Young Station is a two-unit, lignite coal-based power plant near Center, N.D. Owned and operated by Minnkota Power Cooperative, it began generating electricity in 1970.

BNI Coal is developing North Dakota's abundant lignite energy resource. At its Center Mine, BNI mines and reclaims about 200 acres a year to supply lignite coal to fuel the nearby Milton R. Young Generation Station. Two electric generating cooperatives, Minnkota Power and Square Butte, operate the Young Station, which consumes virtually all coal produced at Center Mine.

Sept. 3

The Power of the Cooperative Network

Josh Kramer, executive vice president and general manager, NDAREC

Josh will provide an overview of the electric cooperative network — spanning the local, state and national levels — and resources available to co-op employees and directors. He will also highlight the wide array of services NDAREC offers to its member cooperatives.

An Open Forum with Electric Cooperative Leaders

Josh will facilitate an open forum to answer your questions — no holds barred. We've invited four co-op leaders to participate in this discussion.

Jean Brandt, director, North Central Electric Cooperative, and NDAREC board member; Paul Fitterer, general manager, Capital Electric Cooperative; Christel Laskowski, business manager, Verendrye Electric Cooperative; and Chris Baumgartner, sr. vice president of member & external relations, Basin Electric Power Cooperative

NISC: A Look at the Past, Present and Future of Your Technology Partner

Doug Remboldt, president and CEO, National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC)

This closing session will examine how NISC and technology serves your electric cooperative, and your members at the end of the line. Participants will also learn about some current as well as future expectations of employees and end-consumers, and how we will get there together.

Schedule at a glance

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 2

- 7:30 a.m. **Hot Breakfast Buffet**
- 8 a.m. **We Are Cooperative**
Bryan Singletary, Practical Energies
- Noon **Lunch**
- 12:45 p.m. **Board Bus for Tour of BNI Coal and Milton R. Young Station**
- 5:30 p.m. **Return travel to Mandan**

THURSDAY, SEPT. 3

- 7:30 a.m. **Hot Breakfast Buffet**
- 8:15 a.m. **The Power of the Cooperative Network**
Josh Kramer, executive vice president and general manager, NDAREC
- 9:15 a.m. **Refreshment Break**
- 9:30 a.m. **Open Forum with Electric Cooperative Leaders**
Josh Kramer, facilitator
- 10:30 a.m. **Refreshment Break**
- 10:45 a.m. **NISC: A Look at the Past, Present and Future of Your Technology Partner**
Doug Remboldt, president and CEO, National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC)

Meet the Guest Presenters



Bryan Singletary brings more than four decades of experience in the electric utility industry. He has spent his career translating the technical aspects of delivering high-quality electrical service into terms members can easily understand.

Bryan owns and operates Practical Energies, a consulting firm specializing in helping cooperatives navigate the challenges of today's consumer-centric utility marketplace. His firm has worked with hundreds of

utilities, designing, developing and implementing a wide range of member-focused programs. With the industry's increasing emphasis on reliability, Bryan has seen a growing demand for member-oriented marketing programs and training, particularly in key accounts and strategic planning.

He is a nationally sought-after speaker and trainer in utility operations, strategic planning, key accounts management, demand-side management, member service and power quality. Bryan is also an accomplished writer, having authored and co-authored several books, papers and manuals on these topics.

A Florida native, Bryan holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Auburn University. He and his wife, Maggie, have four children and eight grandchildren.



Doug Remboldt is the president and CEO of National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC). He began his career at NISC in 1990, implementing and supporting NISC's accounting solutions. Throughout his 36-year career at NISC, Doug has been involved in supporting and implementing NISC's accounting, billing, operations and technical solutions. Doug and his family call Bismarck home.

Registration Information

Online registration is available at www.ndarec.com/ndarec-education-programs.

Please note the program limit of 55 people. Registrations will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis. The registration fee is \$695/person and includes the cost of program materials, meals and refreshment breaks. No advance payment is necessary.

Special Dietary Needs and Other Accommodations

Please notify Pamela at pstein@ndarec.com of any dietary restrictions such as food allergies, gluten-free options and other special accommodations needed. A minimum of 72 hours' advance notice is required.

Cancellations

If you need to cancel your registration, please notify Pamela Clark-Stein at pstein@ndarec.com 7 days in advance of the program. If notice is provided 7 days or more in advance, there is no cancellation fee. If notice is provided less than 7 days in advance, a cancellation fee of \$70 will be charged. Please note: Substitutions are permitted at no extra charge if NDAREC is notified of the substitution prior to the program date.

Hotel Accommodations

Comfort Inn and Suites, 1516 27th St. N, Mandan
Reservation Under: NDAREC Cooperative Connection
Dates: Sept. 1-2

Release Date: 08/17/2026

Online Link:

<https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/HQ60K2>

Days Inn by Wyndham, 2630 Old Red Trail, Mandan
Reservation Under: NDAREC Cooperative Connection
Dates: Sept. 1-2

Release Date: 08/14/2026

Booking Link:

[Days Inn by Wyndham Mandan Bismarck Area | Mandan, ND Hotels](#)