



2015 RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION



7/6/2015

Vermont Electric Cooperative

Survey Results Prepared by:

NRECA
**MARKET
RESEARCH
SERVICES**

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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2015 Residential Satisfaction

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following are the top-line findings based on the results of a telephone/online survey of 532 residential members of Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) conducted in May and June of 2015:

- Overall satisfaction with VEC is good, with a mean rating of 8.35. The mean satisfaction rating is higher among phone respondents (8.47) than among online respondents (7.97), which is typical when comparing scaled questions in an interview-administered survey to one that is self-administered. The mean rating for overall satisfaction does not differ significantly from 2014 (8.44).
- The mean ratings for 18 of the 23 performance attributes evaluated are above 4.00, which can be considered good. The co-op is rated highest on attributes related to employees, customer service, and electric service reliability. Among telephone respondents, four of the mean attribute ratings improved significantly from the 2014 survey, while among online respondents three declined. One attribute – *keeping members informed on the status of outages* – improved from 2014 for the combined sample and none declined.
- “Member Service” is the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction among VEC members, which is good news because the co-op receives high marks in this area. In fact, the three highest-rated attributes in the study are related to employee performance and member service. Among those who contacted VEC in the past year, evaluations are high and the majority of issues are resolved on the first contact. Not surprisingly, members most often contacted VEC regarding an outage.
- The second-strongest key driver of overall satisfaction among VEC members is “Cost”. As is typical in satisfaction studies, *the monthly service fees, charging reasonable rates, helping customers keep bills as low as possible, and helping members be more efficient in their electric use* are the attributes evaluated least positively in the study. The mean ratings for these attributes as well as *delivering good value for the money* fall below 4.00 and the Co-op Norms. However, among phone respondents the means have improved significantly from 2013 for *charging reasonable rates* and *helping members be more efficient*.
- The next key driver of overall satisfaction is “Electric Service”. VEC is rated positively in this area but opportunity for improvement exists as many of the attributes are evaluated lower than the Co-op Norms. On the other hand, *keeping members informed on the status of outages* is evaluated much higher than the Co-op Norms.
- “Meter Reading and Billing” and “Social Responsibility” are also key drivers of overall satisfaction. Evaluations in these areas are good with mean ratings above 4.0. VEC members continue to place high importance on renewable energy sources, especially hydro and solar. Still, half say they would not pay anything extra for renewable energy.

BACKGROUND

Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) is a consumer-owned electric distribution cooperative headquartered in Johnson, Vermont with service centers in Grand Isle, Newport, and Richford. VEC currently serves approximately 34,000 residential members in 74 communities with more than 2,800 miles of distribution line over 2,006 square miles in northern Vermont.



VEC has previously conducted residential member satisfaction studies with the most recent survey completed in 2014. The results of tracking surveys provide value by demonstrating when results remain consistent and indicating where there has been significant change over time. The co-op has experienced some recent events that are likely to have an impact on attitudes and satisfaction:

- The last rate increase was in January 2014. The co-op communicated the increase through bill messages, billing inserts and their *Co-op Life* newsletter.
- VEC implemented SmartHub in 2014 and adopted the VEC Community Fund which supports local organizations that promote community development and economic security. VEC is planning increased emphasis on their Beat the Peak program in 2015.
- Winter Storm Damon impacted VEC's entire service area in December of 2014 causing 669 separate outage events impacting 13,000 VEC members. VEC restored 44,620 outages throughout the eight day event. Many members experienced multiple outages.

OBJECTIVES

This residential member survey addresses but is not limited to the following informational objectives:

- **Overall Satisfaction:** Assess how satisfied members are with Vermont Electric Cooperative.
- **Performance Quality Attributes:** Evaluate residential member perceptions of service quality on a variety of attributes (e.g., rates, billing, outages, problem resolution, etc.).
- **Performance Quality Trends and Benchmarks:** Compare the results to past studies to identify trends and benchmark the results against co-ops nationwide using NRECA's Co-op Norms Database.
- **Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts:** Derive the key drivers of overall satisfaction and to what degree consumer needs are being met to help VEC prioritize any improvement efforts.
- **Member Identity:** Estimate the proportion of consumers who identify themselves as member-owners, member-customers, or just customers of the co-op.
- **Other:** Explore other areas of specific interest to the co-op, including perceived importance of power sources, benefit from Efficiency Vermont, and readership of the co-op newsletter.
- **Member Demographics and Segmentation:** Provide demographics of the residential membership base and identify differences in attitudes between segments.

METHODOLOGY

As in 2014, data were collected through telephone and online surveying. Telephone interviewers were thoroughly trained on interviewing techniques and on the questionnaire prior to initiating the survey. During this training, the survey instrument was reviewed to ensure that all surveys would be completed in the same manner. On average, the telephone interviews lasted approximately 12 minutes.

Telephone surveys were completed with a total of 375 residential members of Vermont Electric Co-op between May 20 and June 13, 2015, with random sampling done proportionate to connect date and district. Of those contacted, 305 declined to participate, resulting in a response rate of 55%.

An e-mail invitation was sent to a random sample of 1,250 members for whom VEC has an e-mail address, with 65 returned as being undeliverable. A total of 157 surveys were completed online, resulting in a response rate of 13%. The data are weighted so that the online methodology represents 25% of the total data.

The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample is plus or minus 5.0 percentage points. This means that a result of 50% in the survey may range between 45% and 55% in an infinite number of residential samples this size.

ANALYSIS

The graphics presented in this report are based on data collected from the current study and tracking results from eleven studies conducted between 2003 and 2014. Comparisons are also made to results from similar studies conducted by 75 co-ops among more than 24,000 residential members across the nation between January 2011 and December 2014. These “Co-op Norms” are not taken from the universe of all cooperatives; rather these are co-ops who value, monitor and measure the satisfaction of their members and therefore represent higher performing co-ops, not all co-ops.

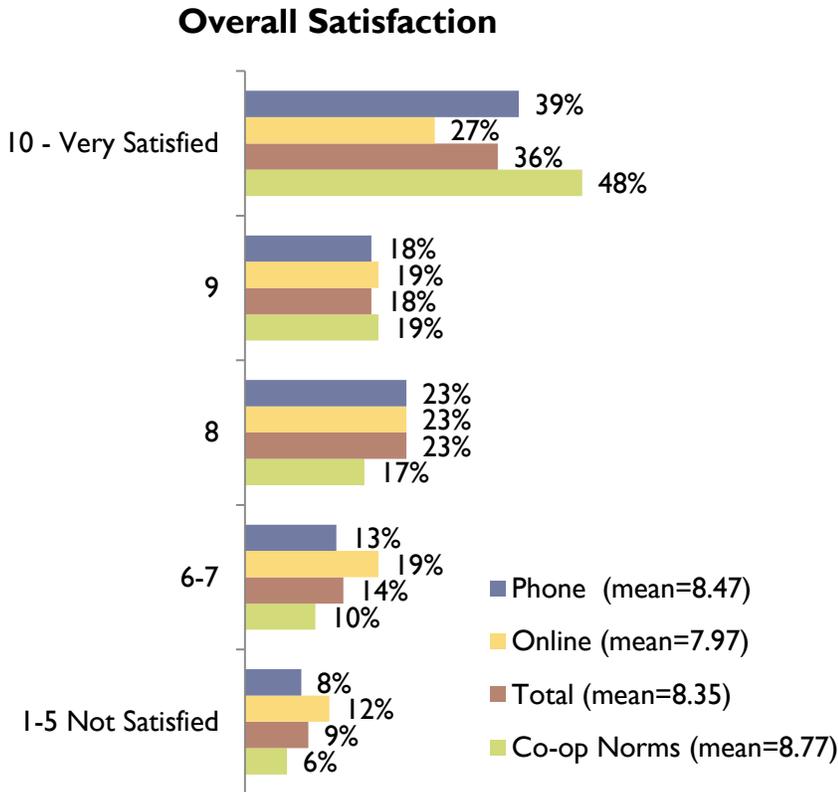
Differences between member segments, such as differences by age or service tenure, are pointed out and characterized as being either statistically significant or not. When the term “significant” is used, this refers to the certainty of a difference, not the magnitude or size of the difference. Significance is measured at the 95% confidence level, meaning that 95% of the time or more this difference will occur; the difference is likely not a matter of chance due to sampling.

When evaluating the mean ratings in this report, on a 5-point scale a mean of 4.50 or above should be considered “excellent” and a mean between 4.00 and 4.49 is considered “good”. Means below 4.00 may be cause for concern and those below 3.75 indicate problems and a need for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS

Overall Satisfaction

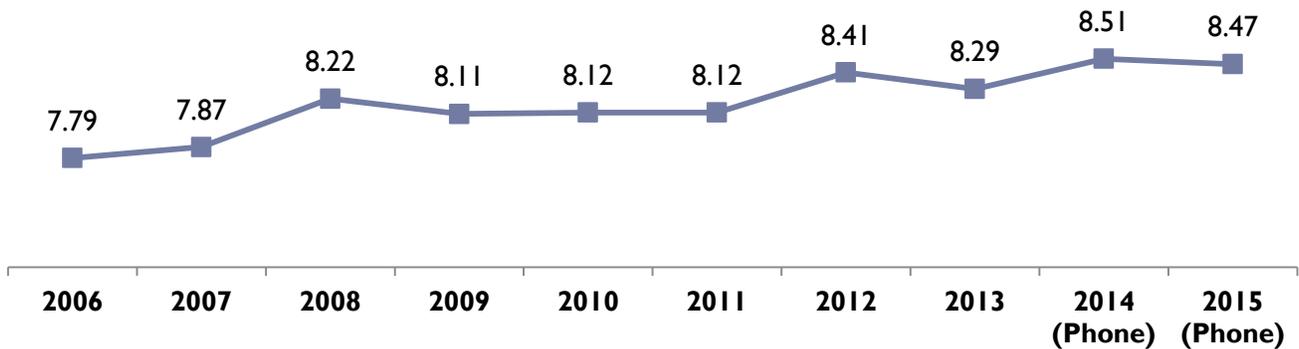
Overall satisfaction among Vermont Electric Cooperative’s residential members is good. The mean overall satisfaction rating is 8.35 on a 10-point scale and 54% give ratings of “9” or “10”.



As is typical, members who responded to the survey online rate their satisfaction significantly lower than phone respondents do.

The mean satisfaction rating among VEC members has not changed significantly from 2014 among phone and/or online respondents. However, it is lower than the Co-op Norms mean of 8.77. Among phone respondents, the mean rating of 8.47 is significantly higher than surveys conducted from 2006 to 2011.

Mean Satisfaction by Year
(Telephone Survey Ratings Only)



Performance Quality Attributes

Members were asked to evaluate 23 performance quality attributes related to member service, electric service, communication, billing, and cost. On 18 of the attributes measured, the mean ratings are higher than 4.00, a “good” rating on a 5-point scale.

Additionally, mean ratings for four attributes are near or above 4.50 which can be considered excellent. Ninety percent or more rate each of the following positively (“4” or “5”):

- Having professional employees (4.53)
- The overall customer service they provide (4.50)
- The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems (4.50)
- Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts (4.48)

Conversely, the attributes on which VEC is rated least well are *charging reasonable rates* (54% rating “4” or “5”) and *the monthly service fees* (55%). These are areas that are often rated lower in cooperative satisfaction research and means often fall below the “good” threshold of 4.00. However, with mean ratings well below 4.0 (3.49 and 3.50 respectively), this is an area for improvement in members’ perceptions.

Telephone respondents give higher ratings than do online respondents on all of the performance attributes and almost all of the differences are statistically significant. Mean ratings among phone respondents are above 4.00 for all but five attributes, including seven that are near or above 4.50. Among online respondents, mean ratings are approximately 4.00 or higher for all but eight attributes, and none exceed 4.50.

Performance Quality Trends and Benchmarks

The mean rating for one performance quality attribute has improved significantly from 2014 and none have declined.

The one attribute that has improved significantly from 2014 for the total sample (phone and online respondents combined) is *keeping members informed on status of outages*, for which the mean rating increased from 3.94 to 4.09. In addition, the mean ratings among phone respondents increased significantly from a recent survey for the following attributes. Almost all the attribute evaluations have improved significantly from at least one survey conducted before 2011. The exception is the *accuracy of meter reading and billing*, for which the mean in 2015 is significantly lower than 2011 and does not differ significantly from any other surveys.

Phone Survey Respondents Only	Improved Sig. from 2014	Improved Sig. from 2013	Improved Sig. from 2012	Improved Sig. from 2011
Overall customer service provided	X			
Demonstrating concern for best interests	X			
Speed and efficiency of responding to members	X			
Helping members be more efficient in use	X	X		
Charging reasonable rates		X		
Convenient payment options		X		
Reliability of service and frequency of interruptions				X

On the other hand, when looking at just the online survey respondents, mean ratings have declined significantly from 2014 for the following three attributes:

- The overall customer service they provide
- The courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to your inquiries or problems
- Providing accurate and easy to understand bills

On most of the comparable attributes, mean ratings among VEC members are lower than the Co-op Norms. The attributes with the biggest gaps between mean ratings are shown below. Mean ratings shown for both VEC and the Co-op Norms include online survey respondents as well as telephone.

Phone and Survey Respondents Combined	VEC Mean Rating	Co-op Norms Mean Rating	Gap
Keeping members informed on status of outages	4.09	3.92	+0.17
Charging reasonable rates	3.49	3.84	-0.35
Supporting the local community	4.18	4.49	-0.31
Delivering good value for the money	3.87	4.17	-0.30
Helping members to be more efficient in electric use	3.76	4.06	-0.30
Operating with concern for the environment	4.25	4.45	-0.20
The restoration of power after an outage	4.26	4.46	-0.20
Their monthly service fees	3.50	3.70	-0.20
Providing accurate and easy to understand bills	4.35	4.54	-0.19
Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum	4.32	4.51	-0.19
Resolving any issues or problems	4.28	4.44	-0.16
Having convenient payment options	4.39	4.54	-0.15

Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts

The key drivers of overall satisfaction among residential members are: member service, cost, electric service, meter reading and billing, and social responsibility. Going forward, these are the areas that Vermont Electric Cooperative should focus on most.

Regression analysis was used to determine the key drivers of overall satisfaction. The scores are to be interpreted relative to each other. For example, since *member service* has a score of 0.45 and *meter reading and billing* has a score of 0.18, we can say that members’ perceptions of the employees and the member service they receive have 2.5 times the impact on overall satisfaction as their perceptions of meter reading and billing. Attributes and factors not shown below are not significant drivers of overall satisfaction. More information on how the factors were formed and importance scores derived can be found in Appendix A.

Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction

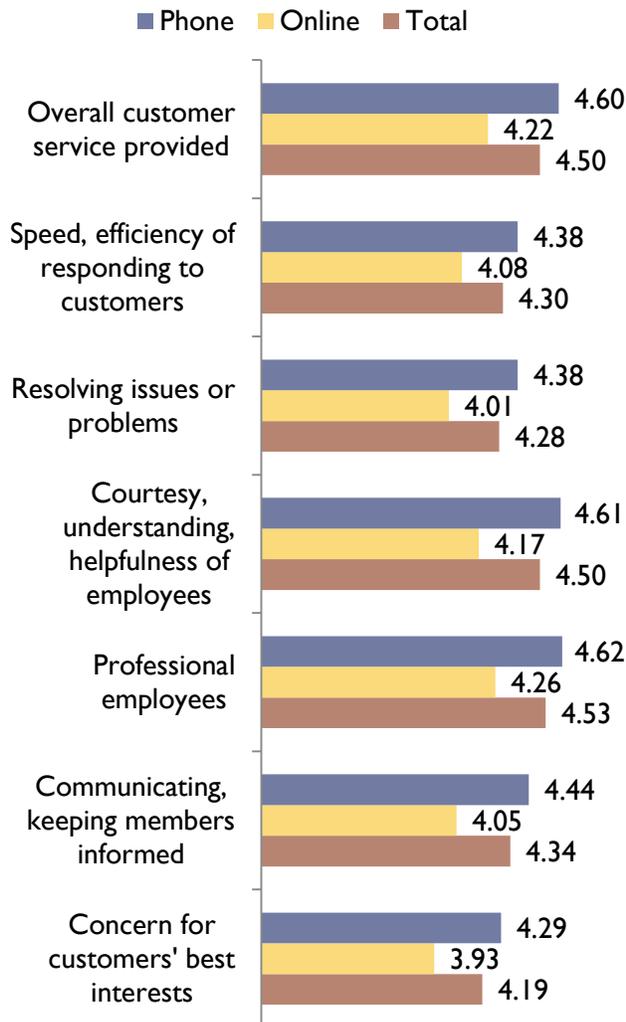
Member Service	Cost	Electric Service	Meter Reading & Billing	Social Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall customer service provided • Speed and efficiency of responding • Resolving any issues or problems • Courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness • Professional employees • Communicating with members • Concern for best interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging reasonable rates • Helping customers keep bills as low as possible • The monthly service fees • Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum • Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum • The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions • The restoration of power after an outage • Consistent voltage without surges or brownouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing accurate, easy to understand bills • The accuracy of meter reading and billing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating with concern for the environment • Supporting the local community
0.45	0.41	0.39	0.18	0.11

Member Service

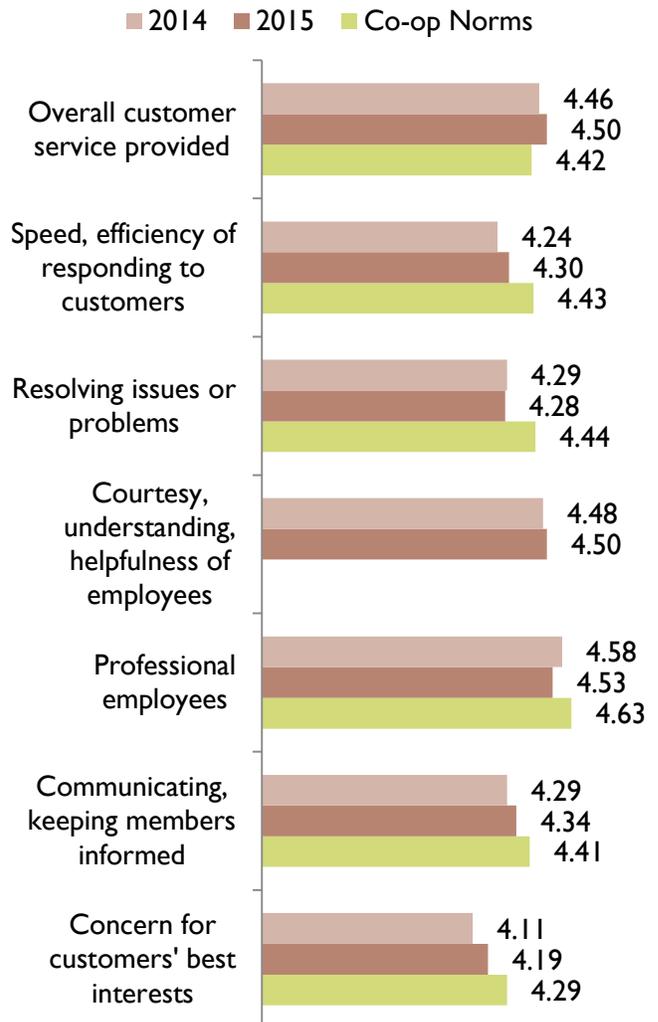
“Member Service” is the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction. This is an area in which VEC receives very positive ratings.

Having professional employees; the courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems; and the overall customer service they provide are rated as excellent with means at or above 4.50. None of the mean ratings for attributes associated with this key driver have changed significantly from 2014 for the total data (phone and online respondents), although several have improved significantly among just phone survey respondents. At the same time, the mean ratings for two attributes declined significantly among online respondents: overall customer service and courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees.

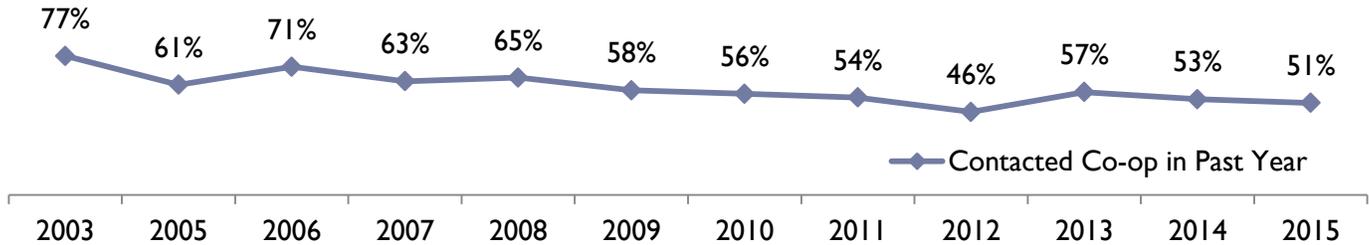
2015 Mean Ratings by Method



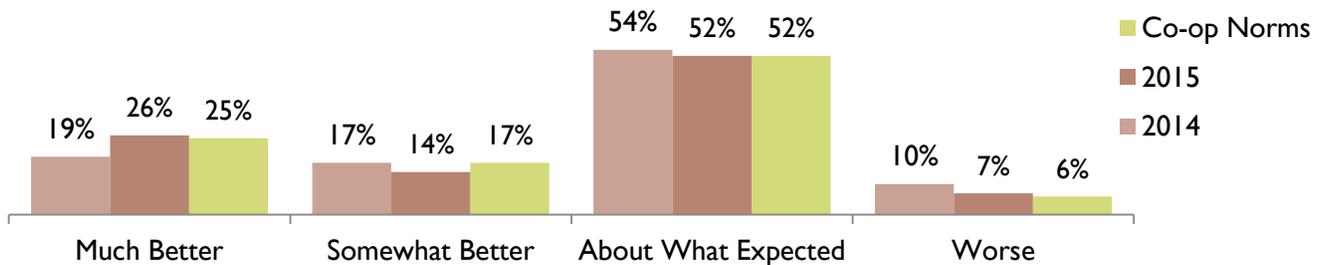
Mean Ratings by Year



Approximately half of the members say they have contacted VEC over the past year. This is similar to 2014 and the Co-op Norms. Those less satisfied with the co-op, those paying higher electric bills, those living in larger households, younger members and those currently employed are significantly more likely than their counterparts to have contacted the co-op. In addition, online respondents are significantly more likely to have contacted VEC than are phone respondents (61% vs. 48%).



Contact Evaluation



Similar to the 2014 study and the Co-op Norms, 40% say their contact with VEC was somewhat or much better than expected, and very few say it was worse. Of those who contacted VEC, 51% did so to report or get information on an outage. Contact evaluations are lowest among those who called regarding general service. Ratings are highest among those with billing questions and those who only contacted VEC once.

Reason for Most Recent Contact	% of Those Who Contact	% Evaluate "Much Better"	Number of Contacts*	% of Those Who Contact	% Evaluate "Much Better"
Outage	51%	20%	1	72%	29%
Bill question	6%	31%	2	17%	16%
Tree Trimming	6%	26%	3-4	5%	13%
General svc	6%	12%	5+	3%	0%

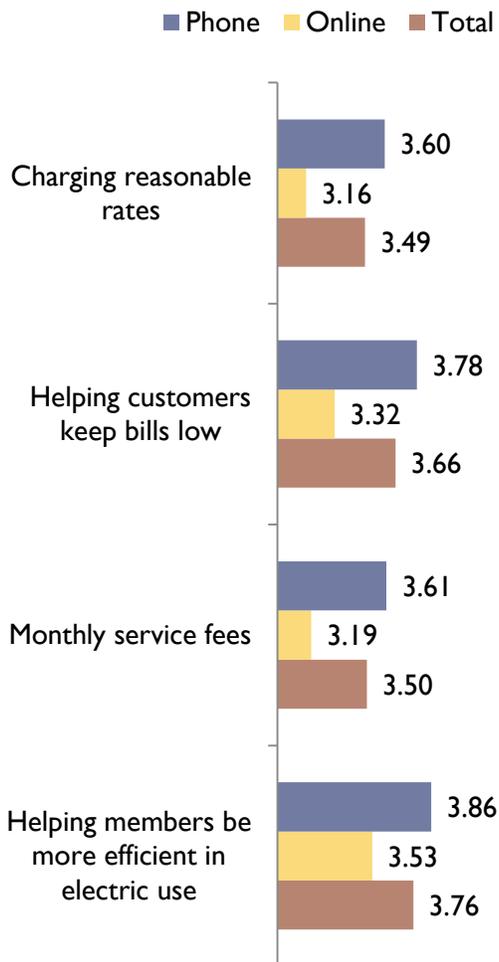
*Number of contacts does not include those who were paying bills

Cost and Value

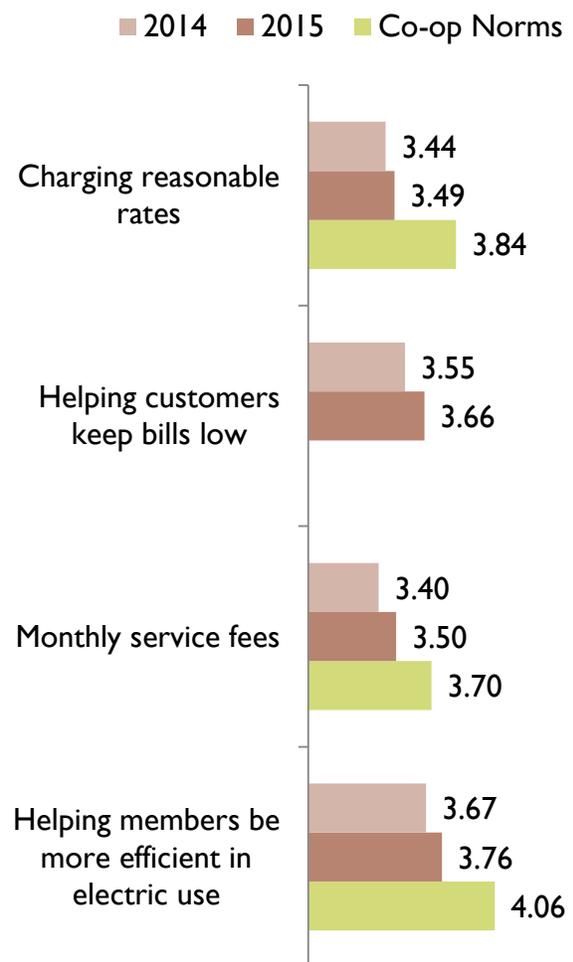
The second-strongest key driver of overall satisfaction is “Cost”. This is the area that includes the lowest rated attributes in the study, which is very typical in studies of this type.

The mean ratings continue to be below the Co-op Norms in regards to the rates, fees, and help using electricity more efficiently. However, evaluations have improved from the 2013 and 2014 studies, especially among phone respondents.

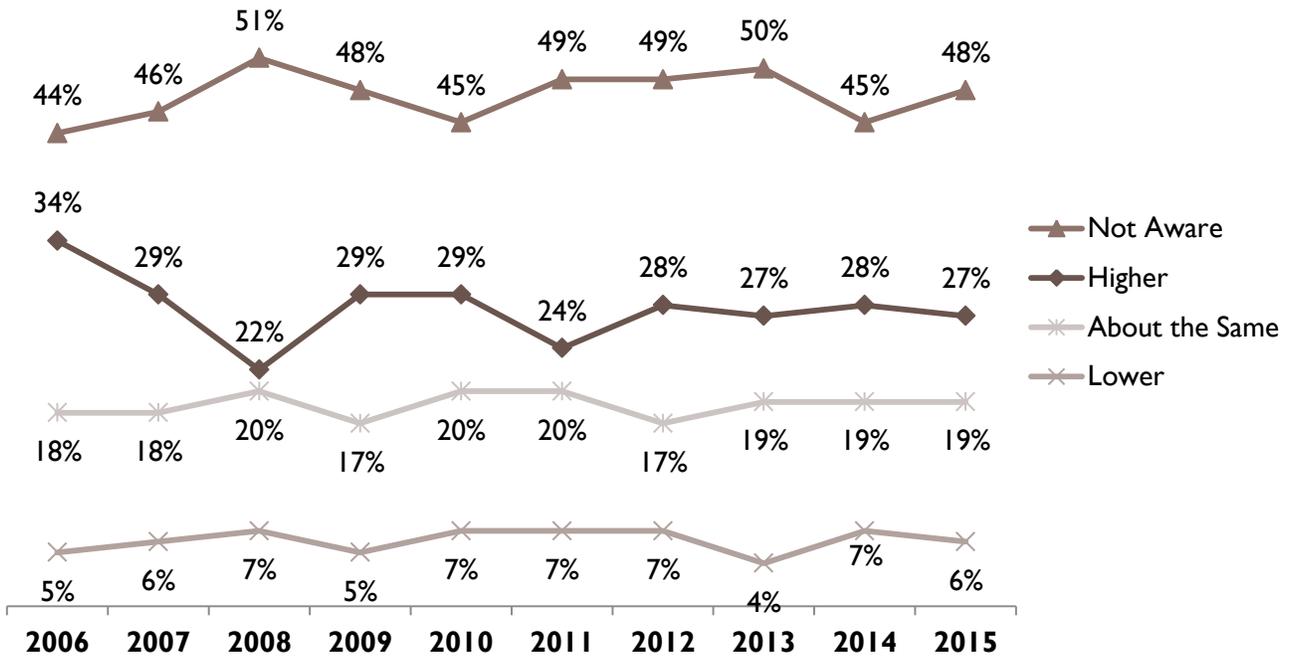
2015 Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year

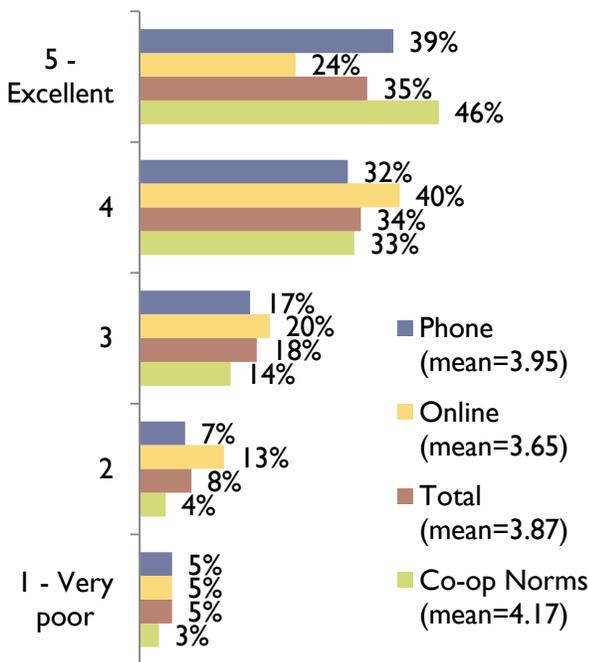


VEC's Rates Compared to Other Electric Companies



Similar to recent studies, about half of the members are not aware of how their rates compare to other electric companies. Those less satisfied with the co-op and those paying higher electric bills are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to think their rates are higher.

Value for the Money



A regression analysis was also conducted to determine the key drivers of *delivering good value for the money*. As seen in the table, it was found that five factors are significant drivers of value. Although the perception of the cost of electricity has the strongest impact by far on the value members feel they receive, it is not the only factor that enters into the “value equation” among members of VEC.

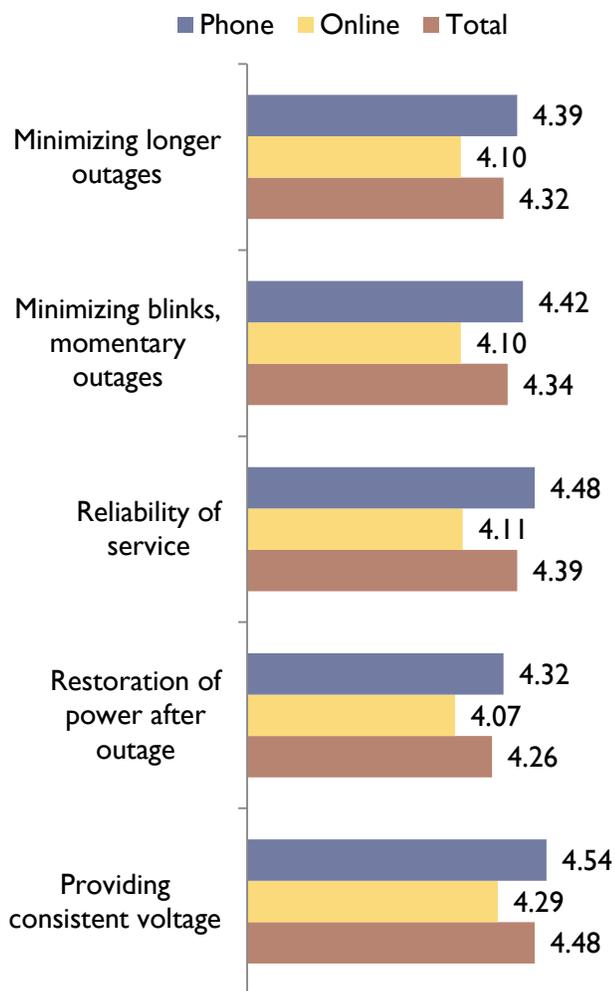
Key Drivers of Value	
Cost	0.57
Member Service	0.40
Electric Service	0.23
Social Responsibility	0.23
Meter Reading & Billing	0.14

Electric Service

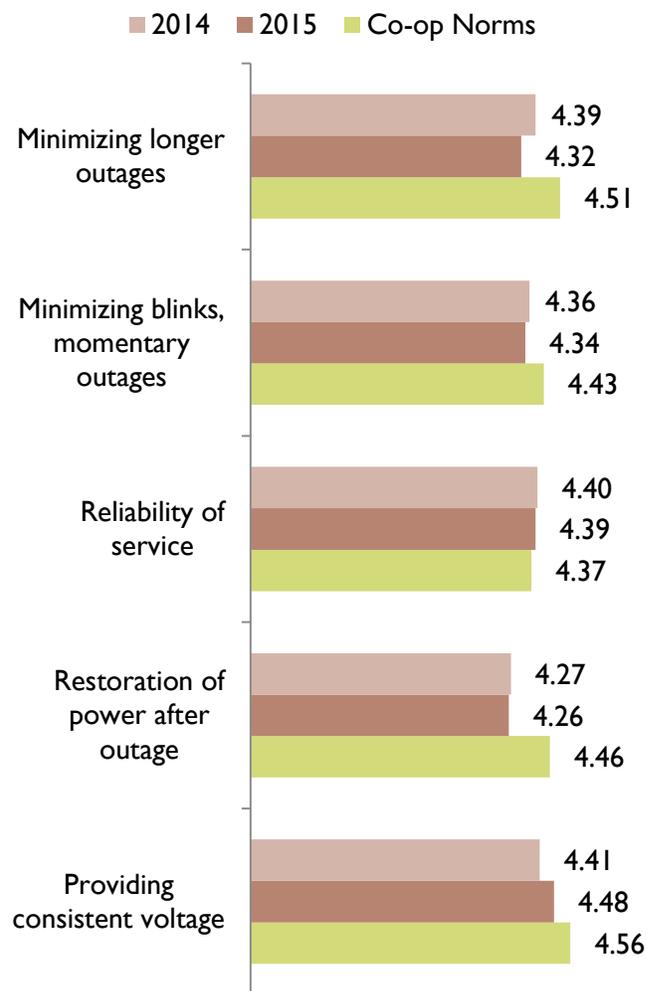
“Electric Service” is the next key driver of overall satisfaction. Electric Service is another area in which the co-op receives positive performance ratings.

The mean ratings for the attributes that make up this key driver are well above 4.00. None have changed significantly from 2014, but they are significantly higher than most studies conducted between 2006 and 2010. The means for *keeping longer outages to a minimum* and *restoration of power after an outage* are lower than the Co-op Norms.

2015 Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year

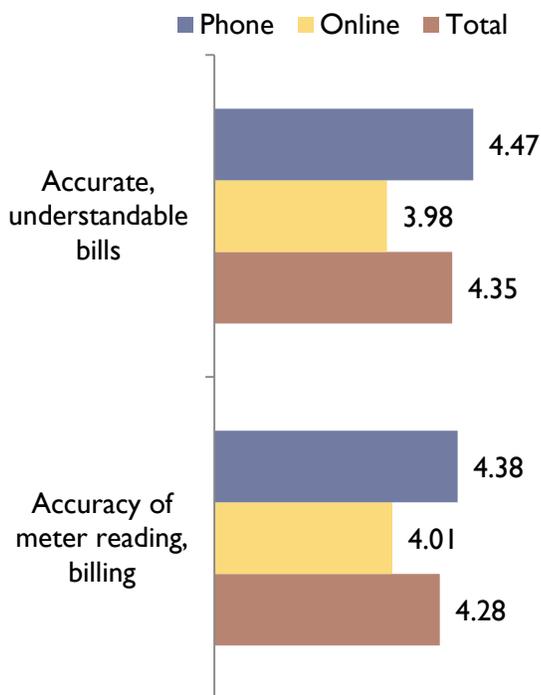


Meter Reading and Billing

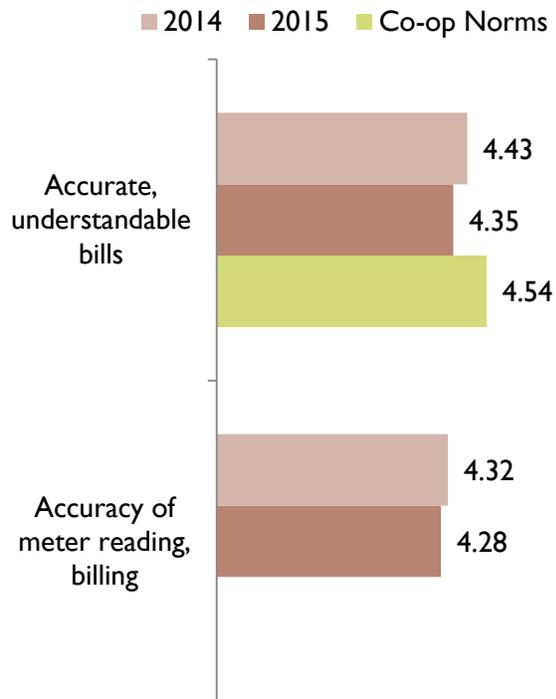
The next key driver of overall satisfaction is “Meter Reading and Billing”. Again, this is an area in which VEC is rated very well with mean ratings above 4.0.

Mean ratings for the two attributes in this key driver have not changed significantly from 2014. Among phone respondents, the mean rating for *the accuracy of meter reading and billing* is significantly lower than 2011. *Providing accurate and easy to understand bills* has a mean rating below the Coop Norms.

2015 Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year

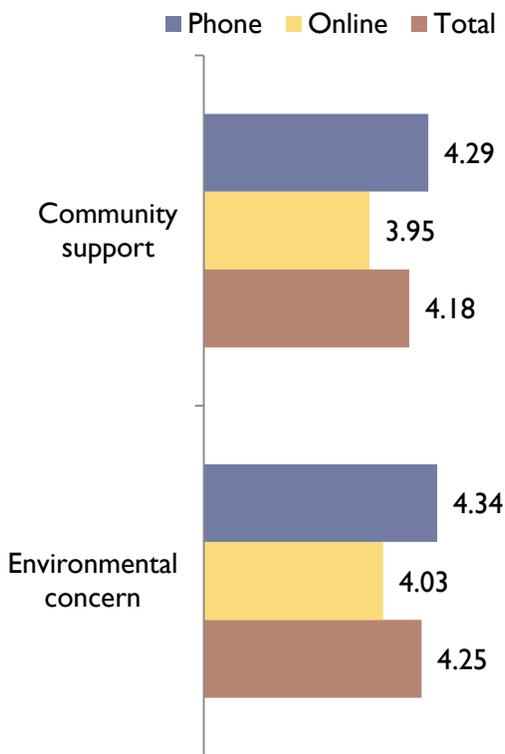


Social Responsibility

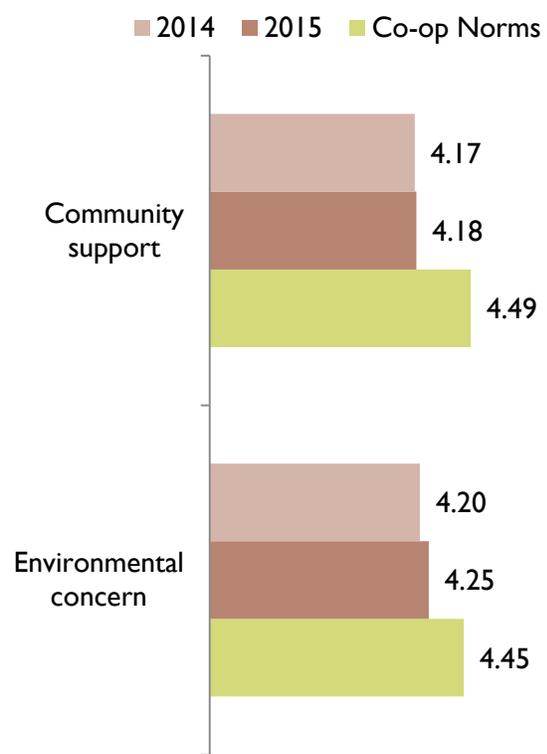
The final key driver of overall satisfaction is “Social Responsibility”. This is another area in which the co-op is evaluated positively.

Mean ratings are above the 4.0 “good” threshold for these two attributes. Although mean ratings have not changed significantly from any of the recent studies, they are lower than the Co-op Norms.

2015 Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year

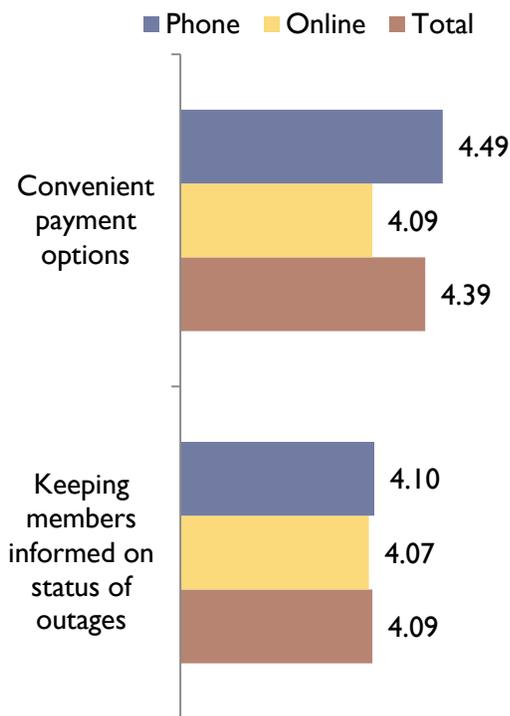


Other Attributes

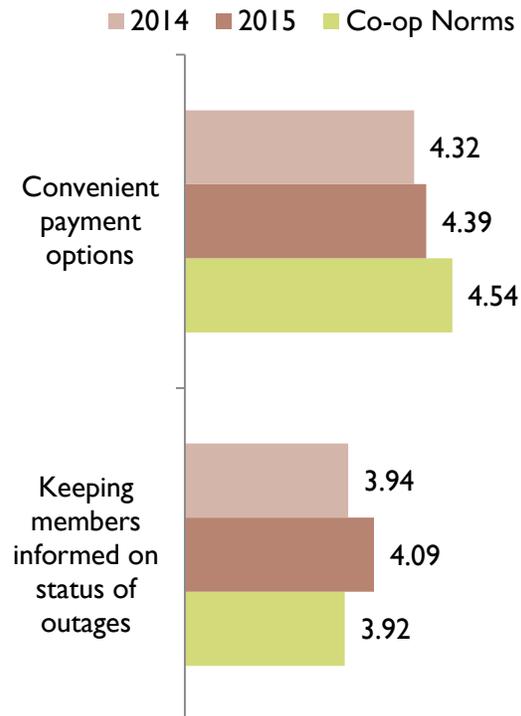
Two performance attributes are not significant drivers of overall satisfaction, but are areas where VEC performs well and should keep up the good work.

Mean ratings are above the 4.0 “good” threshold for *having convenient payment options* and *keeping members informed on the status of outages*. In addition, the mean rating for *keeping members informed on the status of outages* has increased significantly from the 2014 study and is higher than the Co-op Norms. Among phone respondents, *having convenient payment options* has improved significantly from 2013.

2015 Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year



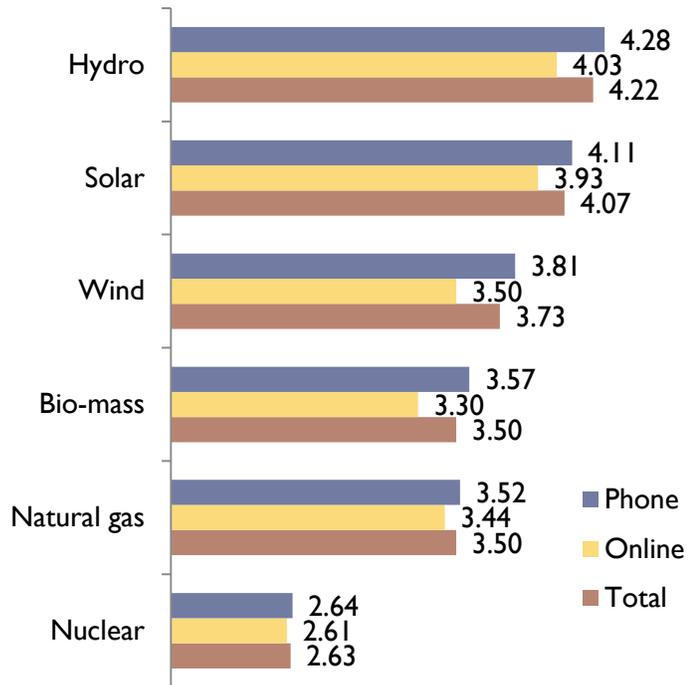
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Approximately three-quarters of the members give high ratings (“4” or “5”) for the importance of VEC providing power from hydro or solar sources. Importance ratings are lower for wind, bio-mass, natural gas, and especially nuclear.

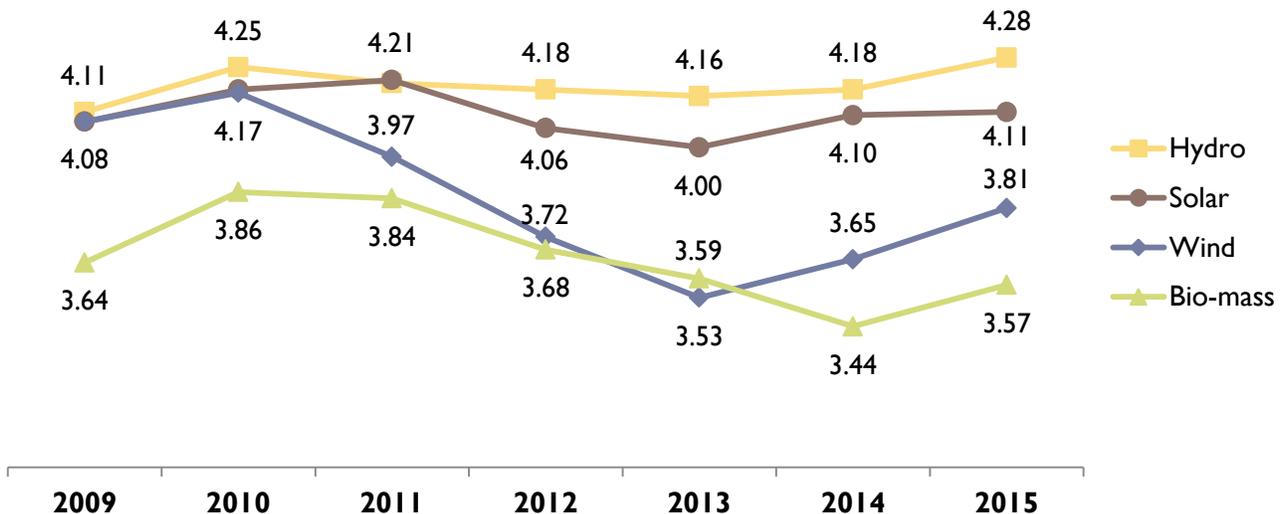
The mean importance rating for wind is up significantly from 2013 but down compared to 2009, 2010 and 2011. The mean rating for bio-mass has also decreased significantly from 2010 and 2011.

Those more satisfied with the co-op overall place higher importance on wind, hydro, bio-mass, and natural gas power. Females give higher ratings than males for wind power while males give higher ratings than females for hydro, bio-mass, natural gas, and nuclear power.

Importance of Power Sources
2015 Mean Ratings



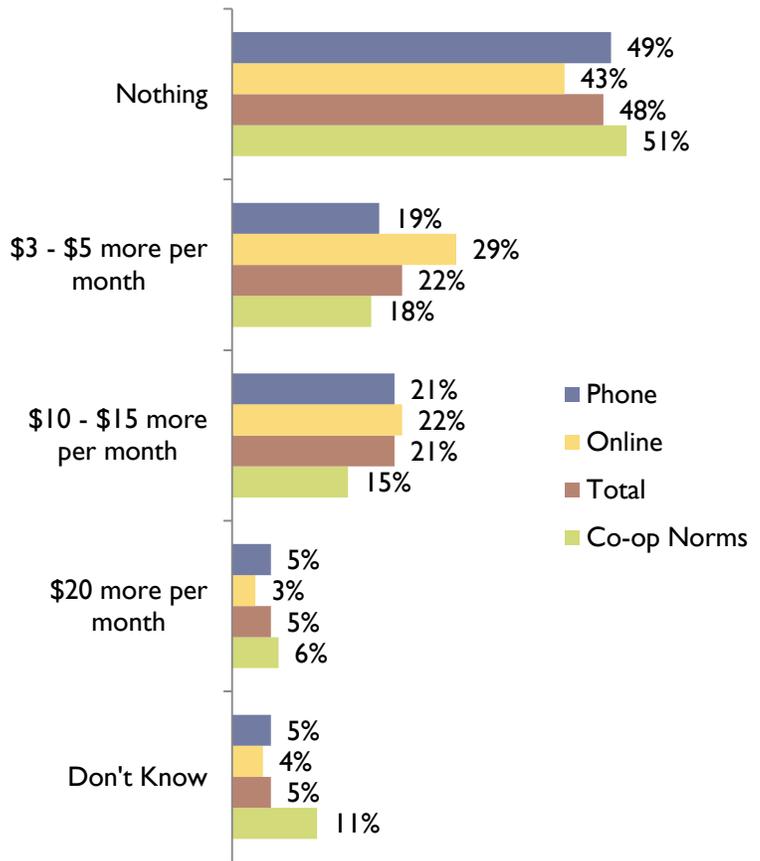
Mean Ratings by Year
(Phone Respondents Only)



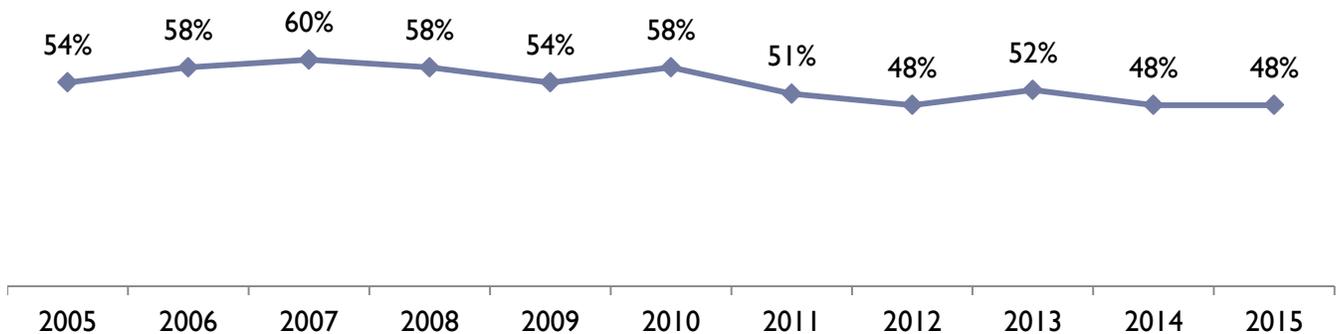
Although half say they are not willing to pay anything extra each month for renewable energy, one-quarter say they would be willing to pay \$10 or more per month. The proportion of members who are willing to pay something extra to get renewable power is identical to 2014. The proportion who say they are not willing to pay more for renewable power continues to be significantly higher than in most studies prior to 2011.

Newer members, those paying lower electric bills, and those currently employed are significantly more willing than their individual counterparts to pay something extra.

How Much More Willing to Pay for Renewable Power



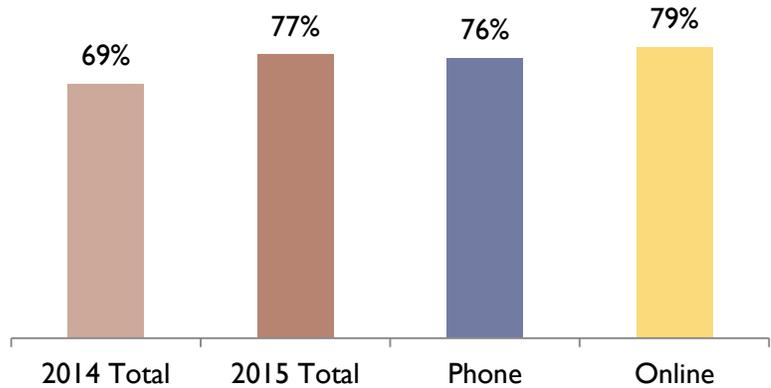
Willing To Pay Additional Amount (\$3 or More)



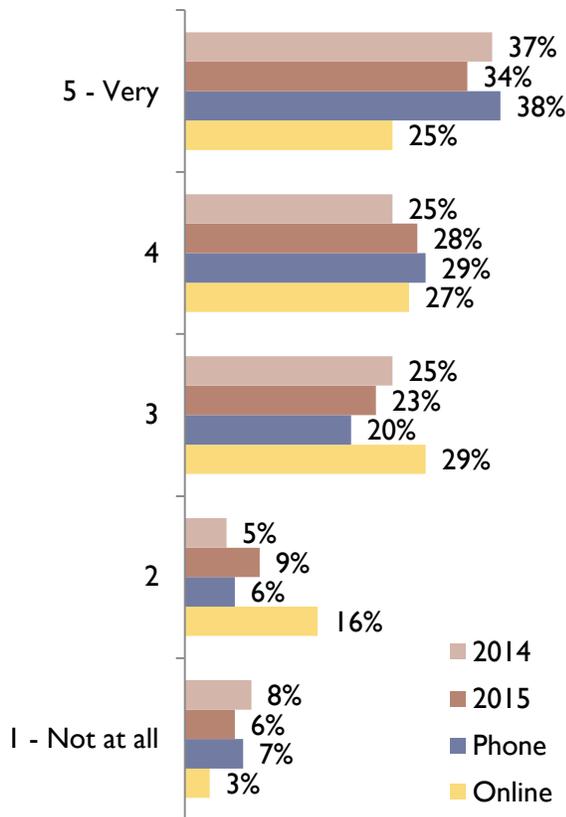
About three-quarters say they have heard of the energy efficiency utility Efficiency Vermont. This is significantly higher than 2014.

Among those aware of Efficiency Vermont, 62% give high ratings for how beneficial it is for consumers, which is consistent with the 2013 and 2014 studies, and 42% give high ratings for how beneficial it is to them, personally. There are few significant differences between member segments in either awareness of Efficiency Vermont or the perceived benefit.

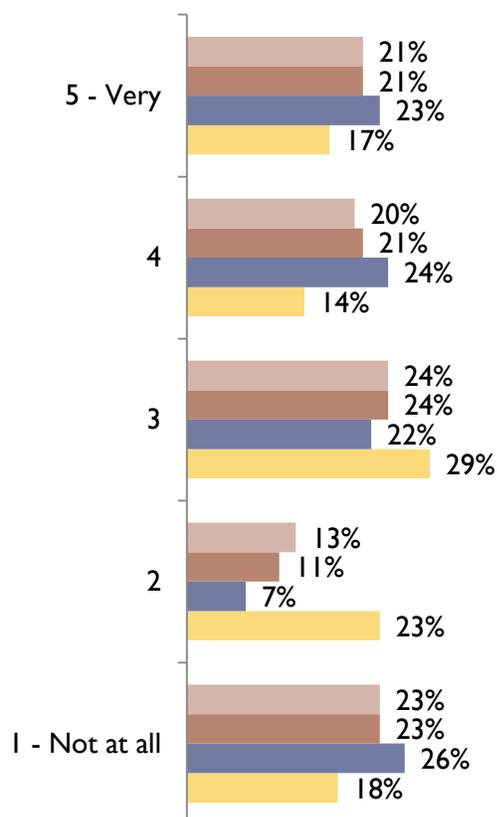
Have Heard of Efficiency Vermont



How Beneficial for Vermont Consumers

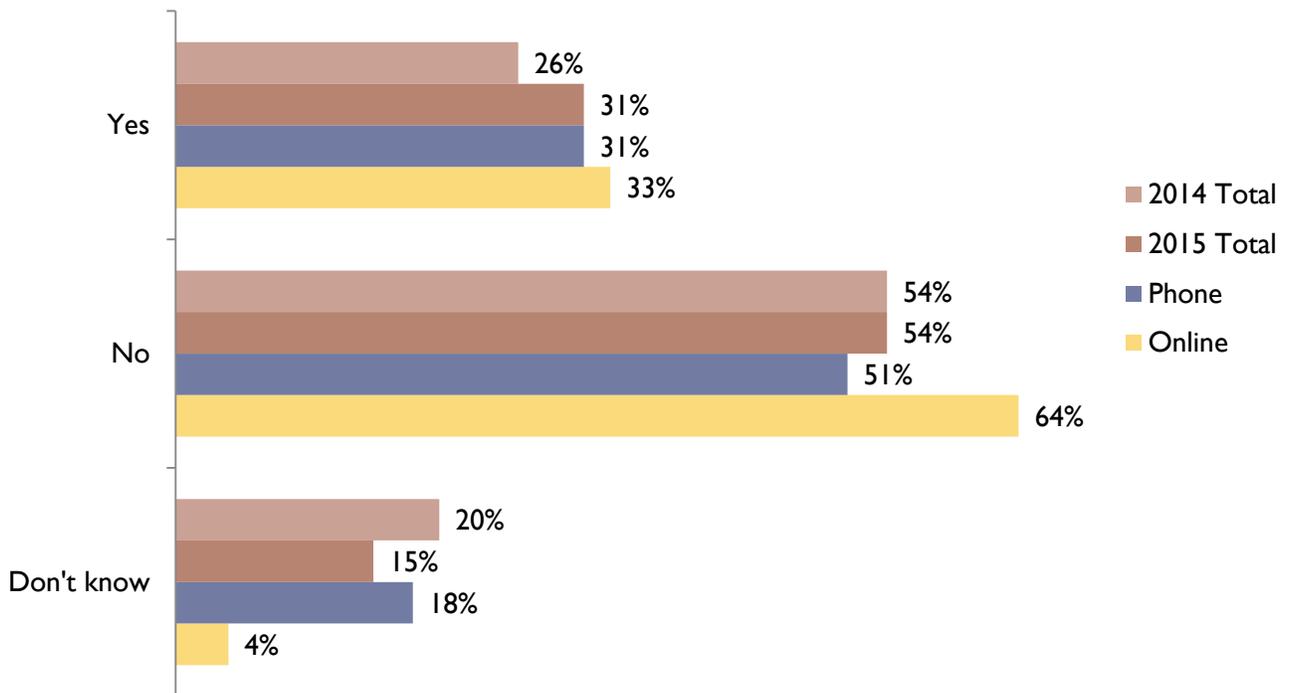


How Beneficial for Members, Personally



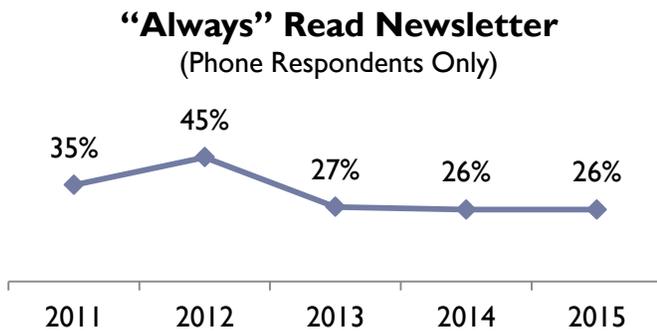
Three in ten members say they would support an electric rate increase if it were caused by Vermont state requirements to increase the amount of renewables in VEC's portfolio of electric generation sources. Those less satisfied with VEC overall are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to say they would not support a rate increase for this reason. Those with 20 or more years of tenure and those living in smaller households are significantly more likely than their counterparts to be unsure.

Would Support Rate Increase if Caused by Vermont State Requirements to Increase Amount of Renewables in Portfolio of Electric Generation Sources

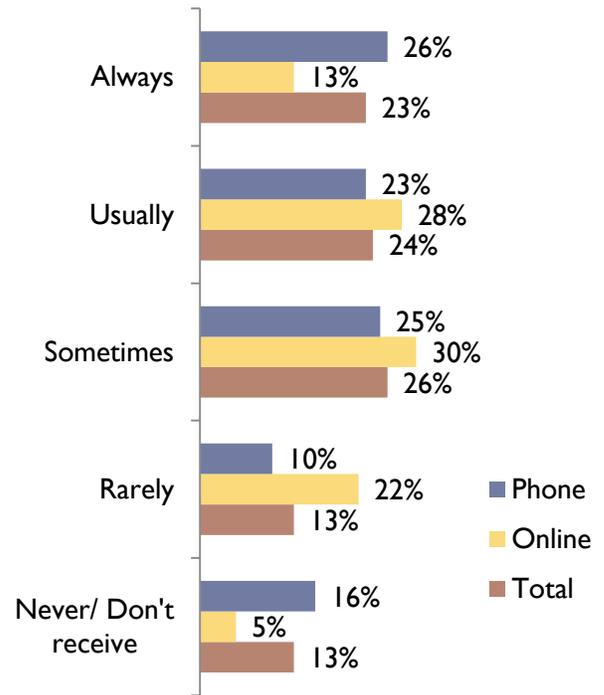


Communication

Twenty-three percent say they always read *Co-op Life*. Older members, longer-tenured members, those living alone or with one other person, and retired members are significantly more likely than their counterparts to say they always read the newsletter.

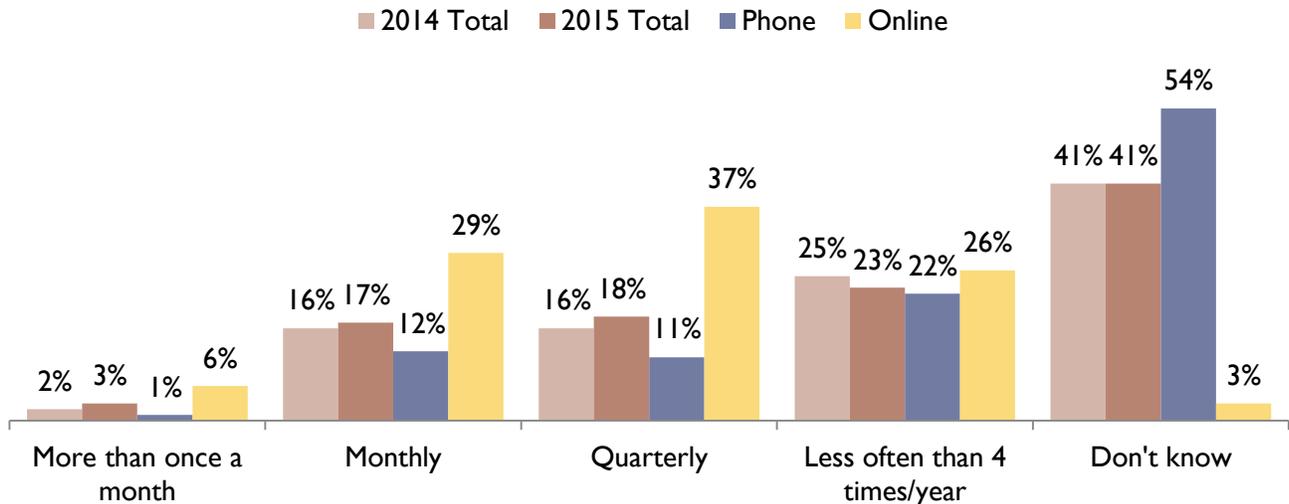


Frequency of Reading *Co-op Life* Newsletter



Four in ten members say they would like e-mails from the co-op on a quarterly basis or less often. This is similar to the 2014 study.

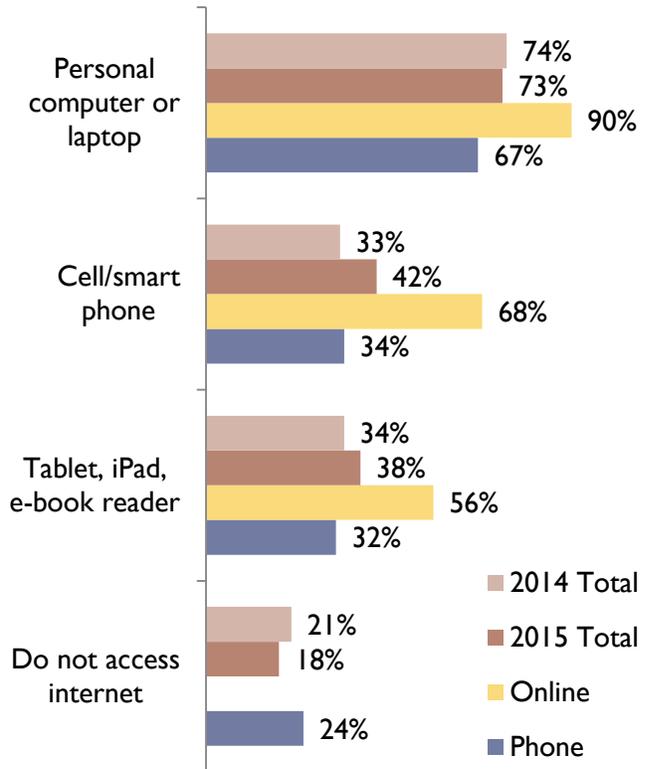
How Often Would Prefer to Receive E-Mail From Co-op



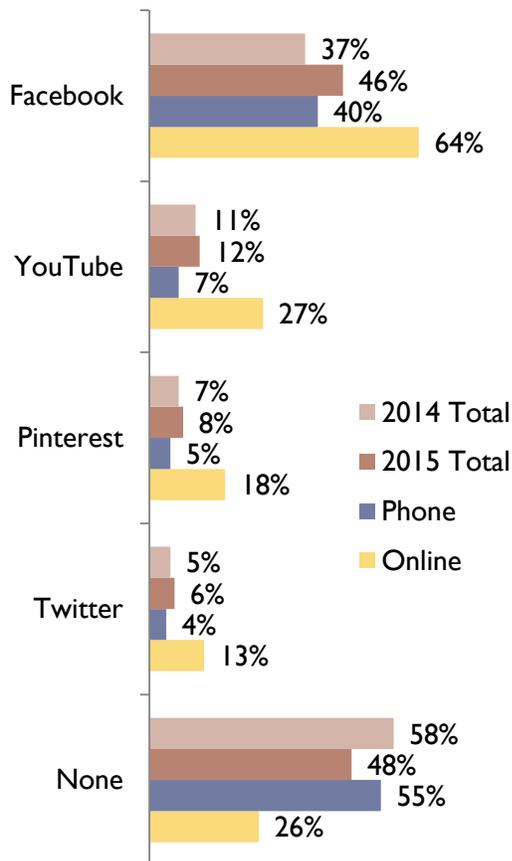
Among phone respondents, three-quarters have Internet access, most often through a personal computer or laptop. Internet access through a smartphone has increased significantly from 2014. Social media use has also increased significantly from 2014, especially Facebook.

Younger members, newer members, those living with at least one other person, those paying higher electric bills, and those who are currently employed are also significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to have Internet access and use social media.

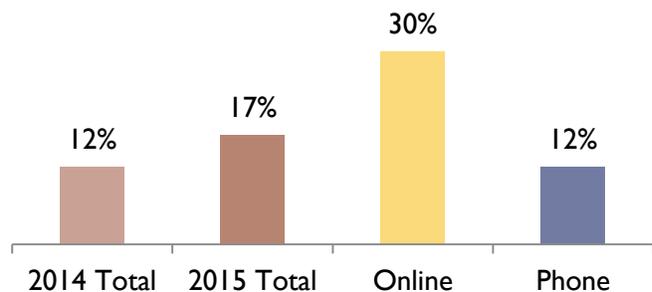
Device(s) Used to Connect to Internet



Participate in Online Social Media Group

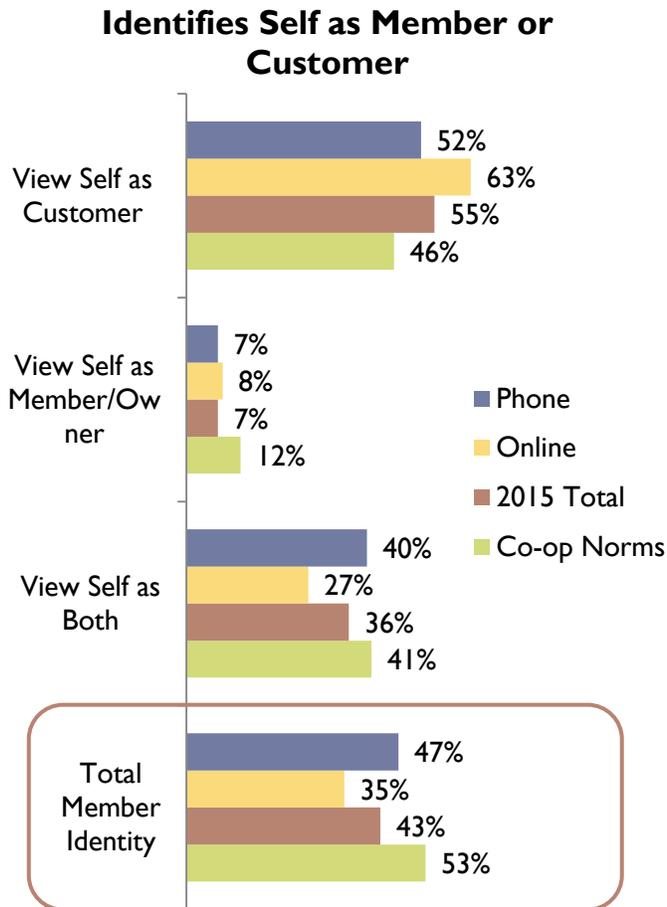


Aware VEC Has Facebook Page



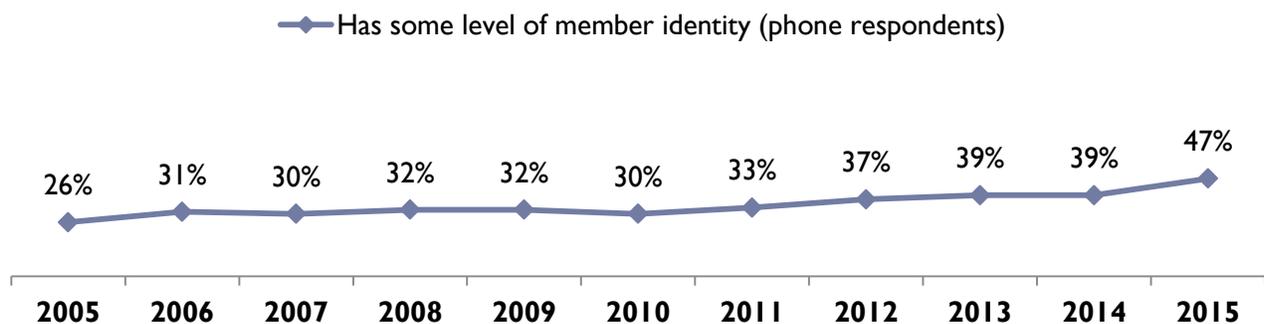
Member Identity

Forty-three percent have member identity, viewing themselves as a member-owner or both a member-owner and a customer, as opposed to feeling they are just a customer. Member identity is significantly higher than most past studies among phone respondents.



Those who are more satisfied with VEC overall, older members, longer-tenured members, those living alone and retired members are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to have member identity.

Those with member identity give significantly more positive evaluations than do those who view themselves as “customers” on overall satisfaction and all of the attributes. “Members” are also significantly more likely to feel that Efficiency Vermont is beneficial, support an electric rate increase, read the *Co-op Life* newsletter, and believe VEC’s rates to be lower than other electric companies.



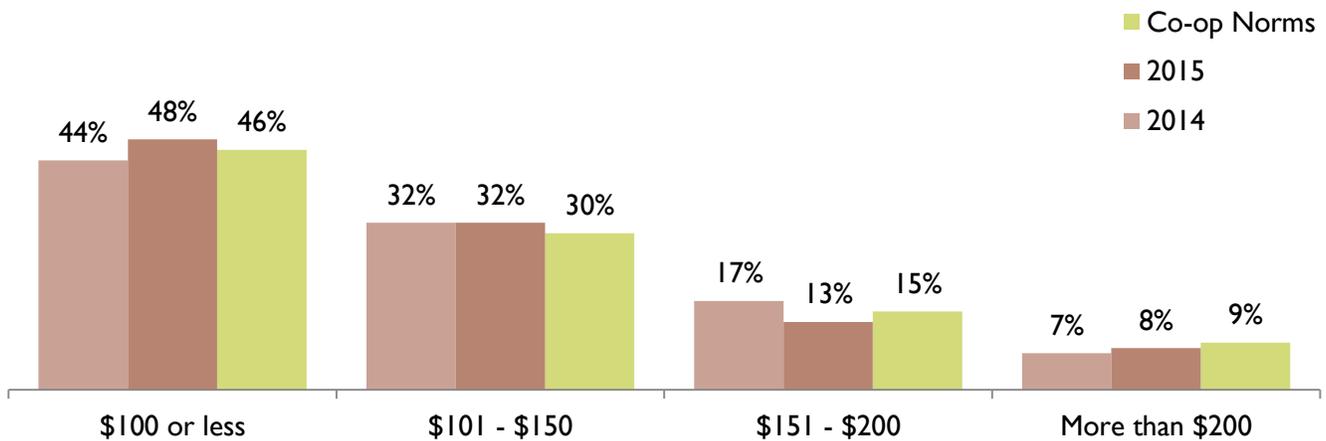
Member Demographics and Segmentation

Four in ten responding members are 65 years of age or older and 48% have received their electricity from VEC for 20 years or more.

Phone respondents are significantly more likely to be 65 years of age or older and served by the co-op for more than 20 years than are online respondents. Online respondents are significantly more likely to live in household of 6 or more and to be employed full-time. Compared to the Co-op Norms, VEC members are longer-served and are more likely to be employed.

	2015	2015 (Online)	2015 (Phone)	2014	Co-op Norms
Under 55	34%	33%	33%	33%	36%
55 to 64	27%	37%	24%	28%	25%
65 or Older	40%	30%	43%	38%	38%
Served < 10 Years	23%	24%	22%	27%	38%
Served 10 – 19 Years	30%	37%	28%	28%	24%
Served 20+ Years	48%	40%	50%	46%	39%
1 or 2 in Household	70%	63%	73%	72%	70%
Employed FT/PT	54%	59%	53%	54%	49%
Retired	40%	33%	42%	41%	43%

Average Monthly Electric Bill



Member segments that give significantly higher ratings than their counterparts for their overall satisfaction include those with member identity, those 65 or older, those served by the co-op for 20 years or more, those paying lower electric bills, those living alone, and retired members.

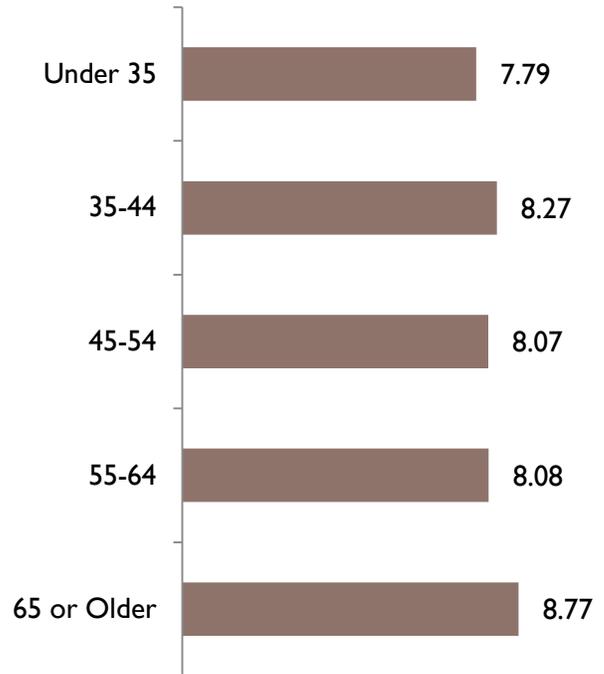
These member segments also tend to give more positive evaluations of the service attributes, although not all of the differences are statistically significant. In addition to giving lower performance ratings, younger members are significantly less likely than older members to:

- Feel they are a member-owner of the co-op
- Read the *Co-op Life* newsletter
- Feel hydro power is important
- Believe VEC’s rates are the same as other utilities

Conversely, younger members are significantly more likely than older members to:

- Have had contact with the co-op in the last 12 months
- Have Internet access, participate in a social media group online, and be aware of the co-op’s Facebook page
- Be unaware of how their rates compare to other electric companies
- Indicate they would pay extra for renewable power
- Support an electric rate increase if mandated by state requirements

Mean Satisfaction by Age



Communication Preferences By Age	Under 45	45-54	55-64	65 or older
<i>Always read Co-op Life</i>	8%	15%	18%	35%
<i>Co-op emails at least monthly</i>	25%	25%	20%	13%
<i>Has Internet access</i>	95%	95%	89%	66%
<i>Use social media</i>	78%	67%	55%	32%
<i>Aware of VEC’s Facebook page</i>	32%	19%	22%	7%

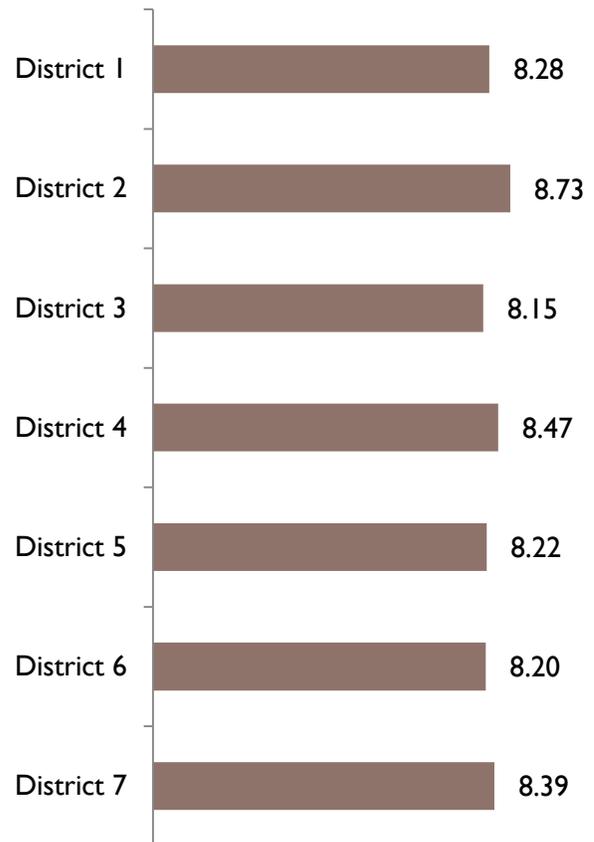
The mean overall satisfaction rating is highest among members in Districts 2, 4, and 7. District 2 is significantly higher than District 5.

On the performance attributes, members in District 2 tend to give the highest ratings while those in Districts 3, 5 and 6 generally give lower ratings. Many of these differences are statistically significant, especially in the area of electric service and outages.

Other differences between districts include the following, although some of these differences are not statistically significant:

- Members in District 5 are the most likely to have Internet access, use social media, and be aware VEC is on Facebook.
- Members in District 4 are the most likely to have member identity; members in District 3 are the least likely.
- Members in Districts 4 and 5 are the most likely to have contacted VEC in the past year, significantly more likely than those in Districts 1, 2, 6, and 7.
- Those in District 5 are the most likely to have heard of Efficiency Vermont while those in District 1 are least likely. Those in District 6 give the highest ratings for how beneficial the program is for Vermont consumers while those in District 2 give the highest ratings for the benefit of the program to them personally.
- Members in Districts 4 and 7 are the most likely to “always” read the monthly newsletter.
- Those in District 7 are the most likely to feel their rates are lower than at other electric companies, while those in District 3 are the least likely to think this.
- The importance of VEC providing power from wind is highest among those in District 4, solar – District 7, hydro – District 4, bio-mass – District 3, natural gas – District 7, and nuclear – District 7.
- Members in Districts 4 and 5 are the most likely to be willing to pay extra, whether that be to pay more for renewable power or increase renewables in the portfolio.

Mean Satisfaction by District



Verbatim Comments

At the conclusion of the survey, members were given the opportunity to share any comments, concerns, or questions they had. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents offered input.

Among those who commented, the following table provides a breakdown of the subjects mentioned and the number of comments that were positive, negative, or neutral. A full listing of comments can be found in Appendix B.

Subject/Topic	Total # Comments	Positive	Negative	Neutral
<i>Operations/Engineers – blinks, outages, tree trimming, AMI/AMR</i>	68	37	19	12
<i>Rates/Fees</i>	64	8	50	6
<i>Overall Satisfaction</i>	62	60	0	2
<i>Renewable Energy</i>	34			
<i>Member Services/Marketing – resolving issues, customer service reps</i>	19	14	5	0
<i>Management/Board</i>	12	4	4	4
<i>Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits</i>	11	2	3	6
<i>Problems With Bills</i>	10	0	7	3
<i>Additional Services</i>	9	3	3	3
<i>Member Identity/Loyalty</i>	9	2	4	3
<i>Newsletter/Information</i>	2	1	1	0

Appendix A:

Key Driver/Factor Explanation

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used to reduce the many service attributes rated in the survey to a core set of issues. This analysis shows how consumers unconsciously think about or group the many different performance attributes. Five factors were found and named Member Service, Electric Service, Cost, Social Responsibility, and Meter Reading and Billing.

The performance quality attributes that make up each factor are listed below in order of the performance attribute most related to the factor down to the attribute least related to the factor.

Member Service Factor

- The overall customer service they provide
- The speed and efficiency of responding to customers
- Resolving any issues or problems
- The courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to your inquiries or problems
- Having professional employees
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed
- Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests

Electric Service Factor

- Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum
- Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum
- The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions
- The restoration of power after an outage
- Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts

Cost Factor

- Charging reasonable rates
- Helping customers keep bills as low as possible
- Their monthly service fees
- Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity

Social Responsibility Factor

- Operating with concern for the environment
- Supporting the local community

Meter Reading and Billing Factor

- Providing accurate and easy to understand bills
- The accuracy of meter reading and billing

The following attributes are not included in the factors found because they are not highly correlated with other attributes:

- Keeping members informed on the status of outages
- Having convenient payment options

Key Driver Analysis

To help determine where expectations are and are not being met for co-op members, we calculate importance scores for the factors and attributes. The importance scores were derived using the beta scores from a regression of the factors and attributes on overall satisfaction. What we are looking for is significance. If a factor or attribute is positively significant, it has a positive relationship with satisfaction. If the factor/attribute receives a high rating, overall satisfaction also receives a high rating. That is, the more a factor or attribute influences overall satisfaction, the higher its importance score. Factors and attributes that are found to be significant in the regression are labeled as key drivers of overall satisfaction and shown in the figure.

A separate analysis was done to find the key drivers of value among residential members of Vermont Electric Cooperative. Rather than regressing the factors and attributes on overall satisfaction, they were regressed on the attribute “delivering good value for the money”. The key drivers of value are shown in a separate figure.

Appendix B:

Verbatim Responses

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE VERBATIM RESPONSES**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

In order to present comments in their entirety, verbatim responses may appear under more than one heading. The portion of the comment pertaining to the section is in black, while portions covered under other areas are colored in gray.

Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses

Keep up the good work! (3 mentions)

They do a good job. (3 mentions)

They are doing a great job. (2 mentions)

I'm satisfied. (2 mentions)

Everything is fine.

Good all-around company.

I appreciate the fact that they are improving.

I feel great about them.

I guess they are doing a good job.

I have always been happy with them. They have fixed power outages quickly.

I have always been very happy with Vermont Electric Cooperative.

I have no issues with them. They are great.

I have no complaints. I just take it for granted.

I like it. I like co-ops.

I like them a lot.

I like them. I think they do a good job. They are very good people. They are very rural and they do a good job with outages.

Additional Comments
Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses
(continued)

I like this company a lot. I've dealt with them for many years with a variety of issues. Every time, they responded quickly and solved my problems. To me, they are a great company.

I think in my opinion, that they have strived to do as good as they can be. I think they do a good job. They are a very rural through the woods job. They do a very excellent job.

I think they are all right. I don't like their automated meter reading. If there is an outage, there seems to be a spike in my costs for no apparent reason.

I think they are better than they used to be. I don't have a lot of complaints. I think they do a good job.

I think they are doing a fine job.

I think they are doing a good job.

I think they are doing a job so far.

They try to do a good job.

I think they are doing a pretty good job.

They do a great job, no complaints.

I think they do a great job. I appreciate them getting out to work on the power in the winter months.

I think they do a very great job. I don't have hardly any outages.

I think they do ok. I feel bad for them when they have to be out in bad weather.

I think they have done remarkably well.

I'd like to see their rates come down a bit and be more competitive. I think they have less outages than anybody else. Overall, I think they do a great job.

I'm pretty much satisfied.

I'm pretty satisfied.

I'm satisfied with it.

Additional Comments
Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses
(continued)

I'm very satisfied.

We're quite satisfied with them.

We are very satisfied with the co-op.

It is a very good company and I am very pleased with them.

I've had them for over 20 years and I have no complaints with them.

Keep going.

The co-op is great.

The state has put on so many mandates that it is hard for any company to function. I know I don't want hydro or nuclear power. I think they are doing a good job.

They are an excellent power company.

They are better than they were 20 years ago, but they have a long way to go. I was out of power for 5 days in 2013 and you don't forget that kind of stuff.

They are the best electric company that I have worked with.

They do a great job, but I think the rate is high when it's double to the company across the river in New Hampshire.

They seem to be doing a good job. We hardly have any outages. They come quickly when there is a problem. They are doing a good job.

They seem to be doing a great job, and improving as the years go by.

They try their hardest.

We bought into "now things will go down the tube" when Vermont Electric Cooperative took over from Citizens, but we were pleasantly surprised when things got much better instead. When there is a rare outage, one of us will inevitably say, "Look, there's the VELCO truck already!" It's easy to get up-to-date information when there is an outage, and everyone I've talked to over the years has been great.

We have been very happy with them so far.

Additional Comments**Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses
(continued)**

We have found that Vermont is much simpler to use than other utilities.

We have had them for many years, and have always been satisfied.

We have never had a problem, and they have always been courteous.

Overall Satisfaction – Neutral Responses

I don't think they're doing too bad.

Just keep it the way it is, and keep it on and do their best.

Management/Board – Positive Responses

I hope that they can stay on course and keep the rates low.

I hope they will continue to improve so we don't have to pay so much.

Pay the good people good for their work, and keep the costs down as much as possible.

The company has improved its sensitivity to customer issues. I believe the long term utility interests of the power company are to bury more power lines and avoid the expense of maintaining over ground utility equipment. I believe such maintenance has improved in the past 3-4 years, but must be expensive to maintain. It seems all new building and development or replacement should be buried as a requirement.

Management/Board – Negative Responses

I don't like seeing solar panels on low income homes. People who are not low income still use electricity. I don't want them doing wind power at all. It destroys more environment than they say it does. I think it's all for money. They are not efficient. They should rely on private funding not subsidies. And they should have asked us "members" what we felt. They should have asked if we should be involved with wind power. We should have gotten to vote. I don't feel like a member in the least. They used to take far better care of the power lines. Now they just wait until there is an outage. They need to be more pro-active. It's more cost effective to do it in the summer than to wait until it's dangerous for the men. They wait until there is an outage so their insurance will pay for it.

Additional Comments

Management/Board – Negative Responses

(continued)

I own two homes in Vermont Electric Cooperative territory and my primary home is in GMP. I am not considered a co-op member with owner rights like others. I can't run for the Board. That is very wrong in my opinion. I installed two net metered wind turbines on land where I built a year round log cabin with air source heat pumps. Before the cabin was finished, Vermont Electric Cooperative stole over \$1500 worth of net meter credited electricity. GMP did the right thing by sending me a check when a similar situation happened at my home. Vermont Electric Cooperative legally could take my credits by the letter of the law, but did not do the right thing at all. Vermont Electric Cooperative needs a new CEO to change the culture. Mary Powell at GMP had a similar problem when GMP bought CVPS and had to turn around CV's arrogant culture. I'm in the solar and wind business and Vermont Electric Cooperative as a utility is old school, slow and expensive to deal with on net metered installations. Management has some work to do!

I was very disappointed by Vermont Electric Cooperatives stance on net metering last year. It eventually was resolved by the legislature, but I would like Vermont Electric Cooperative to be thinking about how we can take advantage of renewable opportunities instead of fighting new connects. I would also like to see Vermont Electric Cooperative to think strategically about rate design in order to appropriately value renewables and take advantage of other new technologies such as smart meters and batteries. Finally if the complaint about renewables is that they are intermittent and that our distribution system cannot adequately handle them, then the solution should be for Vermont Electric Cooperative and the state as a whole to seriously evaluate grid upgrades. Grid upgrades could help with resiliency, with the deployment of services using smart meters and with getting the most out of renewable resources. One last thing. I was very disappointed that the co-op decided to buy power from Seabrook. Nuclear Power brought Vermont Electric Cooperative to bankruptcy. It is also dangerous and unsustainable. I do not think the co-op should purchase any nuclear power ever again.

Poor utilization of hydro, natural gas, and nuclear energy sources. Wind technology has been proven to be a scam on the American tax payer. A devastating effect on ecological system (destructive footprint) and a poor long term 7% payback. It is so poor, that England has abandoned the use in their country. Simple hydro power is the best and cleanest. Add the use of natural gas and you would have the best unlimited source of clean, inexpensive power. Your wind power lovers should install wind turbines in beautiful downtown Burlington where there seems to be an excess of hot wind from NYC. You are grossly under-estimating the cyber-attacks on the grid!

Management/Board – Neutral Responses

The cooperatives are focusing on the politicians. I can't blame the cooperatives, as they are forced to put up with that, as the state demands more regulations.

Additional Comments

Management/Board – Neutral Responses

(continued)

The state has put on so many mandates that it is hard for any company to function. I know I don't want hydro or nuclear power. I think they are doing a good job.

We have been trying to find out why our bill is higher than anyone else. Do you have any energy efficiency programs that would help? Do you have any equipment to test the appliances or lines as to why so much juice is sent to the end of the line? We have had an electrician check this out. I would like to talk to the manager or the head of co-op to get this resolved. Who are my Directors?

What happened to the rate decreases we were supposed to get when the co-op acquired Citizens Utilities? It was a promise from the co-op for members' approval of that acquisition.

Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses

Appreciate all the reliable service through the years.

I am grateful for the guys working in all kinds of weather to restore power lines.

I am impressed with the reliability of their service. We hardly have any outages. I read about their three tiered plan and it sounds challenging. I think hydro would be the best for us.

I am satisfied with the service.

I believe that Vermont Electric Cooperative is doing an excellent job with providing my electric needs. I also feel that electricity is the most important service that we have and without electricity nothing would work. Just look at all the comforts and necessary things in life that we have that would not be functioning without electricity. How about a very cold night in winter or hot day in summer? Too, football games in the fall?

I do think they are doing a good job improving service. They have improved the lines, they have been trimming trees, and the result is fewer outages. They are actively working and I'm very satisfied.

I don't like it that they brought in the wind power/wind tower. The annual meeting was rigged when they had Elizabeth McCreedy. I thought the questions were rigged. The presentation was cut short. I don't know why rates have gone up so quickly. I find I use far fewer kilowatts, yet my bill is 500% higher. All the service fees that the state keeps adding on, the electric companies should stand up to them. I resent the co-op for putting in the wind towers. They are useless and they destroyed that environment and made our rates higher. I resent the fact that Efficiency Vermont is again a government department that is giving us suggestions that we can't afford to do. Those who have the capital put in wind power and get a heck of a rate and the rest of us don't get that rate advantage. Vermont co-op is good in storms.

**Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses
(continued)**

I have always been happy with them. They have fixed power outages quickly.

I have really good service with them and it has improved over the last 5 to 10 years.

I like them. I think they do a good job. They are very good people. They are very rural and they do a good job with outages.

I like this company a lot. I've dealt with them for many years with a variety of issues. Every time, they responded quickly and solved my problems. To me, they are a great company.

I love these people. I love calling in to pay my bill. I receive excellent service.

I remember when you knew if the wind blew hard the power would go out; no more.

I think in my opinion, that they have strived to do as good as they can be. I think they do a good job. They are a very rural through the woods job. They do a very excellent job.

I think the number of outages have improved a lot over the years.

I think they do a great job. I appreciate them getting out to work on the power in the winter months.

I think they do a very great job. I don't have hardly any outages.

I would tell them to continue to work on alternative energy sources despite the push back that's coming. We are in the woods. So we expect to lose service when there's ice or snow. They are doing a good job of clearing the trees away from the lines. They are being more proactive to keep the service on.

I'd like to see their rates come down a bit and be more competitive. I think they have less outages than anybody else. Overall, I think they do a great job.

If you need anything they are right there.

I'm very satisfied with the service. I hope they don't have to raise the rates.

Quality of service has gotten a lot better over the last five years or so (less outages, flickering, etc.).

Service and communication have improved dramatically in the past few years. Thanks.

Thanks for all your hard work.

Additional Comments

Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses

(continued)

The company has improved its sensitivity to customer issues. I believe the long term utility interests of the power company are to bury more power lines and avoid the expense of maintaining over ground utility equipment. I believe such maintenance has improved in the past 3-4 years, but must be expensive to maintain. It seems all new building and development or replacement should be buried as a requirement.

The service has been good. We had a storm come through and it took down some lines a few years back and they were very quick at responding.

They are very easy going and easy to talk to. They are very nice and quick to fix things.

They are very good about getting power back on.

They are very good at getting the power on after storms.

They have a good reputation and respond to outages in a timely manner. They are good at keeping customers informed. I like that they are looking into renewable energy.

They need to train the employees to be more considerate. The pricing needs to be fair in regards to usage. Customers need to be able to see their constant usage. They are good on providing electrical service, but lacking in communications to the community/customers. Customers need to know what services the co-op has and what they can do to help lower usage and the bill. Then the customer will understand who they are and what they do. The division between the customer and the co-op will then come closer together. (I won't answer personal questions.)

They seem to be doing a good job. We hardly have any outages. They come quickly when there is a problem. They are doing a good job.

They work really hard in all kinds of weather to keep the electric on. I appreciate that.

We are very pleased with the service.

We bought into "now things will go down the tube" when Vermont Electric Cooperative took over from

Citizens, but we were pleasantly surprised when things got much better instead. When there is a rare outage, one of us will inevitably say, "Look, there's the VELCO truck already!" It's easy to get up-to-date information when there is an outage, and everyone I've talked to over the years has been great.

We have been very satisfied with their services.

Additional Comments**Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses
(continued)**

We rarely have an outage.

Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses

A couple summers ago my neighbor and I endured a surge of electricity in the middle of the night. The fire department was called because my neighbor's house filled with smoke. This surge filled my house with a noxious odor and fried some of my older electronics such as a CD-radio. I imagine it would have been a lot worse had I not had my expensive electronics on surge protectors. My comment/question is why are tree limbs (the cause of the surge) not trimmed away from power lines to prevent this from happening? I know that NYSEG in NY State routinely trims trees that may come in contact with power lines.

Don't like that they installed a Smart Meter without consent.

I am concerned about the winter, as I was told that there are long durations of power outages. I have noticed that there are a lot of trees in the power lines.

I didn't like the forced removal of electric heat meters. Connection to heat circuits should have been done in the meter box.

I don't like seeing solar panels on low income homes. People who are not low income still use electricity. I don't want them doing wind power at all. It destroys more environment than they say it does. I think it's all for money. They are not efficient. They should rely on private funding not subsidies. And they should have asked us "members" what we felt. They should have asked if we should be involved with wind power. We should have gotten to vote. I don't feel like a member in the least. They used to take far better care of the power lines. Now they just wait until there is an outage. They need to be more pro-active. It's more cost effective to do it in the summer than to wait until it's dangerous for the men. They wait until there is an outage so their insurance will pay for it.

I don't like the fact I live so close to the biggest city in the state and we're probably going to have to get a generator. When the power goes out it's out for a long time. Very few times does it come back on in an hour or two. Only three houses away they are supplied by a different power company. The lights are almost always on when we are out. You can contact us about these comments if you like.

I live on top Texas Hill. When there is a storm half of the people will get their electric on again and we do not sometimes for a week, why is that? We live on the same road. I have asked several times no one gives me an answer.

I think it would have been better if we wouldn't have had the difficulty in December that was due to the storm.

Additional Comments

Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses

(continued)

I think they are all right. I don't like their automated meter reading. If there is an outage, there seems to be a spike in my costs for no apparent reason.

I used to hate Vermont Electric Cooperative. I don't anymore, but I am still frustrated by the long power outages (3-5 days) that happen 2 times a year. The GMP households 200 yards away don't have these.

I was very upset by the 5 day outage. It was an outrage. I bought a generator because of that. That outage cost me a lot of money. I just got a notice that they are spraying RoundUp 30 feet from my garden. They don't need to spray RoundUp. I want them to come around and cut the branches back.

It should be 115 volts and 60 cycle. The lights are flickering a lot at night. These transient service interruptions are causing resetting of clocks and appliance clocks.

Sometimes when we contact them about a power outage, their voice mail is difficult to navigate. We know they are trying, but it is difficult to always be the last one to get power back on, due to being at the end of the line. While they maintain the power lines well, the trees need to be removed farther back on each side of the line.

Still having a problem with RF interference.

They are better than they were 20 years ago, but they have a long way to go. I was out of power for 5 days in 2013 and you don't forget that kind of stuff.

They should upgrade our line so we don't have 4 - 5 days of lost power. Line workers tell us all the time how old our lines are. In addition we've had our lawn cut up by utility workers and had to supply gas to them for their chain saws. Yet we had to install a generator to maintain our power because we are told we are at the end of a line and not an immediate concern. Somehow, we don't feel the love!

We have been in our home for 11 years and every time we call to get marked for digging they tell us our line are above ground and they are not. Then tell us to follow the wires to the house (overhead) and there aren't any. And they won't come out and mark for digging. Pretty dangerous.

I come from a state that had more severe weather and ice and almost never a power surge or a power outage. Clearing trees from the line was very much a priority, and they worked on it every day. They never had an outage. With Vermont this past winter, it has been outage after outage. My neighbors said I need a generator to keep up with it. Instead of a generator, I would rather pay more for the electric service, so they could clear the lines.

Additional Comments

Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses

(continued)

1. Discontinue automated telephone system and have a live person always answering phone. 2. As wires need replacing move new wiring to roads right-of-way. 3. Fix short (1 second or 2) power interruptions. (I might be the cause - if I reset all my electric clocks, I am sure to have a power interruption requiring me to reset all clocks within one week's time.) 4. We have power line directly over our house that is 40 years old. Hopefully, the co-op will move wires before they break and possibly set the house on fire.

Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses

A number of the ratings that I gave in the survey are probably skewed based on me being somewhat more understanding than many probably are about the difficulty of servicing our particular area. This past December storm for example left us without service for something like 5 days. I was very understanding of the fact that we were basically at ground zero of the storm, and I completely understood that it would be quite a number of days before service was restored.

Cut more trees away from the lines. They need to do that more often. Trees are growing with lines through them. That can't be good.

I think they do ok. I feel bad for them when they have to be out in bad weather.

I would like them to come out and fix the wire hanging down on the crooked pole before it comes down or someone gets hurt. Also I would like to know when they are removing the pine trees that they said they would after buying them.

I'm on their main line. About 300 yards back, there are some trees that need to be cut down. I would like them to call me about getting them cut down. If they would cut them, I would take care of the rest of it.

There's a streetlight that has been out at the corner of Highland Avenue and Pleasant Street, Newport, Vermont for several months now. I would appreciate its replacement.

They did come right out when I called about the meter. But we are still waiting to see why it is going up every month.

This is a silly survey. What is biomass? What about a box that reads I don't care/I don't know? Would I pay more? If I had more, sure if I still have an income under \$10,000 a year, no. How many times have I contacted you? Do you really think I keep tabs on how often we lose electricity? Do you think I blame you for storms or people running into poles? Now trees on lines, yes, that I blame on you. I do think your phone service when we lose electricity is often frustrating and sometimes downright dumb, but lately you have changed message - guess it helps to bitch about it.

Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses
(continued)

Time to cut the right-of-ways or the trees will regulate the power again!

When the power goes off, check with me first, because I'm on oxygen. They don't need to call me, but make sure they know I'm on oxygen and I need a quick response from them whenever the power goes off.

When there is an outage the business (like a grocery store or dairy operation) should have priority over getting electric back on for the most number of households, with the exception of households with a medical need.

1. Discontinue automated telephone system and have a live person always answering phone. 2. As wires need replacing move new wiring to roads right-of-way. 3. Fix short (1 second or 2) power interruptions. (I might be the cause - if I reset all my electric clocks, I am sure to have a power interruption requiring me to reset all clocks within one week's time.) 4. We have power line directly over our house that is 40 years old. Hopefully, the co-op will move wires before they break and possibly set the house on fire.

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Positive Responses

I like them. I think they do a good job. They are very good people. They are very rural and they do a good job with outages.

I love their customer service and the people are fantastic when you call. I wish the rates were lower. I wish they would get renewable energy going.

I love these people. I love calling in to pay my bill. I receive excellent service.

I really enjoy that you can speak to a human being when we call.

I've experienced a couple of blue-sky outages (one third-party) and one major event outage. In both cases, I have been impressed with the quality of information available through the website and (on the blue-sky occasions) through email/text notification. I work with several larger (200,000 - 5 million + meters) utilities who struggle to provide that level of information. Well done!

Personnel on an individual basis have been outstanding.

Sara Packard did an excellent job when I called in about the spraying.

Service and communication have improved dramatically in the past few years. Thanks.

Additional Comments**Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Positive Responses
(continued)**

The company has improved its sensitivity to customer issues. I believe the long term utility interests of the power company are to bury more power lines and avoid the expense of maintaining over ground utility equipment. I believe such maintenance has improved in the past 3-4 years, but must be expensive to maintain. It seems all new building and development or replacement should be buried as a requirement.

They are always friendly when I drop off my bill.

They are very easy going and easy to talk to. They are very nice and quick to fix things.

They have a good reputation and respond to outages in a timely manner. They are good at keeping customers informed. I like that they are looking into renewable energy.

We bought into "now things will go down the tube" when Vermont Electric Cooperative took over from Citizens, but we were pleasantly surprised when things got much better instead. When there is a rare outage, one of us will inevitably say, "Look, there's the VELCO truck already!" It's easy to get up-to-date information when there is an outage, and everyone I've talked to over the years has been great.

We have never had a problem, and they have always been courteous.

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Negative Responses

1. Discontinue automated telephone system and have a live person always answering phone. 2. As wires need replacing move new wiring to roads right-of-way. 3. Fix short (1 second or 2) power interruptions. (I might be the cause - if I reset all my electric clocks, I am sure to have a power interruption requiring me to reset all clocks within one week's time.) 4. We have power line directly over our house that is 40 years old. Hopefully, the co-op will move wires before they break and possibly set the house on fire.

Sometimes when we contact them about a power outage, their voice mail is difficult to navigate. We know they are trying, but it is difficult to always be the last one to get power back on, due to being at the end of the line. While they maintain the power lines well, the trees need to be removed farther back on each side of the line.

Additional Comments

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Negative Responses (continued)

The billing system is awful. My cash flow got out of sync with my scheduled electronic withdrawal payment date and I had a few bad checks. They were rude and condescending. They were returned for NSF and now I find myself treated as a person who is trying to rip off the co-op, not as a member of the co-op. The customer service is rude and condescending and threatens to shut off my power even in the middle of the coldest months if my check is received even a week late, instead of re-depositing it again. Since I have electric heat, shutting the power off is equivalent to a death threat. Furthermore, Vermont Electric Co-op has taken me off the electronic auto pay for a year (like I'm sent to purgatory) and requires either cash or money orders or calling and using a credit card and paying a fee. There is no business rationale for not being able to use the scheduled electronic withdraw. This is just vindictive. The main reason I signed up for the EFT payment option is to have less things to worry about making payments. Now I have to wait a year without a late payment until I can use the EFT again. Vermont Electric Co-op needs to review these policies which reflect a 1960s business approach and step into the new century.

They need to train the employees to be more considerate. The pricing needs to be fair in regards to usage. Customers need to be able to see their constant usage. They are good on providing electrical service, but lacking in communications to the community/customers. Customers need to know what services the co-op has and what they can do to help lower usage and the bill. Then the customer will understand who they are and what they do. The division between the customer and the co-op will then come closer together. (I won't answer personal questions.)

This is a silly survey. What is biomass? What about a box that reads I don't care/I don't know? Would I pay more? If I had more, sure if I still have an income under \$10,000 a year, no. How many times have I contacted you? Do you really think I keep tabs on how often we lose electricity? Do you think I blame you for storms or people running into poles? Now trees on lines, yes, that I blame on you. I do think your phone service when we lose electricity is often frustrating and sometimes downright dumb, but lately you have changed message - guess it helps to bitch about it.

Billing/Finance – Negative Responses

I get very upset with the fact that some people don't pay their bill. They let the power go off so that they can get help. Then they go and get help and all those bills are paid. I work hard to pay my bill. They are younger and able bodied. It's very frustrating for those who work hard to pay your bill. They are blatant about it. It's not fair and I know it's costing me more because of it. Somebody has to pay those hookups and disconnect fees.

I have had questionable readings in the winter when no one has been there. I have talked to them about it, and they used estimated readings for the previous year, and still made the customer pay, even when the breaker was off. It has happened several times before. Other people have had similar circumstances, in Grand Isle County.

Additional Comments**Billing/Finance – Negative Responses
(continued)**

I sent a check for the bill, but they didn't receive it so they shut the power off. They should have talked to me. I didn't get the message until I got home from work, which was after hours for the co-op.

I wish I could use a credit card to pay my bill without the \$4.95 charge..

The billing system is awful. My cash flow got out of sync with my scheduled electronic withdrawal payment date and I had a few bad checks. They were rude and condescending. They were returned for NSF and now I find myself treated as a person who is trying to rip off the co-op, not as a member of the co-op. The customer service is rude and condescending and threatens to shut off my power even in the middle of the coldest months if my check is received even a week late, instead of re-depositing it again. Since I have electric heat, shutting the power off is equivalent to a death threat. Furthermore, Vermont Electric Co-op has taken me off the electronic auto pay for a year (like I'm sent to purgatory) and requires either cash or money orders or calling and using a credit card and paying a fee. There is no business rational for not being able to use the scheduled electronic withdraw. This is just vindictive. The main reason I signed up for the EFT payment option is to have less things to worry about making payments. Now I have to wait a year without a late payment until I can use the EFT again. Vermont Electric Co-op needs to review these policies which reflect a 1960s business approach and step into the new century.

The price is extremely high. Also the bill paying, I have it paid automatically with other utilities, where Vermont they don't do that.

We were gone for the winter and one month my bill was double. I received no satisfaction from the co-op as to why this happened.

Billing/Finance – Neutral Response

Please accept credit cards.

The online billing, you should be able to choose the pay date. I have no idea what the co-op benefits that is indicated on the billing, as to what that means.

There is a thing that comes on our bill each month that there is a certain amount that has accumulated. It has been on there for quite a while and I would like to know what their plans are to do with it.

Additional Comments (continued)

Rates/Fees – Positive Responses

I hope that they can stay on course and keep the rates low.

I think my bill was pretty good this winter. It was only \$90.

I think they are doing a great job with the rates. I've never paid such a cheap electric bill. This month my bill was \$40.

Try to keep the price low.

Try to keep the rate down for older Americans.

Try to keep the rates as low as possible.

Try to keep the rates down.

We are against wind power. We would like to keep the cost low. Solar is great.

Rates/Fees – Negative Responses

Could you have a discount for oxygen use? Other companies have a discount if you have oxygen use in the home. Our major complaint is the cost.

Cut the rates.

Everything is so expensive, even the electric.

I appreciate the work toward renewable energy which Vermont Electric Cooperative is attempting. I am retired, so I feel my electricity costs too much, but at the same time I am willing to pay for renewable energy.

I don't like it that they brought in the wind power/wind tower. The annual meeting was rigged when they had Elizabeth McCreevy. I thought the questions were rigged. The presentation was cut short. I don't know why rates have gone up so quickly. I find I use far fewer kilowatts, yet my bill is 500% higher. All the service fees that the state keeps adding on, the electric companies should stand up to them. I resent the co-op for putting in the wind towers. They are useless and they destroyed that environment and made our rates higher. I resent the fact that Efficiency Vermont is again a government department that is giving us suggestions that we can't afford to do. Those who have the capital put in wind power and get a heck of a rate and the rest of us don't get that rate advantage. Vermont co-op is good in storms.

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

I have changed all my light bulbs to LED. I have my electric washer, lights, and refrigerator. That's all I use. I still have a bill of \$100 a month. The rates must be high. I have minimized all I can. I don't know why I can't get that bill down for my minimal usage. Yes, I would like them to call me to help me resolve this issue. If you call this week (June 1) you can try my home phone too. 8026445477

I just think it is very expensive.

I love their customer service and the people are fantastic when you call. I wish the rates were lower. I wish they would get renewable energy going.

I plan to get involved at some point concerning how to get cheaper rates.

I wish my bill was lower.

I wish the information that they give on conserving energy, was more helpful. If they could come up with something really constructive on how to lower your bill. I am not going to unplug my coffee pot because of the clock, to save pennies. I think my bill is awfully high.

I would like lower rates just like everybody else.

I would like my bill to come down.

I would like the rates to be a little lower, compared to other electric companies.

I would like to know if they are using solar and wind power then why aren't my rates going down?

I would like to see more reasonable rates.

I'd like more incentives if we use less electricity. They have their "base rate" and no matter what I do, I can't lower my bill.

I'd like to see their rates come down a bit and be more competitive. I think they have less outages than anybody else. Overall, I think they do a great job.

If they could get the rates down, I would be happy.

If they could try to get the rates down somehow, that would help.

If we could get a lower rate, and the rates could be cut.

I'm very satisfied with the service. I hope they don't have to raise the rates.

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

It is very expensive.

It would be nice if the light bills were a little lower.

Just try to keep the bills as low as possible.

Keep the rates down.

Keep the rates low.

Lower my bills and STOP regulating me to death! Efficiency Vermont and alternative fuels are over rated. The LED bulbs are great, but expensive. Those jokers made me put in those stupid CFL bulbs without the transformer in all of my 50 apartments and now I spend all of my time going around replacing them today. What a pain in the ass. Didn't save me much! Cost me so much in fuel and time. Efficiency Vermont has outlived their usefulness and is now all about keeping their job relevant and forcing new requirements on us EVERY YEAR to keep paying them. They have made homes so darn expensive that no one can afford them and the only way they can afford a new home is if I eat the costs of all of this crap. CUT IT OUT! Stop the solar crap, you cannot run an IBM plant off a windmill and a solar panel. Wake up before it is too late. The liberals and progressives have chased all of the good paying jobs away while at the same time get the Unions and legislature to protect theirs. Anytime David decides he needs some common sense you can give me call he knows me. Tom Wyckoff (thomas.wyckoff@gmail.com)

Lower the rates. We had the co-op on our family farm. Citizens and Franklin were always cheaper than the co-op. The co-op is supposed to be member owned, but yet it costs more. We don't get any break on our bill for a being a member. Citizens bought out Franklin and then the co-op bought out Citizens. Those other two companies were always lower in price and easier to get along with. Now we pay more than all of them.

My bill increased 100% this winter. We were not living in it.

Our bill has been ridiculously high with no reason. We have tried for years to get an evaluation to determine the problem. After 20 plus years of an astronomical bill I would love for some resolve.

Our bill is twice as high this year compared to last year. If you could tell me why, I would appreciate that. Do you do energy audits?

Owning property in other states I find Vermont Co-op electric is the most expensive out of all other electric companies. Their rates are almost 3 times higher than others.

Pay the good people good for their work, and keep the costs down as much as possible.

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

Please discontinue the fee I pay monthly when I am not there and the high cost of shut off and turning back on to make it more affordable and fair.

Stop raising the rates. My rates almost triple in the winter, which is ridiculous.

The bill is very high compared to other companies.

The cost is too high.

The price is extremely high. Also the bill paying, I have it paid automatically with other utilities, where Vermont they don't do that.

The rates are really high compared to the city.

The rates are really high.

Their prices are a little too high.

They charge too much for their electricity.

They do a great job, but I think the rate is high when it's double to the company across the river in New Hampshire.

They need to train the employees to be more considerate. The pricing needs to be fair in regards to usage. Customers need to be able to see their constant usage. They are good on providing electrical service, but lacking in communications to the community/customers. Customers need to know what services the co-op has and what they can do to help lower usage and the bill. Then the customer will understand who they are and what they do. The division between the customer and the co-op will then come closer together. (I won't answer personal questions.)

This survey is not relevant for us. We are seasonal users (5 months) in a cottage on Lake Champlain. I think power in Vermont is quite expensive by comparison to Rocky Mountain Power (cheap, dirty coal) and Questar Gas (natural gas) here in Utah. Vermont is shooting itself in the foot with high prices for taxes, utilities, fuel, gas, tuition, etc. No wonder the school population is dropping and folks are getting out. The problem (frustration) is that nobody does anything about it -- and seasonal residents have little or no influence on Montpelier. No offense, but I have little respect for monopolistic utilities, but who would deliver power to very rural places like Vermont? I do feel qualified (and worthy) to make these criticisms after 7 generations-- 60 years myself, in Vermont. I left 10 years ago. Thanks for listening!

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

We have been trying to find out why our bill is higher than anyone else. Do you have any energy efficiency programs that would help? Do you have any equipment to test the appliances or lines as to why so much juice is sent to the end of the line? We have had an electrician check this out. I would like to talk to the manager or the head of co-op to get this resolved. Who are my Directors?

What happened to the rate decreases we were supposed to get when the co-op acquired Citizens Utilities? It was a promise from the co-op for members' approval of that acquisition.

Your electric rates rank too high compared to other areas of the country.

Rates/Fees – Neutral Responses

A senior discount would be good, either year round or winter only, when seniors on fixed incomes have high heating bills.

Keep the cost down if possible.

Keep the rates down if possible.

They should have some discount for seniors as we conserve the most.

Try to keep all the extra fees down, it makes the bill very high.

We are paying a charge each month don't know if it is member charge or what. I will call about it.

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Positive Response

I have changed over most of my home to LED bulbs...what a difference in my bill and since I switched from an old heating oil furnace to a high efficiency propane the past four months have dropped the bill monthly again. I am elated!

Love all the opportunities to participate in pilot or energy efficiency studies

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Negative Responses

I wish the information that they give on conserving energy, was more helpful. If they could come up with something really constructive on how to lower your bill. I am not going to unplug my coffee pot because of the clock, to save pennies. I think my bill is awfully high.

Additional Comments**Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Negative Responses
(continued)**

I would like them to figure out why my bill is \$500 a month.

Lower my bills and STOP regulating me to death! Efficiency Vermont and alternative fuels are over rated. The LED bulbs are great, but expensive. Those jokers made me put in those stupid CFL bulbs without the transformer in all of my 50 apartments and now I spend all of my time going around replacing them today. What a pain in the ass. Didn't save me much! Cost me so much in fuel and time. Efficiency Vermont has outlived their usefulness and is now all about keeping their job relevant and forcing new requirements on us EVERY YEAR to keep paying them. They have made homes so darn expensive that no one can afford them and the only way they can afford a new home is if I eat the costs of all of this crap. CUT IT OUT! Stop the solar crap, you cannot run an IBM plant off a windmill and a solar panel. Wake up before it is too late. The liberals and progressives have chased all of the good paying jobs away while at the same time get the Unions and legislature to protect theirs. Anytime David decides he needs some common sense you can give me call he knows me. Tom Wyckoff (thomas.wyckoff@gmail.com)

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Neutral Responses

I'd just like to figure out how my bill could be lower.

I'd like to have more information on how to go about being more efficient with my electrical usage. Yes, please contact me.

It would be nice to find a way to lower our bills

Our bill is twice as high this year compared to last year. If you could tell me why, I would appreciate that. Do you do energy audits?

They need to train the employees to be more considerate. The pricing needs to be fair in regards to usage. Customers need to be able to see their constant usage. They are good on providing electrical service, but lacking in communications to the community/customers. Customers need to know what services the co-op has and what they can do to help lower usage and the bill. Then the customer will understand who they are and what they do. The division between the customer and the co-op will then come closer together. (I won't answer personal questions.)

We have been trying to find out why our bill is higher than anyone else. Do you have any energy efficiency programs that would help? Do you have any equipment to test the appliances or lines as to why so much juice is sent to the end of the line? We have had an electrician check this out. I would like to talk to the manager or the head of co-op to get this resolved. Who are my Directors?

Additional Comments (continued)

Additional Services – Positive Responses

I think the Efficiency Vermont is a great program. My contractor was insistent upon using Efficiency Vermont.

I'd like more incentives if we use less electricity. They have their "base rate" and no matter what I do, I can't lower my bill.

I can't wait for the App to improve. I love seeing my usage and power generation in real time, but this app is clunky and not optimized for solar display or customization. It's very annoying to use, but I love seeing the data so I use it anyway.

Additional Services – Negative Responses

I don't like it that they brought in the wind power/wind tower. The annual meeting was rigged when they had Elizabeth McCreedy. I thought the questions were rigged. The presentation was cut short. I don't know why rates have gone up so quickly. I find I use far fewer kilowatts, yet my bill is 500% higher. All the service fees that the state keeps adding on, the electric companies should stand up to them. I resent the co-op for putting in the wind towers. They are useless and they destroyed that environment and made our rates higher. **I resent the fact that Efficiency Vermont is again a government department that is giving us suggestions that we can't afford to do.** Those who have the capital put in wind power and get a heck of a rate and the rest of us don't get that rate advantage. Vermont co-op is good in storms.

Lower my bills and STOP regulating me to death! Efficiency Vermont and alternative fuels are over rated. The LED bulbs are great, but expensive. Those jokers made me put in those stupid CFL bulbs without the transformer in all of my 50 apartments and now I spend all of my time going around replacing them today. What a pain in the ass. Didn't save me much! Cost me so much in fuel and time. **Efficiency Vermont has outlived their usefulness and is now all about keeping their job relevant and forcing new requirements on us EVERY YEAR to keep paying them.** They have made homes so darn expensive that no one can afford them and the only way they can afford a new home is if I eat the costs of all of this crap. **CUT IT OUT!** Stop the solar crap, you cannot run an IBM plant off a windmill and a solar panel. Wake up before it is too late. The liberals and progressives have chased all of the good paying jobs away while at the same time get the Unions and legislature to protect theirs. Anytime David decides he needs some common sense you can give me call he knows me. Tom Wyckoff (thomas.wyckoff@gmail.com)

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**Additional Comments
(continued)****Additional Services – Neutral Responses**

I have heard mention of Efficiency Vermont, probably in the news, but I don't really know what it is. On this survey there was no option to say this. I had to answer that I have not heard of it because since I don't really know what it is, I could not rate it.

I would like Vermont Efficiency to give me a call,

Went to the meeting at Jay Peak for the first time. It was a lot of fun. I wished there could have been more vendors regarding hot water tanks and information regarding these. Hot water is probably our biggest bill, as we heat it with oil. We do burn about 4-6 cords of wood to heat the house. It's well insulated, but around 3500 square feet. We installed new windows a year ago. So we are up-to-date. We also installed a new super store hot water tank as well, but we do go thru a fair amount of oil. The oil burner is almost 30 years old, so we are looking to replace that in the next few years. I guess I should call Efficiency Vermont and get some information.

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Positive Responses

I am glad they are doing a survey, makes me more informed about what they are doing.

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Negative Responses

They need to train the employees to be more considerate. The pricing needs to be fair in regards to usage. Customers need to be able to see their constant usage. They are good on providing electrical service, but lacking in communications to the community/customers. Customers need to know what services the co-op has and what they can do to help lower usage and the bill. Then the customer will understand who they are and what they do. The division between the customer and the co-op will then come closer together. (I won't answer personal questions.)

Member Identity, Annual Meeting, Cap Cred/Dividend, Part of/owner – Positive Responses

I like receiving that member allocation from time to time.

Additional Comments**Member Identity, Annual Meeting, Cap Cred/Dividend, Part of/owner – Positive Responses (continued)**

Went to the meeting at Jay Peak for the first time. It was a lot of fun. I wished there could have been more vendors regarding hot water tanks and information regarding these. Hot water is probably our biggest bill, as we heat it with oil. We do burn about 4-6 cords of wood to heat the house. It's well insulated, but around 3500 square feet. We installed new windows a year ago. So we are up-to-date. We also installed a new super store hot water tank as well, but we do go thru a fair amount of oil. The oil burner is almost 30 years old, so we are looking to replace that in the next few years. I guess I should call Efficiency Vermont and get some information.

Member Identity, Annual Meeting, Cap Cred/Dividend, Part of/owner – Negative Responses

I don't like it that they brought in the wind power/wind tower. The annual meeting was rigged when they had Elizabeth McCreevy. I thought the questions were rigged. The presentation was cut short. I don't know why rates have gone up so quickly. I find I use far fewer kilowatts, yet my bill is 500% higher. All the service fees that the state keeps adding on, the electric companies should stand up to them. I resent the co-op for putting in the wind towers. They are useless and they destroyed that environment and made our rates higher. I resent the fact that Efficiency Vermont is again a government department that is giving us suggestions that we can't afford to do. Those who have the capital put in wind power and get a heck of a rate and the rest of us don't get that rate advantage. Vermont co-op is good in storms.

I don't like seeing solar panels on low income homes. People who are not low income still use electricity. I don't want them doing wind power at all. It destroys more environment than they say it does. I think it's all for money. They are not efficient. They should rely on private funding not subsidies. And they should have asked us "members" what we felt. They should have asked if we should be involved with wind power. We should have gotten to vote. I don't feel like a member in the least. They used to take far better care of the power lines. Now they just wait until there is an outage. They need to be more pro-active. It's more cost effective to do it in the summer than to wait until it's dangerous for the men. They wait until there is an outage so their insurance will pay for it.

Additional Comments**Member Identity, Annual Meeting, Cap Cred/Dividend, Part of/owner – Negative Responses
(continued)**

I own two homes in Vermont Electric Cooperative territory and my primary home is in GMP. I am not considered a co-op member with owner rights like others. I can't run for the Board. That is very wrong in my opinion. I installed two net metered wind turbines on land where I built a year round log cabin with air source heat pumps. Before the cabin was finished, Vermont Electric Cooperative stole over \$1500 worth of net meter credited electricity. GMP did the right thing by sending me a check when a similar situation happened at my home. Vermont Electric Cooperative legally could take my credits by the letter of the law, but did not do the right thing at all. Vermont Electric Cooperative needs a new CEO to change the culture. Mary Powell at GMP had a similar problem when GMP bought CVPS and had to turn around CV's arrogant culture. I'm in the solar and wind business and Vermont Electric Cooperative as a utility is old school, slow and expensive to deal with on net metered installations. Management has some work to do!

The billing system is awful. My cash flow got out of sync with my scheduled electronic withdrawal payment date and I had a few bad checks. They were rude and condescending. They were returned for NSF and now I find myself treated as a person who is trying to rip off the co-op, not as a member of the co-op. The customer service is rude and condescending and threatens to shut off my power even in the middle of the coldest months if my check is received even a week late, instead of re-depositing it again. Since I have electric heat, shutting the power off is equivalent to a death threat. Furthermore, Vermont Electric Co-op has taken me off the electronic auto pay for a year (like I'm sent to purgatory) and requires either cash or money orders or calling and using a credit card and paying a fee. There is no business rational for not being able to use the scheduled electronic withdraw. This is just vindictive. The main reason I signed up for the EFT payment option is to have less things to worry about making payments. Now I have to wait a year without a late payment until I can use the EFT again. Vermont Electric Co-op needs to review these policies which reflect a 1960s business approach and step into the new century.

Member Identity, Annual Meeting, Cap Cred/Dividend, Part of/owner – Neutral Responses

I have always questioned about the rate pay back.

I missed their big breakfast. It was some kind of meeting that they were having about 2 weeks ago.

What is the patronage? If it is extra taken, why? If it is not extra, then what is it exactly? How do you determine the customer charge?

Additional Comments (continued)

Renewable Energy

I am eagerly waiting for the next solar project, as a buy in.

I appreciate the work toward renewable energy which Vermont Electric Cooperative is attempting. I am retired, so I feel my electricity costs too much, but at the same time I am willing to pay for renewable energy.

I don't like it that they brought in the wind power/wind tower. The annual meeting was rigged when they had Elizabeth McCreedy. I thought the questions were rigged. The presentation was cut short. I don't know why rates have gone up so quickly. I find I use far fewer kilowatts, yet my bill is 500% higher. All the service fees that the state keeps adding on, the electric companies should stand up to them. I resent the co-op for putting in the wind towers. They are useless and they destroyed that environment and made our rates higher. I resent the fact that Efficiency Vermont is again a government department that is giving us suggestions that we can't afford to do. Those who have the capital put in wind power and get a heck of a rate and the rest of us don't get that rate advantage. Vermont co-op is good in storms.

I don't like seeing solar panels on low income homes. People who are not low income still use electricity. I don't want them doing wind power at all. It destroys more environment than they say it does. I think it's all for money. They are not efficient. They should rely on private funding not subsidies. And they should have asked us "members" what we felt. They should have asked if we should be involved with wind power. We should have gotten to vote. I don't feel like a member in the least. They used to take far better care of the power lines. Now they just wait until there is an outage. They need to be more pro-active. It's more cost effective to do it in the summer than to wait until it's dangerous for the men. They wait until there is an outage so their insurance will pay for it.

I fully support renewable energy. It is critical that we make the transition away from fossil fuels. I will support any efforts to accomplish this.

I have 32 solar panels on the roof. In summer, my electric bills are often "credit, do not pay" but in winter the panels are often covered in snow and due to shorter daylight periods, they are not so efficient.

I hope you will NOT be involved in any future wind power projects.

I just wish that they would use more wind power.

I love their customer service and the people are fantastic when you call. I wish the rates were lower. I wish they would get renewable energy going.

Additional Comments

Renewable Energy (continued)

I own two homes in Vermont Electric Cooperative territory and my primary home is in GMP. I am not considered a co-op member with owner rights like others. I can't run for the Board. That is very wrong in my opinion. I installed two net metered wind turbines on land where I built a year round log cabin with air source heat pumps. Before the cabin was finished, Vermont Electric Cooperative stole over \$1500 worth of net meter credited electricity. GMP did the right thing by sending me a check when a similar situation happened at my home. Vermont Electric Cooperative legally could take my credits by the letter of the law, but did not do the right thing at all. Vermont Electric Cooperative needs a new CEO to change the culture. Mary Powell at GMP had a similar problem when GMP bought CVPS and had to turn around CV's arrogant culture. I'm in the solar and wind business and Vermont Electric Cooperative as a utility is old school, slow and expensive to deal with on net metered installations. Management has some work to do!

I think that nuclear power should be part of our mix.

I understand that if you have wind generators, that they only buy a certain percentage from the people that have it. I think if they were generating power that they are not using, that the utilities should buy it back. It is my understanding that the state has something to say, and should not limit the amount.

I was very disappointed by Vermont Electric Cooperatives stance on net metering last year. It eventually was resolved by the legislature, but I would like Vermont Electric Cooperative to be thinking about how we can take advantage of renewable opportunities instead of fighting new connects. I would also like to see Vermont Electric Cooperative to think strategically about rate design in order to appropriately value renewables and take advantage of other new technologies such as smart meters and batteries. Finally if the complaint about renewables is that they are intermittent and that our distribution system cannot adequately handle them, then the solution should be for Vermont Electric Cooperative and the state as a whole to seriously evaluate grid upgrades. Grid upgrades could help with resiliency, with the deployment of services using smart meters and with getting the most out of renewable resources. One last thing. I was very disappointed that the co-op decided to buy power from Seabrook. Nuclear Power brought Vermont Electric Cooperative to bankruptcy. It is also dangerous and unsustainable. I do not think the co-op should purchase any nuclear power ever again.

I will be glad when the solar farm is up and running.

I would like to know if they are using solar and wind power then why aren't my rates going down?

I would like to see state discontinue mandatory support of green (not so green) energy sources like solar and wind. Let free market determine best sources.

Additional Comments

Renewable Energy (continued)

I would like to see the mandate that requires Vermont to buy back the solar power from customers that generate their own.

I would really like it if they put in some wind towers.

I would tell them to continue to work on alternative energy sources despite the push back that's coming. We are in the woods. So we expect to lose service when there's ice or snow. They are doing a good job of clearing the trees away from the lines. They are being more proactive to keep the service on.

I'd like to see more hydro and nuclear. I think Vermont Yankee should have been kept open. I think they should use hydro. Water is running down the river 24 hours a day. They need to use it.

I'd like to see them do a lot more renewable stuff.

I'd love to have either solar or wind power, but it's not affordable to me.

Keep it small and keep it renewable.

Lower my bills and STOP regulating me to death! Efficiency Vermont and alternative fuels are over rated. The LED bulbs are great, but expensive. Those jokers made me put in those stupid CFL bulbs without the transformer in all of my 50 apartments and now I spend all of my time going around replacing them today. What a pain in the ass. Didn't save me much! Cost me so much in fuel and time. Efficiency Vermont has outlived their usefulness and is now all about keeping their job relevant and forcing new requirements on us EVERY YEAR to keep paying them. They have made homes so darn expensive that no one can afford them and the only way they can afford a new home is if I eat the costs of all of this crap. CUT IT OUT! Stop the solar crap, you cannot run an IBM plant off a windmill and a solar panel. Wake up before it is too late. The liberals and progressives have chased all of the good paying jobs away while at the same time get the Unions and legislature to protect theirs. Anytime David decides he needs some common sense you can give me call he knows me. Tom Wyckoff (thomas.wyckoff@gmail.com)

More renewable energy would be good for our grandchildren.

Poor utilization of hydro, natural gas, and nuclear energy sources. Wind technology has been proven to be a scam on the American tax payer. A devastating effect on ecological system (destructive footprint) and a poor long term 7% payback. It is so poor, that England has abandoned the use in their country. Simple hydro power is the best and cleanest. Add the use of natural gas and you would have the best unlimited source of clean, inexpensive power. Your wind power lovers should install wind turbines in beautiful downtown Burlington where there seems to be an excess of hot wind from NYC. You are grossly under-estimating the cyber-attacks on the grid!

Additional Comments

Renewable Energy

(continued)

The reason I generally oppose subsidies for "renewable energy" is that the push seems to be for solar and wind, which aren't suited for base load power. To the extent that it would be for hydro I'd be more amenable and I think nuclear makes a lot of sense, though that doesn't fit the renewable label (though it's worth noting that its carbon free.)

The solar and wind power is too expensive. Business wise it doesn't make sense, as it is not efficient and the towers will have to be replaced before they are paid for.

The state has put on so many mandates that it is hard for any company to function. I know I don't want hydro or nuclear power. I think they are doing a good job.

They have a good reputation and respond to outages in a timely manner. They are good at keeping customers informed. I like that they are looking into renewable energy.

They need desperately to bring renewable power, such as solar. They need to use clean power such as natural gas as well as solar and hydro. They need to build a nuclear plant to cut down the cost of electricity, as it is totally unfair to middle class and lower class working people.

We are against wind power. We would like to keep the cost low. Solar is great.

We need to invest in alternatives and long-term get their price down relative to natural gas and shale oil alternatives.

When it comes to renewables, I would like to see natural gas cost more than renewables.

Other Comments

Everything is run by big government at the expense of middle America.

I am sorry that they get pushed around by the public service board.

Thank you for asking my opinion.

This is a silly survey. What is biomass? What about a box that reads I don't care/I don't know? Would I pay more? If I had more, sure if I still have an income under \$10,000 a year, no. How many times have I contacted you? Do you really think I keep tabs on how often we lose electricity? Do you think I blame you for storms or people running into poles? Now trees on lines, yes, that I blame on you. I do think your phone service when we lose electricity is often frustrating and sometimes downright dumb, but lately you have changed message - guess it helps to bitch about it.

Additional Comments
Other Comments
(continued)

This survey is not relevant for us. We are seasonal users (5 months) in a cottage on Lake Champlain. I think power in Vermont is quite expensive by comparison to Rocky Mountain Power (cheap, dirty coal) and Questar Gas (natural gas) here in Utah. Vermont is shooting itself in the foot with high prices for taxes, utilities, fuel, gas, tuition, etc. No wonder the school population is dropping and folks are getting out. The problem (frustration) is that nobody does anything about it -- and seasonal residents have little or no influence on Montpelier. No offense, but I have little respect for monopolistic utilities, but who would deliver power to very rural places like Vermont? I do feel qualified (and worthy) to make these criticisms after 7 generations-- 60 years myself, in Vermont. I left 10 years ago. Thanks for listening!

What is the purpose of the survey?

Appendix C: Questionnaire

**2015 Vermont Electric Cooperative
RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION AND CO-OP COMMITMENT SURVEY**

Final 5/28/14

INTRODUCTION:

May I please speak with the head of household who has or shares responsibility for reviewing and paying the electric utility bills? Hello, my name is _____ and I am with NRECA Market Research Services. We are conducting a confidential survey for **Vermont Electric Cooperative** on the service they provide you. Let me assure you, we are not selling anything. *[If hesitant, please offer the following option.] If you would like to first verify the legitimacy of this survey with Vermont Electric (Phone 802-635-2331), I would be happy to schedule a convenient time to call you back.* Our survey will take about 10 minutes. May I continue now?

Yes ... **Continue** No ... When would be a more convenient time for me to call back?
Date to call: _____ Time to call: _____

1. How long have you received your electric service from Vermont Electric Cooperative? (*tenure1*)

- 1 Less than 1 year 3 3 to 5 years 5 10 to 14 years 7 20 years or more
 2 1 to 2 years 4 6 to 9 years 6 15 to 19 years 8 Don't Know/Refused

2. Now, please consider all your experiences to date with Vermont Electric. Using a 10-point scale on which "1" means "very dissatisfied" and "10" means "very satisfied," how satisfied are you with Vermont Electric Cooperative? (*satis*)

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Satisfied

Satisfaction and Performance Ratings

3. Now, again on a 5-point scale where 1 means "very poor" and 5 means "excellent," how would you rate Vermont Electric Co-op's performance on the following? (**Randomize after b.**)

On ...	Very Poor			Excellent	DK	
a. The overall customer service they provide (<i>cust_svc</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Delivering good value for the money (<i>value</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Resolving any issues or problems (<i>resolve</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Having professional employees	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Communicating with you and keeping you informed (<i>communic</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Operating with concern for the environment (<i>environ</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
h. Supporting the local community (<i>community</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
i. The speed and efficiency of responding to customers (<i>respond2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
j. The courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to your inquiries or problems (<i>courtesy</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6

Contact

4. In the past year, did you contact VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE for any reason? [

1 Yes 2 No (**Skip to Q.8**)

5. What was the REASON for the most recent call or visit you made?

___ Reason (**specify**) ___ Don't Know/Refused

6. How many TIMES did you contact the co-op concerning this issue/reason?

1 2 3-4 5-6 7-9 10+ ___ Don't Know/Refused

7. Based on your contact with Vermont Electric, was your experience much better, somewhat better, about what you expected, somewhat worse, or much worse than you expected? (*cntceval*)

1 Much worse 4 Somewhat worse 3 As expected 2 Somewhat better 1 Much better

Electric Service Performance

8. Now, on a 5-point scale where 1 means "very poor" and 5 means "excellent," how would you rate Vermont Electric Co-op's performance on the following ...? (**randomize after b**)

On ...	Very Poor				Excellent	DK
a. Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum (<i>limit_blink</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum (<i>limit_outg</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions (<i>elec_svc</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. The restoration of power after an outage (<i>restore2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Keeping you informed on the status of outages (<i>outinfo2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts (<i>pwr_qal2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6

Rates and Fees

9. How would you rate Vermont Electric Co-op's performance on the following using a 5-point scale where 1 means "very poor" and 5 means "excellent?" (**randomize**)

On ...	Very Poor				Excellent	DK
a. Charging reasonable rates (<i>reasrate</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
b. Their monthly service fees (<i>svcfes</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
c. Providing accurate and easy to understand bills (<i>clearbil</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
d. Having convenient payment options (<i>payoptn</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6
e. Helping customers keep bills as low as possible	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. The accuracy of meter reading and billing	1	2	3	4	5	6
g. Helping you to be more efficient in your use of electricity	1	2	3	4	5	6

10. Compared to other electric companies, would you say Vermont Electric's rates are higher, lower, about the same or you aren't aware? (*ratecomp*)

1 Higher 2 Lower 3 About the same 4 Not aware

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

11. Have you heard of the energy efficiency utility in Vermont, called "Efficiency Vermont"?

1 Yes 2 No (**Skip to Q14**)

12. Using a 5-point scale where "1" means not at all beneficial and "5" means very beneficial, how beneficial do you feel "Efficiency Vermont" is for Vermont consumers?

Not at all beneficial 1 2 3 4 5 Very Beneficial 6 – DK

13. Again using the 5-point scale, how beneficial do you feel "Efficiency Vermont" has been to you, helping you personally to be more efficient in your use of electricity?

Not at all beneficial 1 2 3 4 5 Very Beneficial 6 – DK

14. On a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 means "extremely important," how important is it to you for utilities to provide power from the following energy sources? (**randomize**)

	Not at all Important				Extremely Important	DK
a. Wind	1	2	3	4	5	6 (<i>v11</i>)
b. Solar	1	2	3	4	5	6 (<i>v12</i>)
c. Hydro	1	2	3	4	5	6 (<i>v13</i>)
d. Bio-mass	1	2	3	4	5	6 (<i>v15</i>)
e. Natural gas	1	2	3	4	5	6
f. Nuclear	1	2	3	4	5	6

15. Would you support an electric rate increase if it were caused by Vermont state requirements to increase the amount of renewables in our portfolio of electric generation sources?

1 Yes 2 No 3 Don't know

16. If electricity from renewable energy sources were not available at the same rates you are paying now, how much more would you be willing to pay, if anything, to get this renewable power? Would you pay ... **[Stop when respondent agrees]** (greenpay)

- 1 \$20 more per month 3 \$10 more per month 5 \$3 more, or 7 Don't Know/Refused
2 \$15 more per month 4 \$5 more per month 6 Nothing more per month

Cooperative Commitment

17. Do you view yourself as a member-owner or as a customer of your electric co-op, or both? (mem_id2)

- 1 Member/owner 2 Customer 3 Both 4 Don't Know / Refused

Communications

18. How often do you read the quarterly newsletter called "Co-op Life"?

- 1 always 2 usually 3 sometimes 4 rarely 5 never/don't receive it

19. How often would you like to receive email communications from VEC?

- 1 weekly 2 every-other-week 3 monthly 4 quarterly 5 less often than 4 times/year

20. What types of devices do you use to connect to the internet? (READ LIST – select all that apply)

- 1 Personal computer or laptop
2 Cell phone or smartphone
3 Tablet, Netbook, iPad, or e-book readers
4 Do not access the internet

21. Do you participate in an online social media group such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, or YouTube?

- Yes No (**Skip to Q22**)

22. Which ones? _____

23. (If Q21 = Facebook, ask:) Were you aware that Vermont Electric Cooperative is on Facebook? 1 Yes 2 No

DEMOGRAPHICS

Thank you for your patience. There are just a few final questions that are used for classification purposes only. This information is completely confidential.

24. Into which category does your age fall? (ageresp) 1 Under 25 3 35 to 44 5 55 to 64
2 25 to 34 4 45 to 54 6 65 or older

25. How many people live in your household including yourself? (hh_num) 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more

26. What is your current employment status? (employmt)

- 1 Work full-time 3 At home full-time family care giver 5 Student
2 Work part-time 4 Retired 6 Not employed, not looking
7 Not employed but looking

27. What is your average monthly electric bill? (bill3)

- 1 \$50 or less 3 \$101 - \$150 5 \$201 to \$250
2 \$51 - \$100 4 \$151 - \$200 6 \$251 to \$300
7 Over \$300

28. Pre-coded geographic areas from co-op database/member files: _____ [DO NOT ASK]

29. [DO NOT ASK] Gender: 1 Male. 2 Female.

Additional Comments you would like to make about Vermont Electric Cooperative: _____

Thank you for your time and cooperation. It is very much appreciated.