

Not Just Powering Your Neighbors, but Offering a Career that's Stable, Exciting, and Rewarding

Why accepting a job at a rural electric cooperative
can offer many unique advantages and benefits to
potential employers and the community.

Why would anyone want to leave a corporate job to work for a rural electric cooperative?

First, as a potential employer, electric cooperatives offer job stability and security, strong benefits and work-life balance, collaborative and family-like culture and professional development opportunities.

Second, as a community member, electric cooperatives provide a community-focused mission, lower cost of living and rural lifestyle, and sustainability and innovation.

First, let's talk potential employer...

Rural electric cooperatives offer job stability and security through:

- Essential services: electric cooperatives provide critical utility power, making them more resilient to economic downturn. Homes and businesses are always needing electricity “now and in the future (Wesslund, P. 2023)”.
- Not for profit structures: electric cooperatives typically are mission-driven, often leading to greater stability and long-term employment. You are working to “serve your friends, family and neighbors who collectively own the cooperative (LaBerge, J. 2017)”.

First, let's talk potential employer...

Rural electric cooperatives offer strong benefits and work-life balance through:

- Good benefits packages: electric cooperatives offer excellent benefits such as health insurance, pensions, often through National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and paid time off leading to employment longevity typically resulting in staying in the “industry for more than 15 years (Wesslund, P. 2023)”.
- For example, the NRECA provides services such as “legislative representation (Intercounty Electric Cooperative Association)”, monitoring “regulatory activities affecting electric service and the environment (Intercounty Electric Cooperative Association)”, skills and management trainings, and a “wide range of insurance and employment benefit packages (Intercounty Electric Cooperative Association)”.
- Predictable hours: electric cooperatives support work-life balance compared to corporate utilities.



First, let's talk potential employer...

- NRECA offers a pension plan. Pension plans separate cooperatives from other companies because there are so few many companies in the US that still offer traditional pension plans.
 - For example, The Economics Daily article summarizes information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, that “among private industries, financial activities was notable in that 31 percent of workers had access to a defined benefit plan (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025)”.

Percent of private industry workers with access to and participation in defined benefit plans, March 2024

Industry	Access	Participation
Financial activities	31	16
Information	24	18
Trade, transportation, and utilities	19	13
Manufacturing	17	12
Education and health services	16	13
All industries	15	10
Construction	12	12
Professional and business services	10	6

(U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

First, let's talk potential employer...

Rural electric
cooperatives offer a
family-like culture
through:

- Small teams:
employees are more
likely to work with
leadership and
colleagues across
departments
 - Supportive
environment: many
employees report a
strong sense of
friendship and support.
- “All hands on deck”
(Mecklenburg Electric’s
team motto)



First, let's talk potential employer...

Rural electric cooperatives offer professional development opportunities through:

- Training and advancement: organizations like NRECA provide leadership and training opportunities.
- Wide-ranging roles: employees often wear multiple hats which aid in the acceleration of learning and skill development. There is a wide variety of “skills needed in the utility industry (Wesslund, P. 2023)” and the range of positions are stunning to include “accountants, social media managers, IT specialist, engineers, human resources professionals (Wesslund, P. 2023)” and even more unique positions as well-drone operators, data analysts and power plant operators.



Second, let's talk
about all the perks
as a community
member...

Now that the most important reasons for accepting a job at a rural electric cooperative have been identified, let's shift our focus to the benefits of a community member.

Second, let's talk about all the perks as a community member...

Rural electric cooperatives provide a community focused mission through:

- Member ownership: rural electric cooperatives are owned by the people they serve; their unique business model is “led by the members who use the electricity (Wesslund, P. 2023)”.
- Member-centered service: rural electric cooperatives have a strong emphasis on improving quality of life for rural residents. This could include the board of directors deciding to “take on a task in addition to providing electric service (Intercounty Electric Cooperative Association)”, such as needs for “sewer and water systems, or communication technology, cable TV service, a needed education health or social service to be provided (Intercounty Electric Cooperative Association)”, or concentrated efforts required to attract new businesses to the area.

Second, let's talk about all the perks as a community member...

Rural electric cooperatives provide a lower cost of living and rural lifestyle through:

- Affordable living: rural living means lower housing and everyday expenses. Building a strong community is critical to the “health and prosperity of a community (LaBerge, J. 2017)” through “safe, reliable and affordable energy (LaBerge, J. 2017)”.
- Quality of life: enjoyment of nature, close communities and less traffic are a few of the many advantages of being part of a rural electric cooperative.

Second, let's
talk about all
the perks as a
community
member...

Rural electric cooperatives provide sustainability and innovation through:

- Renewable energy projects: some of the many leaders in implementing solar, wind and smart grid technology, are rural electric cooperatives. Technology advances such as “electric vehicles, next-generation HVAC systems and smart thermostats are creating efficiencies on the consumer side of the meter (LaBerge, J. 2017)” resulting in a lower cost of electricity.
- Example: lower cost electrical bills
- Energy equity: rural electric cooperatives are known for helping underserved communities access affordable and reliable electricity.



Ask yourself...



Are you looking to make a career change and you're tired of the corporate lifestyle?



Are you wanting to be a part of a moving innovation?



Are you seeking a working environment built on principles, not just profit?



Are you wanting to earn a paycheck with a purpose?

If you
answered yes
to any of the
questions...

Consider making a change. Apply to local rural electric cooperatives today and benefit from job stability and security, strong benefits and work-life balance, collaborative and family-like culture, and professional development opportunities, along with a community-focused mission, lower cost of living and rural lifestyle, and sustainability and innovation.



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