



Kenergy's Tim Lindahl speaks to Congress

Federal investment crucial to securing grid

By Erin Kelly

Electric cooperatives are working together on innovative ways to strengthen their cybersecurity, but they can't do it alone, a Kentucky co-op leader told a House panel on December 2.

"Smart, targeted federal support through funding, workforce development and improved threat intelligence sharing is essential," Tim Lindahl, president and CEO of Kenergy, testified at a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy.

"This will help close the resource gap and ensure rural communities are not left behind in the national effort to secure our energy infrastructure."

Specifically, Lindahl asked lawmakers to reauthorize the Department of Energy's Rural and Municipal Utility Cybersecurity Program and release its remaining funds. RMUC, a \$250 million, five-year program authorized by Congress through fiscal year 2026, represents what he called "a generational opportunity to improve the cybersecurity posture of electric cooperatives and municipally owned electric utilities."

"RMUC prioritizes co-ops with the greatest need of support that serve the nation's most critical infrastructure, including military installations, to help them make the necessary investment

to secure the grid," Lindahl said.

Last fall, DOE announced \$80 million in RMUC funding that will directly support more than 400 electric co-ops' cybersecurity programs.

"Much of that funding has yet to be released to the award winners," Lindahl said. "We encourage DOE to move expeditiously to distribute the awarded funds so that electric

cooperatives can put them into action to defend their critical infrastructure."

Electric co-ops face unique challenges in securing the grid because of their rural, often remote, locations and the fact that they are not-for-profit businesses, he said.

"Because cooperatives operate without shareholders or profit incentives, financing costly investments often requires reliance on debt, which must be approved by their boards and is ultimately paid back through rates paid by their members," Lindahl explained, adding that one in four households served by co-ops earns less than \$35,000 a year.

"These resource constraints can make it difficult to invest in advanced technologies and recruit and retain a skilled cyber workforce necessary to defend against increasingly sophisticated



cyberattacks, especially those from nation-state actors."

Despite these obstacles, co-ops are uniting to do everything they can to improve their cyber readiness, said Lindahl, whose co-op serves more than 60,000 homes and businesses.

"Co-ops across the country are coming together and thinking innovatively to overcome these challenges," he said. "The seven cooperative principles, like concern for community and cooperation among cooperatives, are the driving force behind what we do."

"Additionally, our national trade association, NRECA, is leveraging private and public dollars to develop cybersecurity tools and resources to improve information sharing, deploy new technologies and build a capable workforce."

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Apprentice Line Technician Hunter Davis—5 Years

Message from the President

A new year of energy savings

As we usher in a new year, many of us look for practical ways to make our homes more comfortable and our monthly budgets more manageable. At Kenergy, we're committed to delivering reliable service, but also helping our members become more energy efficient every day. Small changes can lead to impactful savings on your energy bill—especially during Kentucky's coldest months.

One of the best long-term investments you can make is improving your home's insulation. Proper insulation keeps warm air inside during the winter, reducing the strain on your HVAC system. Pair that with a programmable or smart thermostat, and you can automatically adjust temperatures based on your family's schedule. Even simple habits, like lowering your thermostat a few degrees in winter, can produce noticeable savings.

Airflow also matters. Ceiling fans should spin clockwise during winter months. Window blinds and curtains can help as well. Keep them open on sunny winter afternoons to let natural light warm rooms.

Small details like sealing cracks around windows and doors and switching to LED lightbulbs can make a difference. Running high-energy appliances later in the evening helps lower stress on the electric grid and can save you money. And always remember what your mom said: Turn off lights when you leave a room!

Make it a resolution in 2026 to take control of your energy use.

*By Tim Lindahl
President & CEO*



Stay warm on the coldest days

January and February typically are the coldest months of the year, but that doesn't mean you have to freeze inside your home for two months.

Dressing in layers, wearing socks with your slippers and staying active are no-cost ways to stay cozy indoors, even when all you can see for miles is snow and ice. Here are some other tips to stay warm:

- **Block drafts:** If your windows are old or made from a single pane of glass, it's time to upgrade. Energy-efficient glass—and windows with double panes—will go a long way toward keeping cold air from blowing into your house. They also could reduce the amount of money you spend on winter energy bills.
- **Seal leaks:** Weather stripping and caulk can plug holes around windows and doors, and wherever the inside of an outdoor wall is penetrated by a cable or phone line.
- **Make the bed:** An electric blanket—one with an automatic shut-off and

the seal of approval from a safety organization like UL—can keep you cozy at bedtime even when you turn the whole-house thermostat down to save energy overnight.

- **Get tech help:** Make 2026 the year you finally switch to a programmable thermostat that will turn the heat up when

the home is occupied and everyone is awake, and down at bedtime and when the family leaves for the day. (Note: If you have a heat pump, purchase a programmable thermostat with adaptive recovery technology to slowly warm the house and avoid the more costly auxiliary heat.)



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Among those tools, he said, are the NRECA Threat Analysis Center, a secure technology platform that helps the co-op community detect, analyze and communicate cybersecurity threats, and the Co-op Cyber Goals Program, which helps co-ops improve their cyber defenses.

Electric co-ops are committed to doing their part, but collaborating with the federal government remains crucial, Lindahl said.

"With continued partnership and targeted investment, we can strengthen our defenses, protect critical infrastructure, and keep the lights on for 42 million Americans. The last two decades have seen significant advancement in how electric cooperatives secure our grid, but there is much more work still to do."

Erin Kelly is a staff writer for NRECA.

A photograph of a family—a mother, a father, and a young child—smiling and looking at a tablet computer together. The background is dark with colorful bokeh lights, suggesting a festive or indoor night setting.

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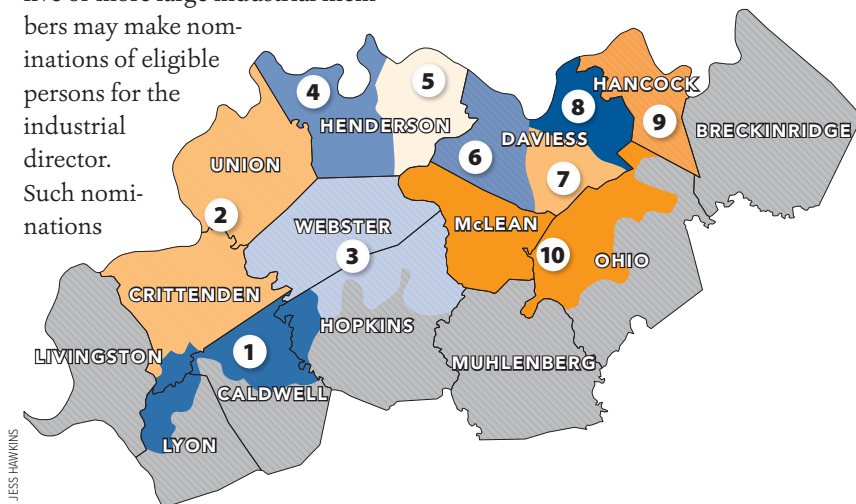
2026 director election

Prior to Kenergy's annual membership meeting planned for June 9, 2026, five individuals will be elected to represent Districts 4, 6, 8 and 9, as well as large industrial members. A district director must be a member of the cooperative and must reside in the district he or she represents.

Any 15 or more members may make nominations of eligible persons for district director and any five or more large industrial members may make nominations of eligible persons for the industrial director. Such nominations

shall be by signed written petition and must be submitted to the cooperative by 4 p.m. on February 19, 2026. Only members eligible to vote in a district are authorized to sign a petition nominating a member from that district.

Information about the election is available on Kenergy's website, or you may contact Debbie Hayden at (270) 689-6101 or dhayden@kenergycorp.com.



Meet your director



Ryan Hammock
District 3