Vermont Electric Cooperative Commercial Member Satisfaction Survey Results

PREPARED BY:
NRECA MARKET RESEARCH SERVICES
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following are the top-line findings for the study’s main objectives based on the results of a telephone survey of 101 randomly selected commercial members of Vermont Electric Cooperative conducted in June of 2011. The main conclusions are highlighted below, followed by the key findings and a detailed graphic representation of the results for all survey questions.

- Overall satisfaction among commercial members is good and is significantly higher than in the 2010 study. Additionally, evaluations of all of the performance quality attributes are significantly higher than or consistent with the 2010 study. Remarkably, there are no statistically significant decreases in mean ratings compared to any of the previous studies.

- The strongest key driver of overall satisfaction among commercial members is Member Service. All eight performance attributes in this area are rated well, especially the courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees; having highly-trained, professional employees; and the overall customer service provided. Additionally, those who have contacted the co-op in the past year evaluate that contact very positively. On the other hand, while half of the commercial members place high value on having an account representative from VEC, perceived value has decreased from past studies, significantly since 2007.

  
  I know all the guys who work there. They work hard. I had to call them and they were here in 20 minutes.

  It’s very good. I don’t have a lot of contact with them. Once I had overlooked a bill payment. They gave me a courtesy call. I was so glad. I didn’t get my service turned off. I didn’t have to pay a late fee. It was so nice that they gave me a call and reminded me. I couldn’t ask for better service.

  When they merged we lost our convenience to stop in and talk to them. Now we have a chain of command to go through. They were more approachable before.

- Electric Service is also a strong driver of overall satisfaction, nearly as strong as member service. The necessity of having power 24 hours a day, seven days a week has increased significantly since the 2009 and 2010 studies. The six attributes related to electric service
are also evaluated well, especially the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions. This is also an attribute that is rated significantly higher than in all previous studies.

We have to have power 24/7 here at the facility and we need a phone call if there are going to be any down times. Vermont is always good to keep us posted and with power, I appreciate that very much, it is a must for us.

I will say that I have so very few outages or blips. They would be very destructive to me since I deal with fresh fish and it would cost a lot to have to dump it because of no power and if the refrigeration was out. Other areas of town at times are out of power and I am on.

Our service has been excellent when it comes to reliability. They take care of problems immediately.

With most of VEC’s commercial members perceiving electricity to be their company’s largest utility expense, it is not surprising that Rates, Fees and Bills is also a driver of overall satisfaction and is one of the strongest drivers of members feeling they receive good value for the money. This is the area with the most room for improvement, with several verbatim comments indicating that members are happy with VEC, except for the rates.

Operating with concern for the environment is the attribute evaluated most positively by commercial members. They place high importance on using green power from the various renewable sources. Not surprisingly though, members are less willing to pay more to get green power than they were in 2010.

As far as green power, it all depends on the bottom line and if it is going to cost even more I would not be for it, otherwise it really doesn't matter.

I would not want to pay more for green power. I really don't care about any of that; I can't have my rates go up any.

I would want them to pay more attention to renewable energy and less attention to those who don’t want the turbines ruining their view.

I hope in the future they do go for the green power, windmills. I love them. I have no issue with them and the folks against them I feel are not giving them a fair shake. I would pay more for green power, but I can't say how much more. I would have to know more details.
BACKGROUND

Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) is a consumer-owned electric distribution cooperative headquartered in Johnson, Vermont. VEC currently serves approximately 34,000 members in 74 communities with more than 2,700 miles of distribution line over 2,000 square miles in northern Vermont (Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Orleans Counties).

VEC has regularly conducted commercial member satisfaction studies, with the most recent completed in 2010. The results of tracking surveys provide value in two ways: by demonstrating when results remain consistent and by 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 members’ attitudes and satisfaction:

- Rates were raised by 2.13% on January 1, 2011. This is lower than increases that have been implemented by other electric companies in the area.

- With continued unemployment and high gas prices, the area served by VEC continues to be impacted by the national economic recession.

- A wind storm in December 2010 caused 12,500 members to be out of power. Additionally, a wet spring in 2011 along with flooding has affected the area, especially those working in agriculture or other outdoor industry.

- In November 2010, VEC began work on a new switching station. Additionally, the co-op has been working on informing members about transmission upgrades and its association with Kingdom Community Wind project.
OBJECTIVES

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

❖ **Overall Satisfaction:** Assess how satisfied commercial members are with Vermont Electric Cooperative.

❖ **Performance Quality Attributes:** Evaluate commercial member perceptions of member service and electric service quality on a variety of attributes (e.g., rates, billing, outages, problem resolution, etc.).

❖ **Performance Quality Trends:** Compare the results to past studies to identify trends.

❖ **Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts:** Determine the key drivers of overall satisfaction and to what degree member needs are being met to help the co-op prioritize any improvement efforts.

❖ **Renewable Energy:** Explore member perceptions of renewable energy sources, including how much they would be willing to pay for green power. Also, explore perceptions of generating electricity using nuclear power.

❖ **Internet and Communications:** Explore members’ willingness to use online services such as an online newsletter, online outage center, or eBill and their readership of the Co-op Life newsletter.

❖ **Business Characteristics and Segmentation:** Provide firmographics of the commercial membership base and highlight any attitudinal differences between segments. Firmographics used for commercial accounts include district, business type, annual revenue, and the number of years served by Vermont Electric Cooperative.
METHODOLOGY

Telephone surveying was used as the data collection technique. Interviewers were thoroughly trained on telephone 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 10 minutes.

Calls were completed with 101 commercial members of Vermont Electric Cooperative with sampling done proportionate to connect date (tenure) and district. The member surveys were conducted between June 13 and June 22, 2011. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample is plus or minus 9.8 percentage points. This means that a result of 50% in the survey may be between 40.2% and 59.8% if the entire membership were to be interviewed.

ANALYSIS

The graphics presented in this report are based on data collected from the current study and tracking results from six studies conducted between 2005 and 2010.

Sub-segments within each group are also identified on graphs and in the notes under each graph. 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 with VEC among commercial members is good. The mean overall satisfaction rating of 8.46 is the highest it’s been since surveying began in 2005.

- The mean overall satisfaction rating is significantly higher than the 2010, 2007, and 2006 studies.

- Businesses in District 19 give the highest ratings (8.92), while those in District 12 give the lowest (8.00). Note that there are fewer than 25 respondents in each of Districts 12, 17, and 19.

Performance Quality Attributes

Commercial members were asked to evaluate 22 performance quality attributes related to customer service, image, electric service, communication, billing and cost. On 19 of the attributes measured, the mean ratings exceed 4.00, a “good” rating on a 5-point scale. Additionally, mean ratings for six of the attributes are higher than 4.50 which can be considered excellent.

- VEC is rated positively on many of the attributes, with the highest mean ratings for the following. Approximately nine in ten commercial members or more rate each of these attributes positively (rating of “4” or “5”).
  - Operating with concern for the environment (4.65)
  - Having highly-trained, professional employees (4.54)
  - Courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to inquiries/problems (4.61)
  - Overall customer service provided (4.54)
  - Supporting the local community (4.51)
  - Reliability of service and frequency of interruptions (4.51)
  - The accuracy of meter reading and billing (4.46)
  - Having convenient payment options (4.46)
The attributes on which VEC is rated least well are charging reasonable rates (54% rating “4” or “5”), the monthly service fees (55%), and helping customers keep bills as low as possible (65%). With mean ratings of approximately 3.75 or lower, this may be cause for concern. However, it should be noted that these are areas that are typically rated lower in cooperative satisfaction research, especially when there has been a recent rate increase.

Performance Quality Trends

Mean ratings and top two-box ratings on all of the comparable performance attributes either increased or do not differ significantly from 2010. None of the attributes significantly declined.

- Mean ratings for nine attributes have improved significantly from 2010:
  - Overall customer service provided
  - Operating with concern for the environment
  - Communicating with members and keeping them informed
  - Having consumers’ best interests at heart
  - Supporting the local community
  - Restoration of power after an outage
  - Reliability of service and frequency of interruptions
  - Keeping members informed on the status of outages
  - Helping customers keep bills as low as possible

- Additionally, four of these attributes are rated significantly higher in 2011 than in any of the previous studies. These are: operating with concern for the environment, having consumers’ best interests at heart, supporting the local community, and the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions.

- There are no significant decreases in mean ratings compared to any of the previous studies.
Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts

The key drivers of overall satisfaction among commercial members are Member Service, Electric Service, and Rates, Fees and Bills. Going forward, these are the areas that VEC should focus on most.

- The strongest driver of overall satisfaction is the Member Service factor – having consumers’ best interests at heart; having highly-trained, professional employees; overall customer service provided; the courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems; having convenient payment options; communicating with members and keeping them informed; providing accurate and easy to understand bills; and resolving any issues or problems. The mean ratings for all eight attributes are above the “good” threshold of 4.00 and ratings for the employees and overall customer service are above 4.50. Additionally, several of these attributes are rated significantly higher than the 2010 study. Continuing and building upon the co-op’s good work in this area will have the strongest effect on overall satisfaction.

- The proportion of commercial members who report having contacted VEC in the past year (44%) is significantly lower than in 2010. Almost all evaluate their contact as being at least what they expected, with 37% saying it was better than
expected. Commercial members in 2011 are significantly more likely than in 2010 to say their contact was much better than expected.

- Members’ perceived value of having an account representative from VEC has decreased from previous studies, significantly compared to 2007. Still, approximately half rate the value as “4” or “5” on a 5-point scale.

- The Electric Service factor – keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum, providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts, keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum, the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions, communicating with members and keeping them informed, and resolving any issues or problems – is the next driver of overall satisfaction. This is another area in which VEC has been doing well. All of the attributes are rated above 4.00 and ratings for communication and overall reliability have improved significantly since 2010.

- Commercial members are much more likely in 2011 (59%) than in 2010 (38%) to say it is absolutely necessary for them to have power 24/7 and an additional 19% say they can only manage a two to three hour outage if it is not during particular business operations.

- Approximately eight in ten or more indicate that power outages lasting three to four hours and inconsistent power quality such as surges or blips have a serious impact on their business.

- The monthly service fees, charging reasonable rates, helping customers keep bills as low as possible, providing accurate and easy to understand bills, and having convenient payment options make up the Rates, Fees and Bills factor, the final driver of overall satisfaction. This is the area in which VEC has the most room for improvement, which is not surprising due to the recent rate increase along with a struggling economy. Although a number of mean ratings have increased from past studies – including helping customers keep bills as low as possible which has increased significantly since 2010 – three of the five attributes are rated below 4.00. The co-op should continue to communicate with members about how rates and other charges on the bill are
determined, why increases are necessary, and what is being done to keep costs as low as possible and value high.

- Most of the members are not aware of how their rates compare to other electric companies (62%) or feel they are about the same (20%). Fewer than one-fifth believe their rates are lower (2%) or higher (16%).

- As in past years, most of VEC’s commercial members perceive electricity to be their company’s largest utility expense. Agriculture and manufacturing/construction businesses are the most likely to report their electric power costs are their biggest utility cost.

- A regression analysis was also conducted to determine the key drivers of value. It was found that three factors or attributes are significant drivers of value: the restoration of power after an outage, Rates, Fees and Bills, and Member Service. So, while the perception of rates has a strong impact on the value members feel they receive, it is not the only factor that enters into the “value equation” among commercial members of VEC.

  - For more information on how the factors were formed and key drivers of satisfaction were derived, see the appendix.

Renewable Energy

Three quarters of the members think it is important for VEC to use green power from hydro. Between 60% and 67% place importance on using gas methane, bio-mass, wind, and/or solar. However, members are less willing to pay more to get green power than they were in 2010.

- Eight percent say they would pay up to 3% extra on their monthly bill to get green power, 14% say they would pay up to 5% more, and 5% say they would pay up to 10% more per month.
As in 2010, respondents are unsure how they feel about VEC distributing electricity generated by nuclear power. When asked to rate the extent to which they are in favor of or against nuclear power, more than one-quarter chose not to answer the question. Of those who did respond, 36% give a neutral rating of “3” while 45% indicate being in favor of it and 19% against it.

Internet and Communications

The vast majority of commercial members have Internet access, either at home or work. Of those with access, three in ten or fewer indicate a likelihood of using online services from the cooperative.

- Almost all of those with Internet access at home use a higher speed access, such as cable, satellite, or DSL service.

- One-fifth of those with access are aware of the co-op’s online outage center and just eight respondents say they have used it. This is a significant decrease in awareness from the 2010 study (from 29% to 21%).

- Nearly four in ten indicate they always (17%) or usually (21%) read the newsletter. One-third report reading it sometimes. Of those who read it at least some of the time, half say they skim it, 20% read most of it, and just 12% say they read all of it.
Verbatim Comments

As in the residential study, commercial members were given the opportunity to share any comments, concerns, or questions they had at the end of the survey. Half of the respondents offered input and most of the comments were neutral or positive.

- 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject/Topic</th>
<th>Total # Comments</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operations/Engineers – Blinks, outages, tree trimming, AMI/AMR</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable Energy</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates/Fees</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter/Information</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Power</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems With Bills</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Services/Marketing – Resolving issues, customer service reps</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management/Board</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- As would be expected, the majority of comments about rates and fees are negative rather than positive or neutral. Most of the comments about electric service are positive or neutral.
- Overall Satisfaction
- Performance Quality Attributes
- Key Drivers of Satisfaction and Value
Please consider all your experiences to date with Vermont Electric Cooperative. Using a 10-point scale on which 1 means “very dissatisfied” and 10 means “very satisfied,” how satisfied are you with Vermont Electric Co-op?

- Overall satisfaction among Vermont Electric Cooperative’s commercial and industrial members is good with a mean satisfaction rating of 8.46 and just over half giving ratings of “9” (23%) or “10 – very satisfied” (29%). Just 4% give a rating of “5” or less, indicating they are not satisfied.

- Commercial members’ overall satisfaction in 2011 is higher than any of the previous studies, significantly higher than in 2010, 2007, and 2006.

- Businesses in District 19 give the highest ratings (mean rating of 8.92), while those in District 12 give the lowest (8.00). Note that there are fewer than 25 respondents in each of Districts 12, 17, and 19, so differences are not statistically significant.
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.

- Approximately nine in ten or more commercial members evaluate VEC positively (ratings of “4” or “5” on a 5-point scale) on the five attributes related to member service.
- Additionally, two-thirds give excellent ratings (rating of “5”) on the courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to members’ inquiries or problems.
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.

- Four of the five mean ratings in 2011 are higher than in 2010 with the improvement being statistically significant for the **overall customer service provided**.

- Additionally, ratings for the **courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems; the speed and accuracy of responding to customers; and resolving any issues or problems** are significantly higher than in 2007.
On a 5-point scale where 1 means “very poor” and 5 means “excellent,” how would you rate Vermont Electric Cooperop’s performance on the following.

- VEC is also rated positively in this area, with more than eight in ten giving positive ratings on all of the attributes and more than half give the highest “excellent” rating.

- Note that approximately half felt unable to evaluate the co-op on the environment and community attributes.
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.

- Ratings for all four attributes have increased significantly since 2010.

- Additionally, ratings for operating with concern for the environment, having consumers’ best interests at heart, and supporting the local community are significantly higher than in any of the previous studies.
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.

- More than eight in ten VEC commercial members give positive ratings for five of the six attributes related to the electric service provided.

- More than half give excellent ratings for the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions and keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum.

- Keeping members informed on the status of outages is rated somewhat lower, but still positively, with 75% giving top two-box ratings.
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.

- Ratings have improved significantly since 2010 for the restoration of power after an outage, the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions, and keeping members informed on the status of outages.

- All areas of electric service have improved over the 2006 and 2007 surveys.
Billing and Cost Ratings
1-5 Scale: 1 = Very Poor; 5 = Excellent
Top 2 Box – “4” and “5” Graphed

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.

- VEC receives high ratings for their billings; more than eight in ten give positive ratings and more than half rate the co-op as being excellent on having convenient payment options, providing accurate and easy to understand bills, and the accuracy or meter reading and billing.

- Ratings for charging reasonable rates, the monthly service fees, and helping customers keep bills as low as possible are lower, which is typical in member satisfaction surveys.
Billing and Cost Trends
1-5 Scale: 1 = Very Poor; 5 = Excellent
Mean Ratings Graphed

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:

- Since 2010, mean ratings have increased significantly for helping customers keep bills as low as possible.

- In addition, mean ratings have increased significantly since 2009 for delivering good value for the money and charging reasonable rates.
Compared to other electric companies, would you say Vermont Electric’s rates are higher, lower, about the same or you aren’t aware?

- Identical to studies conducted in 2008 or later, six in ten commercial members are unsure about how their rates compare with other electric companies. Those who felt able to answer the question are most likely to believe their rates are about the same or higher. Just 2% believe their rates are lower.

- There have been no significant changes from studies done since 2008. However, members in 2011 are significantly more likely than in 2007 to be unsure about how their rates compare and significantly less likely than in 2006 and 2007 to feel their rates are higher.
Electric Power Costs

As in past studies, a majority of VEC commercial members report that electric power costs are the single biggest utility cost, but not the overall largest cost in the business.

However, there are some significant differences in individual responses. Commercial members in 2011 are significantly more likely to be unsure which phrase best describes their electric power costs (compared to 2005, 2007, and 2009) and significantly less likely to say it is the single biggest utility cost (compared to 2005, 2007, and 2008).

Agriculture and manufacturing/construction businesses are the most likely to feel their electric power costs are their biggest utility cost (73%), significantly more likely than wholesale/retail (35%) or government/non-profit businesses (33%).
Regression analysis was used to determine the key drivers of overall satisfaction. The results indicate that there are three factors or attributes that drive overall satisfaction with the cooperative among commercial members, as shown in the above figure: Member Service; Electric Service; and Rates, Fees and Bills.

The scores are to be interpreted relative to each other. For example, since member service has a score of 0.45 and rates, fees and bills has a score of 0.18, we can say that members’ perceptions of the member service they receive is more than twice as important to overall satisfaction as their perceptions of the rates and fees they pay. Attributes and factors not shown above are not significant drivers of overall satisfaction.

More information on how the factors were formed and importance scores derived can be found in the appendix.
Regression analysis was also used to determine the key drivers of perceived value for the money. The results indicate that there are three attributes/factors that drive value among Vermont Electric commercial members, as shown in the above figure.

The scores are to be interpreted relative to each other. For example, since the restoration of power after an outage has a score of 0.49 and rates, fees and bills has a score of 0.46, we can say that member perceptions of the co-op getting power restored is just slightly more important to the value they feel they receive for their money as their perceptions of the rates and fees they pay.

Attributes and factors not shown above are not significant drivers of value.
Contact With the Co-op
Account Representative
In the past year, how many times have you made contact either by phone or in person with Vermont Electric Cooperative? What were the reasons for any calls or visits you made?

- Forty-four percent report having contacted VEC over the past year. This is significantly lower than in 2010.

- Those who contacted the co-op are most likely to have done so to report or inquire about a power outage (24%) or for general service (22%).

- Although the differences are not statistically significant, businesses in Districts 16 and 17 are the least likely to have contacted the co-op.
Evaluation of Contact With Cooperative

Asked of those who have contacted the co-op in the past year

Would you say the contact you’ve had with Vermont Electric has been much better, somewhat better, about what you expected, somewhat worse, or much worse than you expected?

- Almost all of those who contacted VEC in the past year say their expectations were met or exceeded. More than one-third indicate their contact was somewhat (11%) or much (26%) better than expected.

- Commercial members in 2011 are significantly more positive than in 2010 and 2009 about their contact with VEC.

- Although those who did not contact VEC in the past year are more satisfied overall than those who did contact the co-op, the difference is not statistically significant. However, it is interesting to note that when the contact is much better than expected, overall satisfaction is higher than those who did not contact the co-op at all.
In the past year, how many times have you been in contact with your Director from the Board? Using a 5-point scale on which 1 means very poor and 5 means excellent, how would you rate your relationship with your Director?

- As in past studies, there is little contact with Board Directors among commercial members. In 2011, just one respondent indicated contact with a Director in the past year.
- This person rated their relationship with their Director as a “4” on a 5-point scale.
How valuable is it to your business to have an account representative from Vermont Electric Cooperative who works with you to determine how best to meet your business needs? Use a 1-5 scale where 1 is not at all valuable and 5 is extremely valuable.

- Approximately half feel it is valuable to have an account representative from VEC, giving a rating of “4” (15%) or “5 – extremely valuable” (34%).

- This is lower than in all previous years with the difference between 2011 and 2007 being statistically significant.

- Longer-tenured members, those with higher annual revenue, service companies, and those in District 19 generally give higher ratings, although most of the differences are not significant.

- Although again the difference is not significant, it is interesting to note that those more satisfied with VEC overall give lower ratings for the value of an account representative.
Business Power Requirements
Which of the following best describes your electric power delivery requirements for your business or organization?

- Approximately six in ten respondents say that it is absolutely necessary to have power 24/7, 22% say it is very inconvenient but they can manage a 2-3 hour outage, and 19% say they can only manage a 2-3 hour outage if it does not occur during particular business operations.

- The proportion of commercial members who say that it is absolutely necessary to have power 24/7 has increased significantly from the 2009 and 2010 studies. Conversely, the proportion who indicate it is very inconvenient but they could manage any 2-3 hour outage has decreased significantly from 2010.

- Those in District 16 (70%), wholesale/retail (71%) and agricultural businesses (73%) are the most likely to state it is absolutely necessary to have power 24/7.
On a 5-point scale where 1 means “not at all serious” and 5 means “extremely serious,” how would you rate the impact on your business of experiencing:

- More than two-thirds of the commercial members indicate that power outages, either longer or momentary, and having inconsistent power quality have a serious impact on their business.

- Newer members and those with higher annual revenue place higher importance on power quality than their counterparts.

- Wholesale/retail businesses indicate a more serious impact of momentary and longer power outages than do those in other types of businesses. Agricultural and wholesale/retail businesses and those in Districts 16 and 17 indicate a more serious impact of inconsistent power quality.
On a 5-point scale where 1 means “not at all serious” and 5 means “extremely serious,” how would you rate the impact on your business of experiencing:

- The perceived impact of inconsistent power quality and outages lasting 5-10 minutes in 2011 has increased significantly from the 2009 and 2010 studies.
- Renewable Energy
- Alternative Energy Sources
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 Vermont Electric to provide environmentally friendly “green power” from the following renewable energy sources?

- Six in ten or more commercial members place high importance on the co-op providing environmentally-friendly green power from each of the five tested renewable energy sources: hydro, wind, solar, bio-mass, and gas methane.
- Members place the greatest importance on hydro power and the least importance on solar power.
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 Vermont Electric to provide environmentally friendly “green power” from the following renewable energy sources?

- Importance ratings for Vermont Electric providing green power from gas methane power has increased significantly from 2010.
- Other differences are not statistically significant.
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 green power?

- Twenty-seven percent say they would be willing to pay something extra to get green power, if it were not available at current rates. This is significantly lower than in 2010, but the proportion of members who are unsure how much they would be willing to pay has increased significantly from 2009 and 2010.

- Twenty-two percent say they would be willing to pay from 3% to 5% more per month.

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How do you feel about Vermont Electric distributing electricity generated in part by nuclear power? Please rate your opinion of this on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you are “entirely against” nuclear power and 5 means you are “entirely for” it.

- As in 2010, commercial members are generally unsure how they feel about VEC distributing electricity generated in part by nuclear power; 22% in 2010 and 28% in 2011 did not feel they could evaluate it.

- Among those who felt able to answer, 36% give a neutral rating of “3” on a 5-point scale. The proportion who say they are entirely for it increased from 2010, but the proportion entirely against it also increased. Neither difference is statistically significant.

- Those in manufacturing/construction (mean rating of 3.80) are the most likely to be in favor of using nuclear power while those in agriculture (3.22) are least likely, although the differences are not significant. Businesses in District 12 (4.43) are most likely to be in favor, much more likely than those in District 17 or 19.
- Internet
- Communications
Do you have Internet access either at home or at work? If at home, is it dial-up or a higher speed form of access such as cable, satellite, or DSL service?

- Almost all of VEC’s commercial members have Internet access at work (83%) and/or home (81%). Of those with Internet access at home, fully nine in ten use a high speed connection.
- Internet access in 2011 is significantly higher than in 2010.
In the future, would you say you would definitely or probably, might or might not, or you probably or definitely would not use the following services from VEC?

- Fewer than one-third of the commercial members with Internet access indicate they would likely use any of the tested online services. Thirty percent of all commercial members indicate interest in receiving information by cell phone text message or voice mail.

- This does not differ significantly from the 2009 and 2010 studies.
Are you aware that VEC has an outage center online through a link on their website that provides up-to-date outage information as outages occur? If aware, have you used the outage center? If yes, using a 5-point scale where 1 means “not at all valuable” and 5 means “very valuable”, how valuable did you find the outage center to be?

- One-fifth of VEC’s commercial members who have Internet access are aware of the co-op’s online outage center, a significant decrease in awareness from 2010.

- Of those aware of the outage center, 40% (eight respondents) say they used it. Most of those who have used it found it to be valuable.
How often do you read the quarterly newsletter called “Co-op Life”? How much of it do you usually read?

- Approximately four in ten commercial members report they always (17%) or usually (21%) read VEC’s quarterly newsletter Co-op Life.

- Among those who indicate they read the newsletter, one-third say they read all (12%) or most (20%) of it.
Do you feel that the length of “Co-op Life” is too short, too long, or about right?

- Forty-six percent think the length of *Co-op Life* is about right. Just 2% think it is too long.
- However, fully half were not able to answer this question.
How would you prefer to receive news about what is going on at VEC? How would you prefer to receive critical or time sensitive information from VEC?

- Commercial members most often prefer receiving VEC news and critical/time sensitive information via the newsletter.
- Approximately one-quarter say they would prefer e-mail, especially for critical or time sensitive information.
Commercial Member Characteristics
Which of the following best describes your company or organization’s primary business?

- As in the past, respondents represent a wide variety of business types.
Into which of the following categories does your company or organization's revenue fall?

- Nearly one-fifth of the responding businesses report that their annual revenue is $100,000 or less while 36% report more than $1 million.

- This represents a significantly higher level of revenue than in 2010.

- Note that almost two-thirds of the businesses did not respond to this question.
How long have you received your electric service from Vermont Electric Cooperative?

- Six in ten have been served by VEC for twenty years or more. Five percent are newer, having been served by the co-op for two years or less.

- This represents a significantly longer-tenured commercial membership than in past studies. However, when based on the connect date listed in VEC’s membership database, tenure is consistent with past studies. It could be that the respondent answered the question as their personal tenure with VEC, or the tenure of the entire organization rather than their specific location.
• Key Driver/Factor
  Explanation
EXPLANATION OF FACTOR AND KEY DRIVER ANALYSES

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 members unconsciously think about or group the many different performance attributes. Three factors were found and named Electric Service, Member Service, and Rates and Fees.

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.

**Electric Service Factor**
- Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum
- Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts
- Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum
- The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed
- Resolving any issues or problems

**Member Service Factor**
- Having consumers’ best interests at heart
- Having highly-trained and professional employees
- The overall customer service provided
- The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems
- Having convenient payment options
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed
- Providing accurate and easy to understand bills
- Resolving any issues or problems

**Rates and Fees Factor**
- The monthly service fees
- Charging reasonable rates
- Helping customers keep bills as low as possible
Providing accurate and easy to understand bills
Having convenient payment options

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

- The speed and efficiency of responding to customers
- Operating with concern for the environment
- Supporting the local community
- The restoration of power after an outage
- Keeping members informed on the status of outages
- The accuracy of meter reading and billing

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/loyalty 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 commercial 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.
Commercial and Residential Results Comparisons
Please consider all your experiences to date with Vermont Electric Cooperative. Using a 10-point scale on which 1 means “very dissatisfied” and 10 means “very satisfied,” how satisfied are you with Vermont Electric Co-op?
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.
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.

- **Communicating, keeping members informed**: Residential 4.39, Commercial 4.40
- **Environmental concern**: Residential 4.30, Commercial 4.65
- **Supporting local community**: Residential 4.26, Commercial 4.51
- **Having consumers’ best interests at heart**: Residential 4.25, Commercial 4.44
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.
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.
Compared to other electric companies, would you say Vermont Electric’s rates are higher, lower, about the same or you aren’t aware?
In the past year, have you made contact either by phone or in person with Vermont Electric Cooperative? What were the reasons for any calls or visits you made? Would you say the contact you’ve had with Vermont Electric has been much better, somewhat better, about what you expected, somewhat worse, or much worse than you expected?
Importance of Providing Green Power From Various Sources

1-5 Scale: 1=Not At All Important; 5=Extremely Important
Top Two-Box – “4” and “5” Graphed

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 Vermont Electric to provide environmentally friendly “green power” from the following renewable energy sources?

- Hydro: 78% Residential, 77% Commercial
- Wind: 71% Residential, 63% Commercial
- Solar: 78% Residential, 60% Commercial
- Bio-Mass: 65% Residential, 65% Commercial
- Gas Methane: 67% Residential, 60% Commercial
Willing To Pay Additional Amount for Green Power

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 green power?

Don't Know
- Residential: 10%
- Commercial: 40%

Willing to Pay Additional Amount
- Residential: 51%
- Commercial: 27%

Not Willing to Pay Anything Additional
- Residential: 40%
- Commercial: 34%

NRECA MARKET RESEARCH SERVICES
How do you feel about Vermont Electric distributing electricity generated in part by nuclear power? Please rate your opinion of this on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you are “entirely against” nuclear power and 5 means you are “entirely for” it.
Do you have Internet access either at home or at work?

**Internet Access**

- **Home**
  - Residential: 70%
  - Commercial: 81%

- **Work**
  - Residential: 33%
  - Commercial: 83%

- **Neither**
  - Residential: 26%
  - Commercial: 4%
How often do you read the quarterly newsletter called “Co-op Life”? How much of it do you usually read?
In the future, would you say you would definitely or probably, might or might not, or you probably or definitely would not use the following services from VEC?
Are you aware that VEC has an outage center online through a link on their website that provides up-to-date outage information as outages occur? If Aware: Have you used the outage center?
How long have you received your electric service from Vermont Electric Cooperative?

- 2 Years or Less: 6% Residential, 5% Commercial
- 3 - 5 Years: 13% Residential, 6% Commercial
- 6 - 9 Years: 15% Residential, 10% Commercial
- 10 - 19 Years: 29% Residential, 19% Commercial
- 20 Years or More: 37% Residential, 60% Commercial
Verbatim Responses
Please consider all your experiences to date with Vermont Electric Cooperative. Using a 10-point scale on which "1" means "very dissatisfied" and "10" means "very satisfied," how satisfied are you with Vermont Electric Co-op? Please explain your rating.

"10" Rating – Very Satisfied

We haven't had any problems. (11 mentions)
Everything is good. My ratings confirm everything is good.
I am satisfied.
I don't have any issues and I'm the boss.
I have never had an issue. They are great.
I have no conflicts.
I have to be satisfied because they are the only company to serve me.
I haven't had any issues that haven't been resolved. They have always been friendly and courteous.
I know all the guys who work there. They work hard. I had to call them and they were here in 20 minutes.
It's always on when we need it. We haven't had any problems.
It's very good. I don't have a lot of contact with them. Once I had over looked a bill payment. They gave me a courtesy call. I was so glad. I didn't get my service turned off. I didn't have to pay a late fee. It was so nice that they gave me a call and reminded me. I couldn't ask for better service.
I've never had any problems with them. I may have to wait if I need something done. Usually they know it's a nursing facility and they get someone here ASAP.
The rates are a bit spendy, otherwise everything else is good.
They answer our questions.
They are great. We have no problems.
They are great. We love them!
They are usually quick to the point. I had to call the other day because I wondered why I got a disconnect notice the day after I paid a bill.
They do a good job and we have good luck with them.
Overall Satisfaction Rating Reasons (continued)

“9” Rating

I have no problems. (3 mentions)

Everyone has room for improvement. I am satisfied!

Everything is good. My ratings confirm everything is good.

I am having some issues with billing.

I have not had to deal with anything. It has been Vermont Electric Co-op since they took over from Citizens.

I made a few calls to the control room and never got a response back.

I would like to give them a little room for improvement. We've had a little problem with them trimming the trees.

Just from general experience with the co-op.

No one is perfect! They are great!

No one is perfect.

The cost is high.

The only thing I have a problem with is the rate increases that have taken place these last two years. It's gone up 18%, and for a farming operation that's a tremendous increase. I talked to them about this. They said they needed to upgrade the lines, so that improvement has really improved my service. I would just say it seems like a lot of increases in a short amount of time.

The power fluctuates and affects the alarm system.

The service is good.

The service is very good. The employees are always pleasant and friendly.

They are good and I have no contact with them.

They aren't perfect. There are always things that can be improved. They are a big improvement from Citizens.

They do a good job and we have had no issues.

We had an outage and had to make numerous calls before it was restored.

We have been happy with their service.
Overall Satisfaction Rating Reasons (continued)

“8” Rating

I have no problems. (5 mentions)

No reason. (2 mentions)

I am not impressed with the constant increases and no jobs and money coming in!

I do not lose power here and the rest of the town does.

I have no major problem.

I know electrical costs are high. When we built our building and we were getting our construction and wiring done, it was not pleasant. We had lots of problems with attitudes and cooperation. It seemed like they were going to do it on their time table. It was hard to get a straight answer and not knowing a schedule.

I think the rates are a little high.

My history is that the service is great, the people are wonderful, but the rates are too high. We do everything we can to improve, but then there's a rate increase. After talking to other manufacturing companies, we feel they have the highest rates in New England.

Negative sales tax issues.

Our past dealings have been good.

Our service has been excellent when it comes to reliability. They take care of problems immediately.

So far, so good.

The power does go out a lot. There is no one close to us.

The power costs too much. Everything else is fine. The bill is hard to pay. We have tried to become as efficient as possible, but it's still a struggle.

There are a few things that are questionable. Sometimes it's how they reply to my questions.

They always have a good response; it is just that the rates are too high.

They are pleasant to deal with. The rates are average, and they have fewer outages. We have several properties with other electric companies and they have fewer outages.

They give pretty good service. We don't have any problem with them.

We are new.

We are on an island so we need the power.
Overall Satisfaction Rating Reasons

“8” Rating
(continued)

We had a large increase at the switch of meters. It went from $1,500 a month to $2,400 a month at the change. It has leveled out! We could not dispute it though; there was no way to do it!

We have to reset things when they have blips and surges.

When they merged we lost our convenience to stop in and talk to them. Now we have a chain of command to go through. They were more approachable before.

“7” Rating

I have no problems.  (3 mentions)

Everything is not perfect. There is always room for improvement.

I have no major problems.

I have nothing to mention.

They are good about keeping the power on, but the customer service is not so good on response time to their needs of upgrading their systems.

They are okay.

They cut off our power and we had paid the bill.

They have poor response times.

“6” Rating

Billing reasons; sometimes it varies so much and it is hard to understand why.

I was disappointed when the power company couldn't figure out who was responsible for a problem we had. It took several visits and they kept saying it was the business' problem when it turned out to be the VEC's problem.

I've been a customer with you for five years. I moved my business to a new location and I had to pay for a new membership. They asked for another deposit which was over $400 and I am not a happy customer.

Liability issues.

I had a couple of requests. I had some wire dangling and they were supposed to come and they never did. I finally had to take care of it myself. There are some trees near my power lines. They are huge, big trees, they are dead and I'm afraid they will fall on the power lines. I don't know whose responsibility they are. I feel they may not come again.
Overall Satisfaction Rating Reasons
(continued)

“5” Rating

They are not reliable on the power. We are at the end of the line and have constant blips and surges, which burns out our pumps. We are at a trailer park so it gets very costly.

When I was first trying to get power established I was disappointed by the confusion and time delays. It was going to be an "overhead line" type of situation. I wanted to put in a shorter pole as I am up in the mountains and nothing would be driving under it, but to be to code the pole had to be 14 feet. That meant it was going to cost more to get the job done. So then they had to go back in and present it to the Board. Trying to get this accomplished, I had to make another appointment; it went back to the Board and was finally approved. It was poor because of the beginning service set up.

“4” Rating - “2” Rating

No “4”, “3”, or “2” ratings given.

“1” Rating – Not At All Satisfied

I recently voted to not accept Yankee Power!
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

Basically, our co-op does a good job for us. I would want them to pay more attention to renewable energy and less attention to those who don't want the turbines ruining their view. More affordable power is more important than making sure everybody is happy. I'm a fan of nuclear power. It is better because it's affordable. We need more electrical power at a lower cost.

Except for rates I am very happy with VEC. My rates here at the campground are 15 1/2 cents per kWh. At home my rate is 8 cents per kWh. That is quite a difference. I would not want to pay more for green power. I really don't care about any of that. I can't have my rates go up any.

I would make sure people on the road have doggy treats to approach dogs as they read the meters and that expense should not come out of the co-op employees’ pocket but provided by the utility...that is very necessary. We love VEC; they are wonderful. Holidays are very important to us business wise and when we had the Mothers’ Day storm, VEC was great to get our service back up and going for us. They are great. I love them!

In general, I think they are doing okay.

We're satisfied.

Overall Satisfaction – Neutral Response

No major problems.

Management/Board – Negative Responses

Don't go away from Yankee...stay in Vermont! I was very disappointed when that decision was made. There are 600 employees down there that the State should have been concerned about. Keep it in Vermont not outside! You called me at the perfect time, end of our fiscal year; otherwise you might not have caught me. The people at Vermont are just great. We have to have power 24/7 here at the facility and we need a phone call if there are going to be any down times. Vermont is always good to keep us posted and with our power needs we appreciate that very much; it is a must for us.

I do not like the direction that the company is going. Voting to buy power from Seabrook did not seem a wise choice when it could have stayed with Yankee Power. I did not at all like that decision and do not understand the thinking there. Also, I believe green power just to be green power also has to be economical, I have no issue with that, I do if it is more costly. I believe we can do many things ourselves to save energy rather than have a higher cost to go green.
Additional Comments
Management/Board – Negative Responses
(continued)

It is ridiculous to leave Yankee Power and go to energy from New Hampshire. What in the world is the thinking there? There are 600 jobs there to be lost. I do not understand this at all. I am for green power! I have had to have so little contact with Vermont Electric Co-op.

Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses

Don't go away from Yankee...stay in Vermont! I was very disappointed when that decision was made. There are 600 employees down there that the State should have been concerned about. Keep it in Vermont not outside! You called me at the perfect time, end of our fiscal year; otherwise you might not have caught me. The people at Vermont are just great. We have to have power 24/7 here at the facility and we need a phone call if there are going to be any down times. Vermont is always good to keep us posted and with our power needs we appreciate that very much; it is a must for us.

I am just a six-month business. I do prefer my bill, newsletters, etc. still on paper that I can take home. We are battling with the wind power issues right now and I just could not pay anything more for the green power of any sort. I will say that I have so very few outages or blips. They would be very destructive to me since I deal with fresh fish and it would cost a lot to have to dump it because of no power and if the refrigeration were out. Other areas of town at times are out of power and I am on.

I have been very happy with our electricity. I just hope we can keep the costs down. They need to pay their people what they need to pay them, but overall keep our electrical rates down.

I hope in the future they do go for the green power, windmills. I love them. I have no issue with them and the folks against them I feel are not giving them a fair shake. I would pay more for green power, but I can't say how much more. I would have to know more details. I can say I have not had to call VEC since 2007, we just have no problems. With having a dairy, it is essential that we have power at all times. We do have a generator, but we need power and not have to rely on it. It is critical to our business.

We have good service and we would need to have steady electricity always for our business. Any outages at all would not be good for us.

I would make sure people on the road have doggy treats to approach dogs as they read the meters and that expense should not come out of the co-op employees' pocket but provided by the utility...that is very necessary. We love Vermont Electric Cooperative. They are wonderful and holidays are very important to us business wise and when we had the Mothers' Day storm, Vermont Electric Cooperative was great to get our service back up and going for us. They are great. I love them!

We get good service from VEC. We have had no problems at all.

There is talk about nuclear and the waste from that, but we never hear anything about coal and I would rather have the nuclear than coal. The waste from coal is not good. Why is coal not mentioned or talked about? I think VEC does a good job for the weather and all that we get here. I do have an elderly mother on a need for steady power, but we do have a generator backup for a couple hours, but because of that too I would need power, but could handle a short outage.
Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses
(continued)

The power is usually good. I just had our power shut off and it was not good for the business. It was shut off and I had paid the bill. I did not like that at all that it wasn't checked out before it was turned off.

They have done a terrific job in the last couple of years. We don't have so many outages. Now this past fall we had a lot of blinks and we couldn't figure out why that happened, but otherwise we feel they are doing a terrific job.

We have good service with VEC. We do have a generator, but if we didn't have that, yes, we need steady power and cannot be without because of the refrigeration items.

We have not had outages or blips in service for a long time. The service is always good. We do need consistent power for our business; just handling the 5-10 minute outage would be a challenge since our registers would not operate so we would have to close for just a short outage.

We just never have any problems at all, no outages or blinks, so I never contact VEC. We do have a customer that works for VEC and he is so nice, so you do have good employees! The service is good and I am for green power as much as possible and would have to know more about nuclear.

How I feel about green power? The stupid money spent to do something to say you are "green" is ridiculous. I am for the green energies, but not at the consumers' cost. We can have some down time without power but it would have to be during the night 7 PM to 3 AM to not interrupt production. I have to say that I have in the past had contact with the outside men and they are great, they go out of their way to give good service and help to the customer or who they are working with. The field staff is just a bunch of good guys from the ones at the garage to the ones actually out on jobs.

Operations/Engineering – Negative Response

They need to concentrate on their reliability before they think about green power.

Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses

I do support wind power. With the nuclear at Vermont Yankee, I do not follow what is being done there. I would have to have more detail to support nuclear. However, a newer facility would be different than one 25 years old. We could not take an increase in rates with green power. The village general stores would not be able to handle very much of a rate increase. When the meters were changed and our bill jumped from $1,500 to $2,400 and no visible change to use that much power, it was devastating to us. We could not have paid that, but it did settle back to where it usually had been. Our grocery items could not take an outage for very long.

Because of the needs of our health care patrons, we do have a backup generator, so the length of an outage would affect us, but it wouldn't be that serious because we have a way to handle the issue.
Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses
(continued)

I would make sure people on the road have doggy treats to approach dogs as they read the meters and that expense should not come out of the co-op employees’ pocket but provided by the utility...that is very necessary. We love Vermont Electric Cooperative. They are wonderful and holidays are very important to us business wise and when we had the Mothers’ Day storm, Vermont Electric Cooperative was great to get our service back up and going for us. They are great. I love them!

I do not read the newsletter and if you have something that is a true emergency then contact me by text or phone, but I DO NOT want you texting me crap! There is no expense for a business that is higher than health care today, not even the utilities! I do not need power 24/7; I do need and expect power 24/5!

The co-op puts up these towers for their own personal use. I would like to see them use them for cell service and Internet up here. I am way up here in Vermont and it would be nice to have high speed Internet. The co-op should look into that! We do have outages, but my wife is the one that deals with those most of the time.

This is a fairly new site for us served by VEC. Actually, it is a broadband tower so we would require power to this tower at all times. We do have some backup but we would need consistent power.

We are actually on an island and I guess we would need power at all times. We have no other utility out here. Wood is used to heat, and we would need the lights at all times at night or someone could drive easily into the water, because of that we do need electricity at all times. There are no phones on the island except cell phones now.

We have a generator for backup for any outages that may occur, so minor outages don't really affect us.

We use VEC at a station up the road (not here in the office) and we pump oil up there and need power all the time or our customers would not be happy!

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Positive Responses

Don’t go away from Yankee...stay in Vermont! I was very disappointed when that decision was made. There are 600 employees down there that the State should have been concerned about. Keep it in Vermont not outside! You called me at the perfect time, end of our fiscal year; otherwise you might not have caught me. The people at Vermont are just great. We have to have power 24/7 here at the facility and we need a phone call if there are going to be any down times. Vermont is always good to keep us posted and with power appreciate that very much; it is a must for us.

We just never have any problems at all, no outages or blinks, so I never contact VEC. We do have a customer that works for VEC and he is so nice, so you do have good employees! The service is good and I am for green power as much as possible and would have to know more about nuclear.

2011 Vermont Electric Co-op C&I Member Satisfaction Survey Verbatim Responses
Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Negative Response

Cut the rates. It is very expensive. It is a known fact that we have the highest electric rates in the country. They need to be lowered! I have to say the people and service is very good except for one time and I wish I had gotten the lady's name. I called to ask for a 24 hour hold on paying the bill (I was out of town) and she was so totally rude to me and said "so you go to the grocery and ask if you can wait and pay the bill tomorrow"; she was so rude I could not believe her comments.

Billing/Finance – Negative Responses

I would have to have more details to say we would pay more for any green power, what are we getting to have to pay more for it? I do have a concern with the bills; we have three companies and I feel there could be more detailing of payments on the bill. We recently had a payment put on the wrong account. I needed to be able to see what check that was and some details on that and it is not there. It just makes it more difficult when there is more than one company to work with. It would be nice to list the check number, etc. when payments were made.

My only thought is why do we get five bills and then, of course, that means we get five return envelopes? That is sixty a year when twelve would work. Just give us a list of the five different accounts and the amount owed and send it in one bill and one return envelope. We also get fifty newsletters when they are sent out and one will do. If trying to save money, that is a place to start. I have to wonder if someone has several properties, but goes to one address, if they also get a separate mailing for each one.

The only concern or issue I have had to deal with is the sales tax issue and we were all at once back billed for three years of missed sales tax. We got it worked out, but it was not good to have to pay something that was missed for that long. Otherwise our service is good. As far as green power, it all depends on the bottom line and if it is going to cost even more I would not be for it, otherwise it really doesn't matter.

The power is usually good. I just had our power shut off and it was not good for the business. It was shut off and I had paid the bill. I did not like that at all that it wasn't checked out before it was turned off.

Billing/Finance – Neutral Response

Keep the bills low as possible and keep reminding me when I need to pay my bill. It seems there are times that I just do forget or think the month cannot have passed already. I do appreciate those reminders.
Additional Comments
(continued)

Rates/Fees – Negative Responses

Cut the rates. It is very expensive. It is a known fact that we have the highest electric rates in the country. They need to be lowered! I have to say the people and service is very good except for one time and I wish I had gotten the lady’s name. I called to ask for a 24 hour hold on paying the bill (I was out of town) and she was so totally rude to me and said "so you go to the grocery and ask if you can wait and pay the bill tomorrow"; she was so rude I could not believe her comments.

Except for rates I am very happy with VEC. My rates here at the campground are 15 1/2 cents per kWh. At home my rate is 8 cents per kWh. That is quite a difference. I would not want to pay more for green power. I really don't care about any of that, I can't have my rates go up any.

I feel nuclear is going to be our salvation! I am not against the other green powers but I feel if the rates keep going up because of being green it is going to put some people against the wall. It is just too costly. The bills are already high, it is carried too far what was done to Vermont down here. That should have not happened.

I do support wind power. With the nuclear at Vermont Yankee, I do not follow what is being done there. I would have to have more detail to support nuclear. However a newer facility would be different than one 25 years old. We could not take an increase in rates with green power. The village general stores would not be able to handle very much of a rate increase. When the meters were changed and our bill jumped from $1,500 to $2,400 and no visible change to use that much power, it was devastating to us. We could not have paid that, but it did settle back to where it usually had been. Our grocery items could not take an outage for very long.

It's the rates! I would like to see them being more proactive with their bigger corporate customers to help us lower our costs. I've seen it happen before. We latch onto any new program. We evaluate everything, we do whatever is recommended and we get lower rates for 2-3 months or maybe a year and then suddenly there's a rate increase. So we did everything for nothing. We need "long-term" lower rates.

My towers are not strong out here. You cannot assume I get a text or voice mail. I need the telephone call if there is something you need to get to me. I never look at the lingo in the newsletter. It is not for the common person. You have to be in the industry to even know what half of it means. I do not even look at it. The main thing is to not keep raising our rates. We and most people get no increases in the income and yet we are to fit these increases into our budgets. Just hold the rates down.

The bills are always high.

The rates being higher than what I pay in my town is the only thing that I would mention, but here at the business I just get the bill and pay it. I don't think we have a choice. I do think it would be good to find a green energy to use, but would have to know more details to pay more.

They are way too expensive on rates.

You need to explain the service fees!
Additional Comments
(continued)

**Rates/Fees – Neutral Responses**

I have been very happy with our electricity. I just hope we can keep the costs down. They need to pay their people what they need to pay them, but overall keep our electrical rates down.

Keep the bills low as possible and keep reminding me when I need to pay my bill. It seems there are times that I just do forget or think the month cannot have passed already. I do appreciate those reminders.

None of the categories on electric cost to the business fit us. It is not the highest overall cost and not the lowest and actually not the highest utility cost either. Heating oil is always the highest for us. Also, it would not work to use a cell phone in Franklin because we get no signal within Franklin to use a cell phone. Once you get to the outskirts there is a signal, but not right in the town. I appreciate that VEC takes the time to talk with us, it is always good to stay connected with your users.

**Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Neutral Response**

I’d be interested to have an account representative to call on me to help me see if there is any way we could be more energy efficient. I’d like them to help me see where we could save some money and lower our costs.

**Newsletters/Information – Negative Responses**

My only thought is why do we get five bills and then, of course, that means we get five return envelopes? That is sixty a year when twelve would work. Just give us a list of the five different accounts and the amount owed and send it in one bill and one return envelope. We also get fifty newsletters when they are sent out and one will do. If trying to save money, that is a place to start. I have to wonder if someone has several properties, but goes to one address, if they also get a separate mailing for each one.

My towers are not strong out here. You cannot assume I get a text or voice mail. I need the telephone call if there is something you need to get to me. I never look at the lingo in the newsletter. It is not for the common person. You have to be in the industry to even know what half of it means. I do not even look at it. The main thing is to not keep raising our rates. We and most people get no increases in the income and yet we are to fit these increases into our budgets. Just hold the rates down.

Save the paper and don’t send out the newsletter.

**Newsletters/Information – Neutral Responses**

I am just a six-month business. I do prefer my bill, newsletters, etc. still on paper that I can take home. We are battling with the wind power issues right now and I just could not pay anything more for the green power of any sort. I will say that I have so very few outages or blips. They would be very destructive to me since I deal with fresh fish and it would cost a lot to have to dump it because of no power and if the refrigeration were out. Other areas of town at times are out of power and I am on.

2011 Vermont Electric Co-op C&I Member Satisfaction Survey Verbatim Responses
I do not read the newsletter and if you have something that is a true emergency then contact me by text or phone, but I DO NOT want you texting me crap! There is no expense for a business that is higher than health care today, not even the utilities! I do not need power 24/7 I do need and expect power 24/5!

My towers are not strong out here. You cannot assume I get a text or voice mail. I need the telephone call if there is something you need to get to me. I never look at the lingo in the newsletter. It is not for the common person. You have to be in the industry to even know what half of it means. I do not even look at it. The main thing is to not keep raising our rates. We and most people get no increases in the income and yet we are to fit these increases into our budgets. Just hold the rates down.

None of the categories on electric cost to the business fit us. It is not the highest overall cost and not the lowest and actually not the highest utility cost either. Heating oil is always the highest for us. Also, it would not work to use a cell phone in Franklin because we get no signal within Franklin to use a cell phone. Once you get to the outskirts there is a signal, but not right in the town. I appreciate that VEC takes the time to talk with us; it is always good to stay connected with your users.

The co-op puts up these towers for their own personal use. I would like to see them use them for cell service and Internet up here. I am way up here in Vermont and it would be nice to have high speed Internet. The co-op should look into that! We do have outages, but my wife is the one that deals with those most of the time.

Basically, our co-op does a good job for us. I would want them to pay more attention to renewable energy and less attention to those who don’t want the turbines ruining their view. More affordable power is more important than making sure everybody is happy. I’m a fan of nuclear power. It is better because it's affordable. We need more electrical power at a lower cost.

Everything is just fine. I am fine with all of the green power options; however, I would need to know more about nuclear used for power.

I am very much for wind power and the green power; I am against nuclear, however. I feel there are probably others that are against the wind towers, etc., but I feel we need to do something and to move ahead of where we are now.

I do support wind power. With the nuclear at Vermont Yankee, I do not follow what is being done there. I would have to have more detail to support nuclear. However, a newer facility would be different than one 25 years old. We could not take an increase in rates with green power. The village general stores would not be able to handle very much of a rate increase. When the meters were changed and our bill jumped from $1,500 to $2,400 and no visible change to use that much power, it was devastating to us. We could not have paid that, but it did settle back to where it usually had been. Our grocery items could not take an outage for very long.

The rates being higher than what I pay in my town is the only thing that I would mention, but here at the business I just get the bill and pay it. I don't think we have a choice. I do think it would be good to find a green energy to use, but would have to know more details to pay more.
Additional Comments

Renewable Energy
(continued)

I hope in the future they do go for the green power, windmills. I love them. I have no issue with them and the folks against them I feel are not giving them a fair shake. I would pay more for green power, but I can't say how much more. I would have to know more details. I can say I have not had to call VEC since 2007, we just have no problems. With having a dairy, it is essential that we have power at all times. We do have a generator, but we need power and not have to rely on it. It is critical to our business.

It is ridiculous to leave Yankee Power and go to energy from New Hampshire. What in the world is the thinking there? There are 600 jobs there to be lost. I do not understand this at all. I am for green power! I have had to have so little contact with Vermont Electric Co-op.

We just never have any problems at all, no outages or blinks, so I never contact VEC. We do have a customer that works for VEC and he is so nice, so you do have good employees! The service is good and I am for green power as much as possible and would have to know more about nuclear.

How I feel about green power? The stupid money spent to do something to say you are "green" is ridiculous. I am for the green energies, but not at the consumers' cost. We can have some down time without power but it would have to be during the night 7 PM to 3 AM to not interrupt production. I have to say that I have in the past had contact with the outside men and they are great, they go out of their way to give good service and help to the customer or who they are working with. The field staff is just a bunch of good guys from the ones at the garage to the ones actually out on jobs.

I am just a 6 month business. I do prefer my bill, newsletters, etc. still on paper that I can take home. We are battling with the wind power issues right now and I just could not pay anything more for the green power of any sort. I will say that I have so very few outages or blips. They would be very destructive to me since I deal with fresh fish and it would cost a lot to have to dump it because of no power and if the refrigeration were out. Other areas of town at times are out of power and I am on.

I do not like the direction that the company is going. Voting to buy power from Seabrook did not seem a wise choice when it could have stayed with Yankee Power. I did not at all like that decision and do not understand the thinking there. Also, I believe green power just to be green power also has to be economical, I have no issue with that, but I do if it is more costly. I believe we can do many things ourselves to save energy rather than have a higher cost to go green.

I feel nuclear is going to be our salvation! I am not against the other green powers but I feel if the rates keep going up because of being green it is going to put some people against the wall. It is just too costly. The bills are already high, it is carried too far what was done to Vermont down here. That should have not happened.

I would have to have more details to say we would pay more for any green power, what are we getting to have to pay more for it? I do have a concern with the bills; we have three companies and I feel there could be more detailing of payments on the bill. We recently had a payment put on the wrong account. I needed to be able to see what check that was and some details on that and it is not there. It just makes it more difficult when there is more than one company to work with. It would be nice to list the check number, etc. when payments were made.
Additional Comments

Renewable Energy
(continued)

Except for rates I am very happy with VEC. My rates here at the campground are 15 1/2 cents per kWh. At home my rate is 8 cents per kWh. That is quite a difference. I would not want to pay more for green power. I really don't care about any of that; I can't have my rates go up any.

The only concern or issue I have had to deal with is the sales tax issue and we were all at once back billed for three years of missed sales tax. We got it worked out, but it was not good to have to pay something that was missed for that long. Otherwise our service is good. As far as green power, it all depends on the bottom line and if it is going to cost even more I would not be for it; otherwise it really doesn't matter.

Nuclear Power

Basically, our co-op does a good job for us. I would want them to pay more attention to renewable energy and less attention to those who don't want the turbines ruining their view. More affordable power is more important than making sure everybody is happy. I'm a fan of nuclear power. It is better because it's affordable. We need more electrical power at a lower cost.

I feel nuclear is going to be our salvation! I am not against the other green powers but I feel if the rates keep going up because of being green it is going to put some people against the wall. It is just too costly. The bills are already high, it is carried too far what was done to Vermont down here. That should have not happened.

There is talk about nuclear and the waste from that, but we never hear anything about coal and I would rather have the nuclear than coal. The waste from coal is not good. Why is coal not mentioned or talked about? I think VEC does a good job for the weather and all that we get here. I do have an elderly mother on a need for steady power, but we do have a generator backup for a couple hours, but because of that too I would need power, but could handle a short outage.

I am very much for wind power and the green power; I am against nuclear, however. I feel there are probably others that are against the wind towers, etc., but I feel we need to do something and to move ahead of where we are now.

Everything is just fine. I am fine with all of the green power options; however, I would need to know more about nuclear used for power.

We just never have any problems at all, no outages or blinks, so I never contact VEC. We do have a customer that works for VEC and he is so nice, so you do have good employees! The service is good and I am for green power as much as possible and would have to know more about nuclear.

I do support wind power. With the nuclear at Vermont Yankee, I do not follow what is being done there. I would have to have more detail to support nuclear. However a newer facility would be different than one 25 years old. We could not take an increase in rates with green power. The village general stores would not be able to handle very much of a rate increase. When the meters were changed and our bill jumped from $1,500 to $2,400 and no visible change to use that much power, it was devastating to us. We could not have paid that, but it did settle back to where it usually had been. Our grocery items could not take an outage for very long.

2011 Vermont Electric Co-op C&I Member Satisfaction Survey Verbatim Responses
Additional Comments
(continued)

Other Comments

I think your survey has been very complete and the questions were easily understood. I want to compliment the person who wrote the questions.

What does it matter? They are going to do what they want to do anyway!
Questionnaire
2011 Vermont Electric Cooperative  
C&I MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

ID # ___________  Interviewer Code # ________________

INTRODUCTION:
May I please speak with the person who is primarily responsible for making decisions regarding electric power at your company or organization? 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. May I have about 11 minutes of your time to ask you some questions now?

[ ] Yes ... Continue  [ ] No ... When would be a more convenient time for me to call back?

Date to call: ___________  Time to call: ____________

_________________________________________________________________________________________

1. First, how long has your company or organization (at your location) received your electric service from Vermont Electric Cooperative? (tenure1)
   - [ ] Less than 1 year  [ ] 3 to 5 years  [ ] 5 to 10 years  [ ] 7 to 20 years or more
   - [ ] 1 to 2 years  [ ] 4 to 9 years  [ ] 6 to 19 years  [ ] Don't Know/Refused

Satisfaction and Performance Ratings
2. On a 5-point scale where 1 means “very poor” and 5 means “excellent,” how would you rate Vermont Electric Cooperative’s performance on the following? (Do not randomize.)

   a. the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions (elec_svc) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   b. the courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to your inquiries or problems 1 2 3 4 5 6
   c. the restoration of power after an outage (restore2) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   d. the accuracy of meter reading and billing 1 2 3 4 5 6
   e. the speed and efficiency of responding to customers (respond2) 1 2 3 4 5 6

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

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

4. 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)

   On ...  Very Poor  Excellent  DK
   a. the overall customer service they provide (cust_svc) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   b. resolving any issues or problems (resolve) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   c. having highly-trained, professional employees (htemp) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   d. delivering good value for the money (value) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   e. having consumers’ best interests at heart (best_int) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   f. communicating with you and keeping you informed 1 2 3 4 5 6
   g. operating with concern for the environment (environ) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   h. supporting the local community (comunity) 1 2 3 4 5 6
Contact
5. In the past year, how many times have you made contact either by phone or in person with Vermont Electric Cooperative? Would you say you called or visited their office ... (contactnew)

[ ] 2 Once last year  [ ] 4 3 or 4 times  [ ] 6 7 to 9 times  [ ] 1 Never...(Skip to Q.8)
[ ] 3 Twice  [ ] 5 5 or 6 times  [ ] 7 10 or more times  [ ] 8 Don’t Know/Refused

6. What was the REASON for the most recent call or visit you made? [Do not read/Check all that apply]
   ___Reason (specify) ___Don't Know/Refused (skip to Q7)

6a. Did you contact VERMONT ELECTRIC Cooperative for any other reason? IF SO, what?
   ___Reason (specify) ___ No (skip to Q7) ___Don't Know/Refused

6b. Did you contact VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE for any other reason? IF SO, what?
   ___Reason (specify) ___ No (skip to Q7) ___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)
   [ ] 5 Much better  [ ] 4 Somewhat better  [ ] 3 As expected  [ ] 2 Somewhat worse  [ ] 1 Much worse

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all valuable” and 5 means “extremely valuable,” how valuable is it to your business to have an account representative from Vermont Electric Cooperative who works with you to determine how best to meet your business needs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not valuable at all</th>
<th>Extremely Valuable</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. In the past year how many times have you been in contact with your Director from the Board?

[ ] 2 Once last year  [ ] 4 3 or 4 times  [ ] 6 7 to 9 times  [ ] 1 Never...(Skip to Q.11)
[ ] 3 Twice  [ ] 5 5 or 6 times  [ ] 7 10 or more times  [ ] 8 Don’t Know/Refused

10. Now, please consider all your experiences to date with your Director from Board. Using a 5-point scale on which "1" means very poor and 5 means excellent, how would you rate your relationship with your with Director?
   Very poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent

Electric Service Performance
11. 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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On ...</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum (limit_blink)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum (limit_outg)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Keeping you informed on the status of outages (outinfo2)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts (pwr_qal2)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Which of the following best describes your electric power delivery requirements for your business or organization?

[ ] 1 It’s absolutely necessary to have electric power 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
[ ] 2 It’s strongly desired to have power at all times, especially during business hours, but your business can manage any 2 or 3 hour outage. It’s very inconvenient but not seriously damaging.
[ ] 3 It’s strongly desired to have power at all times, but your business can only manage a 2 or 3 hour outage if it does not occur during particular business operations.
[ ] 4 Don’t Know/Refused
13. On a 5-point scale where 1 is not at all serious and 5 is extremely serious, how would you rate the impact on your business of experiencing...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact on Business</th>
<th>Not at all serious</th>
<th>Extremely Serious</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Inconsistent power quality such as surges, blips, dips, or other voltage variations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Power outages lasting 5 to 10 minutes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Power outages lasting 3 to 4 hours</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rates and Fees

14. 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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Charging reasonable rates (reasrate)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Their monthly service fees (svces)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Providing accurate and easy to understand bills (clearbil)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Having convenient payment options (payoptn)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Helping customers keep bills as low as possible</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. 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

16. Which of the following best describes your electric power costs? [READ and Check only one]

[ ] 1 Electric power costs are the single biggest expense in your business, greater than labor or insurance costs.
[ ] 2 Electric power costs are the single biggest utility cost but not the biggest cost overall in the business.
[ ] 3 Of all the fixed or variable costs of your business, electric power is among the lowest.
[ ] 4 DK/Refused

Power Supply

17. 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 Vermont Electric to provide environmentally friendly “green power” from the following renewable energy sources? (randomize)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renewable Energy Source</th>
<th>Not at all Important</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Wind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Solar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Hydro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Gas Methane</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Bio-mass</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. 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 green power? Would you pay ...

[ ] 1 Up to 15% more per month [ ] 3 Up to 5% more per month [ ] 5 Nothing more per month
[ ] 2 Up to 10% more per month [ ] 4 Up to 3% more per month [ ] 6 Don’t Know/Refused

19. How do you feel about Vermont Electric distributing electricity generated in part by nuclear power? Please rate your opinion of this on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you are “entirely against” nuclear power and 5 means you are “entirely for” it.

Entirely opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Entirely for
Communications

20. How would you prefer to receive news about what is going on at VEC?
   [ ] 1 newsletter   [ ] 2 e-mail   [ ] 3 text   [ ] 4 Other (specify) ________________   [ ] 5 don’t know

21. How would you prefer to receive critical or time sensitive information from VEC?
   [ ] 1 newsletter   [ ] 2 e-mail   [ ] 3 text   [ ] 4 Other (specify) ________________   [ ] 5 don’t know

   IF E-MAIL OR TEXT to Q19 or Q20: email: ________________________________
   Phone # for texts: ________________________________

22. How many of the do you usually read?
   [ ] 1 always   [ ] 2 usually   [ ] 3 sometimes   [ ] 4 rarely   [ ] 5 never/don’t receive it

23. How many of the do you usually read?
   [ ] 1 all of it   [ ] 2 most of it   [ ] 3 skim it   [ ] 4 very little   [ ] 5 not aware of it/don’t receive it

24. Do you feel that the length of Co-op Life is [ ] 1 too short   [ ] 2 too long   [ ] 3 or about right?

25. Do you have Internet access either at home or at work?
   [ ] 1 At home   [ ] 2 At work (Skip to Q.24)   [ ] 3 Both at home and work   [ ] 4 Neither (Skip to Q.28c)

26. Is your Internet access at home dial-up or a higher speed form of access such as cable, satellite, or DSL service?
   [ ] 1 Dial-up   [ ] 2 Higher speed access   [ ] 3 Don’t Know

27. Are you aware that we an outage information through a link on our website that provides update to date
    outage information as outages occur? (If yes) Have you used the outage center?
    [ ] 1 AWARE   [ ] 2 NOT AWARE (v16)   [ ] 3 HAVE USED

    (IF Q27=HAVE USED, ASK) Using a 5-point scale where 1 means “not at all valuable” and 5 means “very
    valuable,” how valuable did you find the outage center to be?
    Not at all valuable 1 2 3 4 5 Very valuable

28. In the future, would you say you would definitely or probably, might or might not, or you probably or definitely
    would not use the following services from VEC? (randomize)

    a. Review and pay your monthly electric bill online using VEC’s eBill program
    b. Read “Co-op Life” as an e-newsletter
    c. Receive important information from the co-op (such as the status of outages) by cell phone text messages or voice mails

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.

1. Which of the following best describes your company or organization’s primary business?
   [ ] 1 Manufacturing   [ ] 7 Other service industry/business
   [ ] 2 Wholesale or retail distribution   [ ] 8 Government and municipalities
   [ ] 3 Health Care   [ ] 9 Agriculture
   [ ] 4 Financial or insurance services   [ ] 10 Transportation and utility
   [ ] 5 Construction   [ ] 11 Not for profit
   [ ] 6 Real Estate   [ ] 12 Other (specify) ________________________________
2. Into which of the following categories does your company or organization’s annual revenue fall? (Read list)
   [ ] 1 Less than $50,000   [ ] 2 $50,000 to $100,000   [ ] 3 $100,001 to $150,000
   [ ] 4 $150,001 to $200,000   [ ] 5 $200,001 to $300,000   [ ] 6 $300,001 to $500,000
   [ ] 7 $500,001 to $1,000,000   [ ] 8 Over $1 million   [ ] 9 DK/Ref.

3. Zip Code at your business location______________________________

DO NOT ASK (BUT MAKE SURE THE FOLLOWING IS COLLECTED):
   4. Respondent’s Name:
   5. Company Name:
   6. Company Phone Number:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION. HAVE A PLEASANT DAY