

# Professional Development Services Provided by



Montana Electric  
Cooperatives' Association  
Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## THE 5th COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

### EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND INFORMATION

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

# 5

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Cooperatives' Association

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# 2019 Education & Training Program

# Board Governance Courses

## 2600 Director Duties & Liabilities

Boards are responsible for directing the affairs of the corporation. This course discusses and explains the duties of loyalty, obedience and due care, and the need for directors to acquire the minimum knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill their responsibilities within the cooperative context.

Where: Yogo Inn—Lewistown MT

When: January 22, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$600 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Prepaid Plan

## 2610 Understanding the Electric Business

The electric utility industry is an evolving high-tech system that must be designed and engineered to meet regulatory and consumer standards for reliability, quality and safety. This requires an appropriate investment on a planned and ongoing basis. This course provides directors with an understanding of the key components of the electric utility industry.

Where: Yogo Inn—Lewistown MT

When: January 23, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$600 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Prepaid Plan

## 2630 Strategic Planning

Boards have ultimate responsibility for ensuring and evaluating the long-term health of the organization. They help fulfill this duty through strategic thinking, identifying goals through strategic planning and authorizing the appropriate allocation of resources through the adoption of financial policies, budget review and approval and monitoring management's progress toward strategic goals. This course teaches directors how to participate effectively in strategic thinking and planning processes.

Where: Yogo Inn—Lewistown MT

When: January 24, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$600 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Prepaid Plan

## 964.1 Communicating the New Energy Landscape

The emergence of Distributed Energy Resources (DER) technologies is giving consumers more choices than ever before. Electric cooperatives are well positioned as consumer-owned organizations to be their member's "trusted partner" in navigating the opportunities, risks and benefits of solar and other emerging technologies. This course discusses the top DER technologies, policy issues and questions that co-ops must be prepared to discuss with their members.

Where: TBD

When: July 8, 2019 (In conjunction with the MECA Summer Meeting)

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$600 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Education Prepaid Plan

## 963.1 Strategic Technologies and the Impact on the Cooperative

This course focuses on the importance of technology planning by examining today's emerging technologies using four questions: What will the technology do for the membership? What will it do for the business of the cooperative? Is it cost effective? How well will it integrate with existing systems? This course explores a wide variety of technologies; the role of management versus the board in technology planning and strategies to get the most out of technology investments.

Where: BW Heritage Inn, Great Falls, MT

When: October 7, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$600 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Education Prepaid Plan

"The education of our people should be a lifelong process by which we continue to feed new vigor into the lifestream of the Nation through intelligent, reasoned decisions. Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation."

— John F. Kennedy



# Member Services

## Member Services Conference

A great two-day training and networking event. Will include trainings on Crisis Communication, Advertising, Energy Efficiency, Cyber Security, Key Accounts, Member/Community Engagement and a 2019 Legislative Update; as well as an afternoon roundtable discussion.

Where: Lewistown, MT

When: April 23-24, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$800 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Prepaid Plan

# General Office

## Work Order Accounting

For almost all electric cooperatives and utilities, the biggest investment is the electric infrastructure assets including poles, wire, transforms and the like. It's a complex process to take raw materials, labor and overheads and convert them to a continuing property record (CPR). Are we capitalizing the costs or expensing them? What about depreciation? Not only is the work order accounting system complex, it's expensive. How are we going to pay for this infrastructure investment? What about repairs and maintenance? And storms? Or Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) payments from a declared disaster? How about contributions in aid of construction (CIAC)? What is so special about special equipment?

Beyond that, there are many details, such as and when a work order needs to be set up. What do I do with this staking sheet (electronic or paper)? And once the project is complete, then what?

Together, we will step through this intricate process to understand the components, as well as understand how it shows up on the monthly billing statement to the consumer! Measuring and bench-marking ratios and internal controls is critical when it comes to the biggest investment on the balance sheet.

This course is designed for any and all employees to benefit from the working knowledge of this critically important process.

Where: YVEC Office, Huntley, MT

When: March 26-27, 2019

Where: MECA Statewide Office

When: March 28-29, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2018 Education & Training Plan  
\$800 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Prepaid Plan

## 717.1 Legal Responsibilities and Liabilities for Supervisors

Supervisors and managers have the obligation to treat all employees and job applicants consistently and equally as outlined under the law. Handling team member issues in the most convenient or the nicest way may not be the legal or right thing to do. Whether your co-op has a full-time human resources staff to help you or not, to successfully supervise co-op employees you need to understand the human resource function and your liability with regard to employment laws. Learn how you can avoid common employment law pitfalls at your cooperative while improving your management skills, enhancing your leadership abilities and encouraging a productive work environment at your cooperative.

### KEY TOPICS

- Basics of Human Resources
- Employment laws, including:
  - Title VII of the Civil Rights of 1964
  - The Pregnancy Discrimination Act
  - Age Discrimination in Employment Act
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (and amendments)
  - The Equal Pay Act of 1963
  - Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
  - Fair Labor Standards Act
  - Harassment – What is It?
  - Supervisor's role in preventing harassment
- Shared areas of responsibilities between supervisors and Human Resources
- Pitfalls to be aware of, including discrimination and nepotism
- Legal Vs. illegal interview questions
- Supervisory responsibilities in loss control and work place safety
- Cost of an employee accident

Where: MECA Statewide Office

When: September 18, 2019

Cost: No cost to co-ops enrolled in 2019 Education & Training Plan  
\$600 per participant for co-ops not enrolled in 2019 Prepaid Plan

# Safety/Loss Control

(Please note S/LC Courses are not part of the Prepaid Program)

## Lineman Essentials Course (formerly Lineman Basics)

This popular 2 ½ day course will feature various instructors who will cover a variety of topics to include:

Transformer Connections and Theory  
Reclosures and Recloser Controls  
Meters and Metering

When: February 12 - 14, 2019  
Where: Statewide Office, Great Falls, MT  
Estimated Fee: \$325

## PCB Management & Record Keeping

This 2-day workshop will be instructed by Mark Pennell with Regulatory Compliance Services, Inc. The class will cover topics such as Foundational Training – Reviewing the Basics, Key Regulatory Terms and Established Interpretations, Testing for PCBs versus the “Assumption Rules”, Proper Storage of PCBs and PCB Items, Managing Leaking/Damaged Equipment, PCB Spills – Reporting, Cleanup, Testing and Records as well as other topics.

When: March 5 & 6, 2019  
Where: Statewide Office, Great Falls, MT  
Estimated Fee: \$900

## Workplace Protection Training

Back by popular demand, MECA is pleased to offer Workplace Protection Training: Verbal De-escalation and S.A.V.E. Yourself. This course is designed for all cooperative employees, whether it's inside personnel or outside line personnel. The verbal de-escalation portion of the course focuses on conflict resolution and trains employees on how to deal with difficult or non-compliant people. The S.A.V.E. Yourself program teaches employees how to survive if they are ever confronted with an active killer. The instructor, Chad Sheehan, has trained electric cooperative employees from Iowa, South Dakota, Missouri, Montana and Minnesota. In total, his programs have been taught to over 35,000 people from different states.

When: April 9, 2019  
Where: Statewide Office, Great Falls  
Estimated Fee: \$200 ~ \$400

## Substation Class

This course will provide an overview of substations, inspection practices, equipment, protective relaying, substation metering and equipment troubleshooting and documentation. A substation tour will be included with the class.

Topics to be Covered:

- Types and purposes of substations
- Substation log books
- Substation equipment, fences, structures and yard lights
- Substation power transformers, load tap changers and protective devices
- Oil testing and containment
- Circuit switchers, breakers, three-phase and single-phase regulators
- Batteries and chargers
- Substation capacitors

When & Where: May 13 & 14, 2019 ~ Sidney, MT  
May 16 & 17, 2019 ~ Missoula, MT  
Estimated Fee: \$300 ~ \$350

## RESAP Onsite Observer Training

The Onsite Observation Training is a detailed review of the onsite observation process. The goal of the training is to give co-ops, both in and out of RESAP, and onsite observation team members a better overall understanding of the safety improvement principles of the program and how to achieve the highest level of effectiveness during the onsite observation process.

The session covers purpose and rationale, team roles & responsibilities, process mechanics, system utilization and a sampling of the assessment criteria within the Achievement Program.

When: June 6, 2019  
Where: Statewide Office, Great Falls, MT

## MECA Operations Conference

This 3 ½ day event is a great learning and networking opportunity for operations personnel. Multiple trainings as well as vendors are available.

When: September 9 – 12, 2019  
Where: Best Western Heritage Inn, Great Falls, MT  
Estimated Fee: \$150

# Top 4 Reasons to Invest in Ongoing Education

1. **The energy industry is changing.** You need to keep up with, and stay ahead of, these changes in order to serve your members and community effectively.



2. **Co-op directors need core skills, knowledge and abilities** to effectively govern their co-op and successfully fulfill their fiduciary duties.

3. **Tap into the power of the network.** By building and nurturing professional relationships from across the state/country at face-to-face events, directors create a valuable support network that lives beyond the classroom.



4. **Education is the fifth Cooperative Principle.** Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.