2012 C&I MEMBER SATISFACTION

6/21/2012 Vermont Electric Cooperative

Survey Results Prepared by:
NRECA MARKET RESEARCH SERVICES
# Vermont Electric Cooperative
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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 100 randomly selected commercial members of Vermont Electric Cooperative conducted in May of 2012:

- Overall satisfaction among commercial members is very good, with an all-time high mean rating of 8.72 on a 10-point scale. This is significantly higher than all the studies conducted between 2006 and 2010.

- The mean ratings for eight of the 22 performance attributes are higher than 4.50, which can be considered excellent, and all but three rated above 4.00, which can be considered good. Compared to the 2011 study, the mean ratings for two attributes improved significantly (the speed and efficiency of responding to customers and helping customers keep bills as low as possible) and three declined (operating with concern for the environment, charging reasonable rates, and delivering good value for the money). There have been a number of significant improvements from studies done before 2011.

- The strongest key driver of overall satisfaction among commercial members is Member Service and Communication. Evaluations are very high in this area, with many attributes rated at the “excellent” level and many improvements from past studies. In fact, the three attributes regarding employees are the highest-rated attributes in the study. As was the case among residential members, fewer commercial members in 2012 have had reason to contact the co-op in the past year, and evaluations of that contact have improved. On the other hand, the perceived value of having an account representative has decreased significantly.

- The Reliability of Electric Service is the next-strongest key driver of overall satisfaction. This is also an area in which VEC is doing an excellent job and ratings have improved.

- Surprisingly, Cost is not a key driver of overall satisfaction. This area has the most room for improvement with the lowest-rated attributes in the study. Continue communications with members about how VEC is working to keep costs down, why increases are necessary, and energy efficiency steps they can take to help keep their bills low.
BACKGROUND

Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) is a consumer-owned electric distribution cooperative headquartered in Johnson, Vermont with service centers in Grand Isle, Newport, and Richford. VEC currently serves approximately 3,800 C&I and 34,000 residential 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).

Vermont Electric Cooperative has previously conducted commercial member satisfaction studies, with the most recent completed in 2011. 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:

- VEC last raised rates on January 1, 2011. Members were notified six weeks in advance when the cooperative filed for the rate increase with the Vermont Public Service Board. A number of media were used to inform the membership of the upcoming increase, including press releases, the co-op newsletter, messages on the bills, and the co-op website.

- Hurricane Irene hit the area in August 2011. Although VEC’s service territory fared better than other areas of the state, 10,000 members experienced an outage and there was extensive damage.

- In the spring of 2012, two separate workplace accidents took the life of a VEC employee and critically injured another. Investigations into the accident that resulted in a fatality are ongoing.

- A special election was held with record turnout on July 26, 2011 to approve a transmission line upgrade. This was very controversial because the transmission upgrade also supported an industrial wind project on a mountain ridge.
In July 2011, Bert Lague passed away after 30 years of service as a VEC director. A new director was appointed (George Lague).

The VEC Green Team was launched, which is a voluntary program for members to contribute to support of renewable energy programs in VEC’s service territory.

OBJECTIVES

This commercial and industrial 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 C&I member perceptions of 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**: Derive the key drivers of overall satisfaction and to what degree consumer needs are being met to help Vermont Electric Cooperative prioritize any improvement efforts.

- **Communications**: Explore other areas of specific interest to VEC, including the importance of providing green power from a variety of sources, newsletter readership, and communication from/contact with the co-op.

- **Member Demographics and Segmentation**: Provide demographics of the C&I membership base and identify differences in attitudes between segments.
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 11 minutes.

Calls were completed with 100 commercial and industrial members of Vermont Electric Cooperative between May 22 and May 30, 2012, with sampling done proportionate to District and connect date. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample is plus or minus 9.6 percentage points. This means that a result of 50% in the survey may be between 40.4% and 59.6% 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 seven studies conducted between 2005 and 2011.

Differences between member segments, such as differences by business type 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.

It is important to note that many of the C&I member segments are very small (fewer than 30 respondents), so tests for significant differences among these segments are not valid.

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

Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction among Vermont Electric Cooperative’s commercial members is very good. The mean overall satisfaction rating is 8.72 on a 10-point scale and 64% give ratings of “9” or “10”.

The mean overall satisfaction rating is higher than the 2011 study, although the difference is not statistically significant. It is significantly higher than all of the studies conducted between 2006 and 2010.

Businesses in Districts 19 and 16 are the most satisfied, with mean ratings of 9.14 and 8.83, respectively. The mean satisfaction ratings among businesses in Districts 12 and 17 are 8.42 and 8.33, respectively.
Performance Quality Attributes

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

VEC is rated positively on most of the attributes, with the highest mean ratings for the following. Ninety percent or more rate each of these attributes positively (rating of 4 or 5):

- The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems (4.72)
- The overall customer service they provide (4.65)
- Having highly-trained, professional employees (4.63)
- The speed and efficiency of responding to customers (4.62)
- The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions (4.60)
- The accuracy of meter reading and billing (4.58)
- The restoration of power after an outage (4.55)
- Having convenient payment options (4.50)

The attributes on which VEC is rated least well by commercial members are charging reasonable rates (44% rating “4” or “5”), the monthly service fees (49%), and delivering good value for the money (58%). These are areas that are often rated lower in cooperative satisfaction research, but with mean ratings well below 4.00 (3.14, 3.30, and 3.37, respectively), this may be cause for concern.
Performance Quality Trends

Most of the mean ratings and top two box ratings have not changed significantly from 2011.

Performance attributes that changed significantly since the 2011 study include two that improved (*the speed and efficiency of responding to customers and helping customers keep bills as low as possible*) and three that declined (*operating with concern for the environment, charging reasonable rates, and delivering good value for the money*).

*Delivering good value for the money* is also rated significantly lower than the 2005, 2008, and 2010 studies.

In addition to the two attributes that improved significantly since 2011, mean ratings are also significantly higher in 2012 than in 2010 for:

- The overall customer service they provide
- The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed
- The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions
- Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum
- Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum
- Keeping members informed on the status of outages
- The restoration of power after an outage
- Having consumers’ best interests at heart
Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts

The key drivers of overall satisfaction among commercial members are “member service and communication” and “the reliability of service and frequency of interruptions”. Going forward, these are the areas that VEC should focus on most.

Regression analysis was used to determine the key drivers of overall satisfaction. The scores are to be interpreted relative to each other. For example, since member service and communication has a score of 0.65 and reliability of service and frequency of interruptions has a score of 0.38, we can say that commercial members’ perception of the customer service they receive has almost twice the impact on overall satisfaction as perceptions of the reliability of their electric service. Attributes and factors not shown below are not significant drivers of overall satisfaction. More information on how the factors were formed and importance scores derived can be found in Appendix A.
Member Service and Communication

Member Service and Communication is the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction. This is an area in which VEC is doing very well, more than nine in ten commercial members giving high ratings for the attributes involving member service and employees.

Almost all of the members give positive ratings (“4” or “5 – excellent”) for the three attributes regarding employees: the courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees; the overall customer service provided; and having highly-trained, professional employees. In fact, these are the highest-rated performance attributes in the study.

Communicating with members and keeping them informed is rated positively by 87% of the commercial members.

As shown on the next page, many of the mean ratings in this area are higher than the 2011 study, although the speed and efficiency of responding to customers is the only improvement that is statistically significant. There are many significant improvements from studies conducted between 2005 and 2010.
Member Service Mean Ratings by Year

- Courtesy, understanding, helpfulness of employees
- Overall customer service provided
- Having highly trained, professional employees
- Speed and efficiency of responding to customers
- Resolving issues or problems
- Communicating, keeping members informed
Just over one-third of the members indicate they have contacted VEC over the past year. This is significantly less contact than in all of the studies prior to 2011. Thirty-seven percent of those who contacted the co-op did so regarding an outage.

Other reasons for contact include having a question about a bill, general service, tree trimming, general information, and power quality.

The vast majority of those who contacted VEC in the past year say their expectations were met or exceeded. More than half indicate their contact was somewhat or much better than expected. Compared to the 2011 study, the percent of members who feel their contact was somewhat better than expected has increased while the percent saying it was about what they expected decreased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Contact (Out of those who Contacted)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outage</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question about bill</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General service</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree trimming</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General information</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power quality</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Rating</th>
<th>Overall Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Contact</td>
<td>8.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much Better</td>
<td>8.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Better</td>
<td>8.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As Expected</td>
<td>8.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse Than Expected</td>
<td>5.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Evaluation

- **Much Better**: 6% (2008), 7% (2009), 14% (2010), 16% (2011), 26% (2012)
- **Somewhat Better**: 11% (2008), 20% (2009), 20% (2010), 25% (2011), 38% (2012)
- **About What Expected**: 38% (2008), 54% (2009), 60% (2010), 68% (2011), 61% (2012)
- **Somewhat Worse**: 7% (2008), 3% (2009), 13% (2010), 3% (2011), 3% (2012)
- **Much Worse**: 2% (2008), 3% (2009), 3% (2010), 3% (2011), 5% (2012)
The perceived value of having an account representative from VEC has decreased significantly from all previous studies.

Agricultural businesses and those in District 12 place the highest value on this service. Those in service industries and those in District 17 find it the least valuable.
C&I members indicate they prefer receiving information from VEC through bill stuffers followed by Co-op Life and automated phone messages. One-third or more indicate they prefer one of these three methods as either their first or second choice.

As would be expected, members prefer a more immediate form of communication for receiving critical or time-sensitive information. Sixty percent indicate they would want this type of information from an automated phone message while 20% prefer e-mail.

Approximately nine in ten members say they have Internet access at home and the vast majority of those have a high-speed Internet connection. As would be expected, this has increased significantly since 2010.
The frequency of reading *Co-op Life* has decreased significantly since 2011, with just 18% saying they always or usually read the publication. Fully one-third indicate they never read the newsletter or don’t receive it.

C&I members are also significantly less likely to read the newsletter thoroughly. Approximately half of those who read *Co-op Life* think it is about the right length, while the other half are not sure whether they think the newsletter is too long, too short, or about right.
Electric Service

The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions is the second, and final, key driver of overall satisfaction. Along with other attributes related to electric service, this is another area in which Vermont Electric Cooperative is doing well and can keep up the good work.

Approximately nine in ten or more members give positive ratings for these six attributes. Additionally, more than half give the highest “excellent” rating for all six attributes.

It is apparent that VEC has made improvements in this area as shown on the following page. The mean ratings for five of the six attributes are significantly higher than in 2010 and all are significantly higher than in 2009.
Electric Service Mean Ratings by Year

- Reliability of electric service
- Restoration of power after outage
- Minimizing longer outages
- Providing consistent voltage
- Minimizing blinks, momentary outages
- Keeping members informed on status of outages
Fully half of the responding members indicate that it’s absolutely necessary for their business to have power 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This has increased significantly since 2009.

**Electric Power Delivery Requirements**

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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutely necessary to have power 24/7</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only manage 2-3 hour outage if not during particular business operations</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is very inconvenient, but can manage any 2-3 hour outage</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not surprising that fully eight in ten say that power outages lasting 3-4 hours have a serious impact on business, more serious than inconsistent power quality and 5-10 minute power outages. The seriousness of inconsistent power quality has decreased significantly since 2011, while the seriousness of power outages – both 3-4 hour and 5-10 minute outages – has increased since 2010.

**Seriousness of Power Quality/Outage on Business**

- **Power outages lasting 3-4 hours**
  - 2009: 69% (5 Extremely Serious), 14% (4 Rating), 83% (5 Extremely Serious)
  - 2012: 59% (5 Extremely Serious), 31% (4 Rating), 77% (5 Extremely Serious)

- **Inconsistent power quality such as surges or blips**
  - 2009: 52% (5 Extremely Serious), 25% (4 Rating), 77% (5 Extremely Serious)
  - 2012: 33% (5 Extremely Serious), 35% (4 Rating), 68% (5 Extremely Serious)

- **Power outages lasting 5-10 minutes**
  - 2009: 4.19, 4.03, 3.17
  - 2012: 4.51, 4.26, 3.94
Value, Cost and Billing

Although (surprisingly) they are not key drivers of overall satisfaction, the bills, payment options, and cost are other areas of service evaluated by commercial members. The bills and payment options are rated very well, while the cost-related attributes are rated lowest in the study.

More than half give VEC the highest rating of “5 – excellent” on all three attributes related to the bills and payment options.

None of the differences from 2011 are statistically significant, but the mean rating for providing accurate and easy to understand bills is significantly higher than in 2008 and having convenient payment options has significantly improved from 2007.
Conversely, the three lowest-rated attributes in the study are related to cost – charging reasonable rates, the monthly service fees, and delivering good value for the money. Helping customers keep bills as low as possible is rated higher, with almost half giving an “excellent” rating. Compared to 2011, helping customers keep bills as low as possible has improved significantly while charging reasonable rates and delivering good value for the money have declined.
Nearly two-thirds are not aware of how their rates compare to other electric companies. Members’ perceptions of how their rates compare have not changed significantly since 2011, but those in 2012 are significantly more likely than those in 2006 and 2007 to be unaware of how their rates compare.

Vermont Electric’s Rates Compared to Other Electric Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Not Aware</th>
<th>Higher</th>
<th>About the Same</th>
<th>Lower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifty-six percent of the C&I respondents report that their electric power costs are their single biggest utility cost, but just 11% say it is their single biggest business expense. The proportion of those who say that electric power costs are their single biggest utility cost has decreased significantly since the 2007 study.

Electric Power Costs Are...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Single biggest utility cost</th>
<th>One of the lowest fixed or variable costs</th>
<th>Single biggest business expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Social Responsibility

Social Responsibility is another area in which commercial members generally evaluate VEC positively.

More than eight in ten give positive ratings for the co-op operating with concern for the environment, supporting the local community, and having consumers’ best interests at heart.

The mean ratings for all three attributes are well above the “good” threshold of 4.00 and having consumers’ best interests at heart has improved significantly since 2010. The mean rating for operating with concern for the environment has declined significantly since 2011.
Fully seven in ten feel that it is important for VEC to provide environmentally friendly power from solar and hydro sources. Approximately two-thirds think it is important to get power from bio-mass, wind, and gas methane sources.

Ratings in 2012 are not significantly different from any of the past studies.

Members in District 19 give the highest importance ratings for all five green power sources.
Just 12% say they are willing to pay extra to receive green power. Although this is significantly lower than in all of the past studies, an additional 42% say they are not sure how much more they would be willing to pay.

Nationally, just 12% say they are willing to pay extra to receive green power. Although this is significantly lower than in all of the past studies, an additional 42% say they are not sure how much more they would be willing to pay.

Nearly four in ten indicate they support VEC distributing electricity generated in part by nuclear power, giving a rating of “4” (2%) or “5 – entirely for” (36%). Although the mean and top two box ratings do not differ significantly from previous surveys, members in 2012 are significantly more likely than those in 2010 to say they are entirely against distributing electricity generated from nuclear power. Just over half are in favor of large-scale wind development on Vermont’s ridgeline.

C&I members in District 19 are the most supportive of both nuclear power and large-scale wind development.
Commercial Member Characteristics

More than half of the members indicate they are a wholesale/retail business (26%) or another service industry (28%). Forty-one percent have annual revenue of $100,000 or less and approximately one-third have been served by Vermont Electric Cooperative for 20 years or more.

Commercial members in 2012 report lower annual revenue and are newer compared to the 2011 study.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale/Retail</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Service Industry</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue $100K or Less</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Over $1 Million</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served Less than 10 Years</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served 20 Yrs or More</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Verbatim Comments

At the conclusion of the survey, C&I members were given the opportunity to share any comments, concerns, or questions they had. Sixty-one percent of the respondents offered input.

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

<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>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates/Fees</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
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Appendix A:
Key Driver/Factor Explanation
Factor Analysis

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

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

Member Service Factor

- The overall customer service they provide
- Having highly-trained, professional employees
- The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to members' inquiries or problems
- The speed and efficiency of responding to customers
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed
- Resolving any issues or problems
- Providing accurate and easy to understand bills

Electric Service Factor

- Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts
- Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum
- Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum
- Keeping members informed on the status of outages

Bills and Payment Options Factor

- The accuracy of meter reading and billing
- Providing accurate and easy to understand bills
- Having convenient payment options
- Operating with concern for the environment
- Having consumers' best interests at heart

Social Responsibility Factor

- Supporting the local community
- Having consumers' best interests at heart
- Operating with concern for the environment
- Keeping members informed on the status of outages
Cost Factor

- The monthly service fees
- Charging reasonable rates

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

- The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions
- The restoration of power after an outage
- Helping customers keep bills as low as possible

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.
Appendix B:
Verbatim Responses
VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE C&I VERBATIM RESPONSES

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

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

Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses

Compared to our other electric service at home, Vermont Electric is much better.

Everything is fine.

Having to deal with many electric companies and utilities, this is one of the best to deal with when I need to. The only time I have called is for an accounting issue and Vermont Electric was good to get right back to me with the answer.

I have never had any problems with them.

I have to add that being government, we work with many utility companies and Vermont Electric truly gives us the least amount of issues to deal with of any of them. We are always having issues with some companies — billing issues or whatever. It’s so nice not to have that with Vermont Electric. I do think it would be nice to have one rep that knows our business and can answer our questions. If that rep knows our facility, it would be easier to work with them than to have someone different each time.

I think they do a good job.

It is all good.

Keep up the good work. I would be fine with wind energy if it is not tacky and an eyesore to the scenery of Vermont. Nuclear would be okay if it was maintained correctly and in a safe manner.

Our electricity might be expensive, but like my husband has always said, “it is a cheap hired hand on the farm”. I had to give some ‘4’ ratings and probably should have said ‘5’ there, but we do have outages because of the weather. We just go to our generator because you can’t ever be without power on the farm. We are fine until power is back on. It’s not at all my highest farm charge. My grain bill is thousands and thousands of dollars. Vermont Electric has served us well! Thanks for calling.

They are improving all the time

They have been good to us. I have no problem with them. We have a dairy farm so we need power. I would have said to contact us by e-mail, but I don’t always look at that, so I would like a telephone call. I like to talk to a live person! Thanks for calling.

They’re doing a good job.

Very satisfied.

We are just a small piece of a big puzzle here (government agency). No problems, they do a good job.

We have no problems.
Additional Comments
Overall Satisfaction (continued)

**Overall Satisfaction – Neutral Responses**

I did call once about our street lights and they are back on. I don’t have any problem with Vermont Electric. I would need to know more about some of the things you asked me.

**Management/Board – Negative Responses**

I work with the public and hear a lot of gripes, but I can't complain about my electric bill for all I use. I do feel there are too many chiefs over there at the co-op, chiefs that oversee other chiefs; maybe they need more workers! I do think the solar panels are ugly, I don't mind the windmills at all. Windmills on the mountains are no different than the ski areas clearing out trees and putting their stuff up. We have to do something to help with costs. Why do we send our bills away from the office here? It seems a waste to have to send the bills away from here. It's a pain to get a different person every time; having one person to talk to would be good! Thanks.

I would give my e-mail address, but I'm not sure what you will use it for. I do not want to get messages all the time; I just only want messages that are important to my business! I just returned from Europe and the windmills on the countryside are so pretty. I like them. I always need to know when the power is going to be off. **All electric and other utilities do not have the consumers' interests at heart; they have their bottom line at heart.** All charges for power are too high. I like all the green power choices if they are reliable. Thanks.

In the area we are in, the power goes out probably once a week during the winter and it messes up our computers and phones. The electricity is very expensive here, and they need to try to keep the rates down. **I am not sure Vermont Electric does anything for the community, if they do, I don't see it.** I don’t want the nuclear plant to close down and make our rates go up even higher. I am for nuclear power or any of the green power sources if they hold down our rates or lower our rates.

**Management/Board – Neutral Responses**

We could only handle outages at night, not during the day. I would like to be able to use a credit card or debit card rather than just cash or check to pay the bill. The pricing is very expensive. The service is very good, but the pricing is high. Also, I have a concern for mandated charges that cannot be utilized by all members or by everyone! That is about it, thanks for calling.

**Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses**

I think they are doing a good job. Those guys who cleaned out the power line areas did a wonderful job; they did just a hell of a job! We are really pleased with them. I talk to the boys from the co-op all the time; they are good to stop by and tell me what is going on and if the power needs to be out a while. I can handle a short outage, but I do need power to work.

I was very pleased that a guy came and informed us the power would be out prior to changing out a meter, which allowed us to shut down our computers.
Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses
(continued)

Just let us know when outages are planned as we have a dairy farm and need power 24/7! Be here as soon as you can!
We have our own turbine here, but lightning has hit it twice and the insurance company has pretty much said they can't
cover it, we have to replace blades! I would like to see a small wind farm -- maybe not the whole ridge or put some on J
Peak rather than ship it all. Since Citizens, I feel our reliability has gotten better. It's confusing at times with billing and the
turbine, but even with the turbine; our electric cost is still our highest utility bill.

The rates are high. Where I live, my electricity is from another company, and the co-op has very high rates. Other than
that, I am very happy with the service here. I have called maybe three times in eight years.

Their service is reliable but expensive. The Green Mountain customer charge is $3 less a month and the kWh charge is
much less than mine. I do not want the Vermont scenery messed up with those windmills, and I hear they are killing birds
in other areas. In the newsletter, they report that additional meters are lower in cost and do not have the high customer
charge. However, I have additional meters and have no change in cost. I have six accounts and they tried to bill me for a
seventh that was not mine. I charged Vermont Electric $100 for doing that and never even got a call about it or paid!
(This is the reason for the lower rating for charges and contact with customer questions.)

They are doing a wonderful job. When the men are out there in 30 below weather and people are calling in complaining,
they need to get a fine. That is just awful. I remember when 30-40 years ago, every time the wind blew or it stormed, we
were out of power. This is 300% better than then. I love the windmills! I feel the extra fees should be the charged the
same at households and businesses, and businesses not charged higher fees. There should just be a flat fee. Thanks for
calling.

They are good about telling us when they are going to cut trees, etc.

They do a great job of keeping the brush and limbs cleared from the lines. They do a great job!

Those little postcards work well to tell us if there is going to be a planned outage. The only complaint I have is that the
rates are a bit high, other than that, we have good service and all is good. Thanks.

Very good service!! Very pleased!

We did have the storm this morning and had a blip, but we don't have many of those. As far as wind and solar, etc., I'm
not sure solar would work in Vermont and wind, I am not a tree hugger, but whether we would want windmills on our
horizon, I just don't know. My husband might have better thoughts on all of that, I just don't know. I guess I would want
to know that the green power would be effective and reliable, I just really don't know. I have a beauty shop here and it
could be critical if I'm doing a perm or color and had no power. Thanks.

We used to have a lot of blips, but since they have cleared out the tree limbs near the wires, we don't have near as many.

We do our communicating with the Ford Motor Company at night and it is critical that we don't have outages during the
night. Nothing resets itself and we come into a mess with computers and clocks and timing, etc. The rates are the only
thing I have a concern with, and I feel from what I have heard that they are maybe close to double what others rates are.
It is expensive power. The project to cut the trees and clear those areas has gone very well. I really appreciate what they
are doing there. Thanks for calling.
Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering
(continued)

Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses

I believe Vermont Electric is underpowered for electric appliances compared to others. The rates are extremely high and I am not satisfied with that. My business uses so much electricity you would think there would be a reduction in rates for us.

If we are properly notified in advance of an upcoming outage, we can make provisions to handle it, but sometimes we are NOT notified. This is a computer business and this year has been the worst for blips.

In the area we are in, the power goes out probably once a week during the winter and it messes up our computers and phones. The electricity is very expensive here, and they need to try to keep the rates down. I am not sure Vermont Electric does anything for the community, if they do, I don’t see it. I don’t want the nuclear plant to close down and make our rates go up even higher. I am for nuclear power or any of the green power sources if they hold down our rates or lower our rates.

The rates are too high. Also, lines were run through my son’s place without his permission.

We are in the process of redoing our heating system so our electric bill will go down. It seems every time it gets windy or rainy, we have blips and there have been a lot so far this year.

We do have outages caused by storms mostly. We have to have consistent power -- we have a dairy farm and have a generator, but even the blips are a concern when milking since the milkers fall off the cows and into the manure and the cows get spooked. My husband hates when we get the blips in power. I can’t answer about the electricity cost; I’m not sure what it is compared against. Just fuel to plant corn was $1,702 this month and our electric bill was $792, so whatever that is!

Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses

I am against all of the green energy sources because none of them are economical, and I will not pay more for any of it. Nuclear power, I do like. I could be without power 10 months out of the year and it would not matter to my business, but during the "sugar" harvest time I do need power. I’m not sure how to rate that.

I get confused why we get the house bill at one time and then get the garage or business bill. I pay them together, but why don't they come together? Also, the bill fluctuates so much sometimes and not sure why it does that either. When do the summer rates start? I can’t figure out how they read the meter from down there (at the office). I don't understand how they can do that. We recently drove to New York and saw the windmills along the way; they seem okay but I don’t know that much about them. There is a horse farm that has two and they seem to work for them. Thanks for calling us.

I would give my e-mail address, but I’m not sure what you will use it for. I do not want to get messages all the time; I just only want messages that are important to my business! I just returned from Europe and the windmills on the countryside are so pretty. I like them. I always need to know when the power is going to be off. All electric and other utilities do not have the consumers' interests at heart; they have their bottom line at heart. All charges for power are too high. I like all the green power choices if they are reliable. Thanks.
Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses
(continued)

I live in another electric company’s area and Vermont Electric is way higher. We need to make a living too! This is a dairy and the milk has to be kept cold so we need power all the time and blips can be an issue for us. I am fine with windmills and nuclear as long as it’s not in my backyard!

Our electricity might be expensive, but like my husband has always said, "it is a cheap hired hand on the farm". I had to give some '4' ratings and probably should have said '5' there, but we do have outages because of the weather. We just go to our generator because you can’t ever be without power on the farm. We are fine until power is back on. It’s not at all my highest farm charge. My grain bill is thousands and thousands of dollars. Vermont Electric has served us well! Thanks for calling.

We could only handle outages at night, not during the day. I would like to be able to use a credit card or debit card rather than just cash or check to pay the bill. The pricing is very expensive. The service is very good, but the pricing is high. Also, I have a concern for mandated charges that cannot be utilized by all members or by everyone! That is about it, thanks for calling.

We do our communicating with the Ford Motor Company at night and it is critical that we don’t have outages during the night. Nothing resets itself and we come into a mess with computers and clocks and timing, etc. The rates are the only thing I have a concern with, and I feel from what I have heard that they are maybe close to double what others rates are. It is expensive power. The project to cut the trees and clear those areas has gone very well. I really appreciate what they are doing there. Thanks for calling.

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Negative Responses

Just lowering the cost is my concern as the rates and bills are high. Compared to Florida where I lived and had air conditioning 24/7, this is very high! I do get or did get frustrated when calling about an outage and have to punch numbers because there is not live person. When there is not the category I need, it is frustrating. I like to be able to speak to a live person. Thanks for calling, we do pay attention to and keep the bill stuffers with information from Vermont Electric.

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Neutral Responses

I have to add that being government, we work with many utility companies and Vermont Electric truly gives us the least amount of issues to deal with of any of them. We are always having issues with some companies -- billing issues or whatever. It’s so nice not to have that with Vermont Electric. I do think it would be nice to have one rep that knows our business and can answer our questions. If that rep knows our facility, it would be easier to work with them than to have someone different each time.

I work with the public and hear a lot of gripes, but I can’t complain about my electric bill for all I use. I do feel there are too many chiefs over there at the co-op, chiefs that oversee other chiefs; maybe they need more workers! I do think the solar panels are ugly, I don’t mind the windmills at all. Windmills on the mountains are no different than the ski areas clearing out trees and putting their stuff up. We have to do something to help with costs. Why do we send our bills away from the office here? It seems a waste to have to send the bills away from here. It’s a pain to get a different person every time; having one person to talk to would be good! Thanks.
Additional Comments
Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Neutral Responses
(continued)

I have only been the owner three weeks. I did talk to them long enough to change the owner from another member of our family to me, but that was just a few minutes on the phone. I cannot answer any of the questions involving the bill and rates yet, I’m too new at being the owner. Thanks for calling.

I would love to put you all on my facebook; right now with the storm I am getting all kinds of warnings from people on facebook. I do not want my e-mail used just to chat, use for important announcements! What would a rep do? If it would help hold down our costs in the dairy, etc. that would be good to just call, anyone can call. You are maybe the second person I have talked to that is connected to Vermont Electric in any way so they are hard to rate, but I would give you a '5'! Newsletter, the type is not good and I do not look at it. It is not easy to read at all. Hurry up with green powers, as the Yankee plant is past its prime; nuclear in Europe is great!

Billing/Finance – Positive Responses

Having to deal with many electric companies and utilities, this is one of the best to deal with when I need to. The only time I have called is for an accounting issue and Vermont Electric was good to get right back to me with the answer.

Billing/Finance – Negative Responses

I work with the public and hear a lot of gripes, but I can’t complain about my electric bill for all I use. I do feel there are too many chiefs over there at the co-op, chiefs that oversee other chiefs; maybe they need more workers! I do think the solar panels are ugly, I don’t mind the windmills at all. Windmills on the mountains are no different than the ski areas clearing out trees and putting their stuff up. We have to do something to help with costs. Why do we send our bills away from the office here? It seems a waste to have to send the bills away from here. It’s a pain to get a different person every time; having one person to talk to would be good! Thanks.

Just let us know when outages are planned as we have a dairy farm and need power 24/7! Be here as soon as you can! We have our own turbine here, but lightning has hit it twice and the insurance company has pretty much said they can’t cover it, we have to replace blades! I would like to see a small wind farm -- maybe not the whole ridge or put some on J Peak rather than ship it all. Since Citizens, I feel our reliability has gotten better. It’s confusing at times with billing and the turbine, but even with the turbine our electric cost is still our highest utility bill.

Billing/Finance – Neutral Responses

I get confused why we get the house bill at one time and then get the garage or business bill. I pay them together, but why don’t they come together? Also, the bill fluctuates so much sometimes and not sure why it does that either. When do the summer rates start? I can’t figure out how they read the meter from down there (at the office). I don’t understand how they can do that. We recently drove to New York and saw the windmills along the way; they seem okay but I don’t know that much about them. There is a horse farm that has two and they seem to work for them. Thanks for calling us.

I would like you to show our kilowatt figures from a year ago so I can compare with this year’s usage on my billing.
Additional Comments
Billing/Finance – Neutral Responses
(continued)

In a nutshell, are the windmills pretty, NO; do they make sense, YES! I would promote any of the green energies that are reliable or save money. I really can’t answer a lot of the bill questions because I don't have enough information. (Our headquarters are in Ontario.)

We could only handle outages at night, not during the day. I would like to be able to use a credit card or debit card rather than just cash or check to pay the bill. The pricing is very expensive. The service is very good, but the pricing is high. Also, I have a concern for mandated charges that cannot be utilized by all members or by everyone! That is about it, thanks for calling.

Rates/Fees – Positive Responses

I work with the public and hear a lot of gripes, but I can't complain about my electric bill for all I use. I do feel there are too many chiefs over there at the co-op, chiefs that oversee other chiefs; maybe they need more workers! I do think the solar panels are ugly, I don’t mind the windmills at all. Windmills on the mountains are no different than the ski areas clearing out trees and putting their stuff up. We have to do something to help with costs. Why do we send our bills away from the office here? It seems a waste to have to send the bills away from here. It's a pain to get a different person every time; having one person to talk to would be good! Thanks.

The billing and meter reading for the building seem okay.

Rates/Fees – Negative Responses

I believe Vermont Electric is underpowered for electric appliances compared to others. The rates are extremely high and I am not satisfied with that. My business uses so much electricity you would think there would be a reduction in rates for us.

I get confused why we get the house bill at one time and then get the garage or business bill. I pay them together, but why don’t they come together? Also, the bill fluctuates so much sometimes and not sure why it does that either. When do the summer rates start? I can't figure out how they read the meter from down there (at the office). I don’t understand how they can do that. We recently drove to New York and saw the windmills along the way; they seem okay but I don’t know that much about them. There is a horse farm that has two and they seem to work for them. Thanks for calling us.

I live in another electric company's area and Vermont Electric is way higher. We need to make a living too! This is a dairy and the milk has to be kept cold so we need power all the time and blips can be an issue for us. I am fine with windmills and nuclear as long as it's not in my backyard!

I would give my e-mail address, but I'm not sure what you will use it for. I do not want to get messages all the time; I just only want messages that are important to my business! I just returned from Europe and the windmills on the countryside are so pretty. I like them. I always need to know when the power is going to be off. All electric and other utilities do not have the consumers' interests at heart; they have their bottom line at heart. All charges for power are too high. I like all the green power choices if they are reliable. Thanks.
Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses (continued)

In the area we are in, the power goes out probably once a week during the winter and it messes up our computers and phones. **The electricity is very expensive here, and they need to try to keep the rates down.** I am not sure Vermont Electric does anything for the community, if they do, I don’t see it. I don’t want the nuclear plant to close down and make our rates go up even higher. I am for nuclear power or any of the green power sources if they hold down our rates or lower our rates.

**It is against all business laws to charge $5 to use a credit card.**

Just let us know when outages are planned as we have a dairy farm and need power 24/7! Be here as soon as you can! We have our own turbine here, but lightning has hit it twice and the insurance company has pretty much said they can’t cover it, we have to replace blades! I would like to see a small wind farm -- maybe not the whole ridge or put some on J Peak rather than ship it all. Since Citizens, I feel our reliability has gotten better. It’s confusing at times with billing and the turbine, **but even with the turbine, our electric cost is still our highest utility bill.**

Just lowering the cost is my concern as the rates and bills are high. Compared to Florida where I lived and had air conditioning 24/7, **this is very high!** I do get or did get frustrated when calling about an outage and have to punch numbers because there is not live person. **When there is not the category I need, it is frustrating. I like to be able to speak to a live person.** Thanks for calling, we do pay attention to and keep the bill stuffers with information from Vermont Electric.

**Please lower the rates for our business.**

The rates are high. **Where I live, my electricity is from another company, and the co-op has very high rates.** Other than that, I am very happy with the service here. I have called maybe three times in eight years.

The rates are too high. **Also, lines were run through my son's place without his permission.**

**Their service is reliable but expensive. The Green Mountain customer charge is $3 less a month and the kWh charge is much less than mine.** I do not want the Vermont scenery messed up with those windmills, and I hear they are killing birds in other areas. **In the newsletter, they report that additional meters are lower in cost and do not have the high customer charge. However, I have additional meters and have no change in cost. I have six accounts and they tried to bill me for a seventh that was not mine. I charged Vermont Electric $100 for doing that and never even got a call about it or paid! (That is the reason for the lower rating for charges and contact with customer questions.)**

They are doing a wonderful job. When the men are out there in 30 below weather and people are calling in complaining, they need to get a fine. That is just awful. I remember when 30-40 years ago, every time the wind blew or it stormed, we were out of power. **This is 300% better than then. I love the windmills! I feel the extra fees should be the charged the same at households and businesses, and businesses not charged higher fees. There should just be a flat fee. Thanks for calling.**

Those little postcards work well to tell us if there is going to be a planned outage. **The only complaint I have is that the rates are a bit high,** other than that, we have good service and all is good. Thanks.

We could only handle outages at night, not during the day. I would like to be able to use a credit card or debit card rather than just cash or check to pay the bill. **The pricing is very expensive. The service is very good, but the pricing is high.** Also, I have a concern for mandated charges that cannot be utilized by all members or by everyone! That is about it, thanks for calling.
Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses (continued)

Three-phase electricity for a business is expensive, why?

We do our communicating with the Ford Motor Company at night and it is critical that we don't have outages during the night. Nothing resets itself and we come into a mess with computers and clocks and timing, etc. The rates are the only thing I have a concern with, and I feel from what I have heard that they are maybe close to double what others rates are. It is expensive power. The project to cut the trees and clear those areas has gone very well. I really appreciate what they are doing there. Thanks for calling.

When we went to digital bill reading, our meter jumped and the bill was very high -- it was so high we could not have used that much power. No one explained why, and had you called me then, I would have hung up on you! It has leveled out now. I can go four hours on a generator and then it is critical. I am saving a lot of energy with timers on just the BUNN coffee makers. If Vermont Electric would give everyone timers to cut off the power for 12 hours (at 1800 watts), it would be a great savings. I can show you what I do. It would save a lot if all businesses do that with timers. Thanks for calling, I appreciate the call.

Rates/Fees – Neutral Responses

I am concerned if they close the Vernon Vermont nuclear plant, it will raise rates.

I will say that Vermont Electric does a good job. As far as the green power, it has to be economical and if the rates go up 5 times over to pay for it, how economical is that? In some areas it would be up to a public vote as to whether it would be used or not. I could not make the decision on my own having a government connection. The rates can be high, but Vermont Electric does a good job. Thanks.

Our electricity might be expensive, but like my husband has always said, "it is a cheap hired hand on the farm". I had to give some '4' ratings and probably should have said '5' there, but we do have outages because of the weather. We just go to our generator because you can't ever be without power on the farm. We are fine until power is back on. It's not at all my highest farm charge. My grain bill is thousands and thousands of dollars. Vermont Electric has served us well! Thanks for calling.

See if the rates could go down for our business.

Small home based businesses should have an exclusion from commercial rates. They should lobby for this as I have a seasonal three bedroom inn.

We do have outages caused by storms mostly. We have to have consistent power -- we have a dairy farm and have a generator, but even the blips are a concern when milking since the milkers fall off the cows and into the manure and the cows get spooked. My husband hates when we get the blips in power. I can't answer about the electricity cost; I'm not sure what it is compared against. Just fuel to plant corn was $1,702 this month and our electric bill was $792, so whatever that is!

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Neutral Responses

More street light efficiency programs! I would like more programs or information on how to be more efficient in the use of the street lights.
Additional Comments
Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits – Neutral Responses (continued)

We are in the process of redoing our heating system so our electric bill will go down. It seems every time it gets windy or rainy, we have blips and there have been a lot so far this year.

When we went to digital bill reading, our meter jumped and the bill was very high -- it was so high we could not have used that much power. No one explained why, and had you called me then, I would have hung up on you! It has leveled out now. I can go four hours on a generator and then it is critical. I am saving a lot of energy with timers on just the BUNN coffee makers. If Vermont Electric would give everyone timers to cut off the power for 12 hours (at 1800 watts), it would be a great savings. I can show you what I do. It would save a lot if all businesses do that with timers. Thanks for calling, I appreciate the call.

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Positive Responses

Just lowering the cost is my concern as the rates and bills are high. Compared to Florida where I lived and had air conditioning 24/7, this is very high! I do get or did get frustrated when calling about an outage and have to punch numbers because there is not live person. When there is not the category I need, it is frustrating. I like to be able to speak to a live person. Thanks for calling, we do pay attention to and keep the bill stuffers with information from Vermont Electric.

Those little postcards work well to tell us if there is going to be a planned outage. The only complaint I have is that the rates are a bit high, other than that, we have good service and all is good. Thanks.

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Negative Responses

I would give my e-mail address, but I'm not sure what you will use it for. I do not want to get messages all the time; I just only want messages that are important to my business! I just returned from Europe and the windmills on the countryside are so pretty. I like them. I always need to know when the power is going to be off. All electric and other utilities do not have the consumers' interests at heart; they have their bottom line at heart. All charges for power are too high. I like all the green power choices if they are reliable. Thanks.

I would love to put you all on my facebook; right now with the storm I am getting all kinds of warnings from people on facebook. I do not want my e-mail used just to chat, use for important announcements! What would a rep do? If it would help hold down our costs in the dairy, etc. that would be good to just call, anyone can call. You are maybe the second person I have talked to that is connected to Vermont Electric in any way so they are hard to rate, but I would give you a '5'! Newsletter, the type is not good and I do not look at it. It is not easy to read at all. Hurry up with green powers, as the Yankee plant is past its prime; nuclear in Europe is great!

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Neutral Responses

If we are properly notified in advance of an upcoming outage, we can make provisions to handle it, but sometimes we are NOT notified. This is a computer business and this year has been the worst for blips.

If you would pre-sort the newsletter, you would get a better discount on it.
Additional Comments
Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Neutral Responses
(continued)

Just let us know when outages are planned as we have a dairy farm and need power 24/7! Be here as soon as you can!
We have our own turbine here, but lightning has hit it twice and the insurance company has pretty much said they can't
cover it, we have to replace blades! I would like to see a small wind farm -- maybe not the whole ridge or put some on J
Peak rather than ship it all. Since Citizens, I feel our reliability has gotten better. It's confusing at times with billing and the
turbine, but even with the turbine our electric cost is still our highest utility bill.

More street light efficiency programs! I would like more programs or information on how to be more efficient in the use
of the street lights.

Please send the Co-op Life newsletter every 6 months, and that breakfast they offer once a year is totally out of line as far
as an expense.

They have been good to us. I have no problem with them. We have a dairy farm so we need power. I would have said to
contact us by e-mail, but I don't always look at that, so I would like a telephone call. I like to talk to a live person! Thanks
for calling.

I would give my e-mail address, but I'm not sure what you will use it for. I do not want to get messages all the time; I just
only want messages that are important to my business! I just returned from Europe and the windmills on the countryside
are so pretty. I like them. I always need to know when the power is going to be off. All electric and other utilities do not
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Newsletter, the type is not good and I do not look at it. It is not easy to read at all. Hurry up with green powers, as the
Yankee plant is past its prime; nuclear in Europe is great!

Renewable Energy

I am against all of the green energy sources because none of them are economical, and I will not pay more for any of it.
Nuclear power, I do like. I could be without power 10 months out of the year and it would not matter to my business, but
during the "sugar" harvest time I do need power. I'm not sure how to rate that.

I get confused why we get the house bill at one time and then get the garage or business bill. I pay them together, but
why don't they come together? Also, the bill fluctuates so much sometimes and not sure why it does that either. When
do the summer rates start? I can't figure out how they read the meter from down there (at the office). I don't
understand how they can do that. We recently drove to New York and saw the windmills along the way; they seem okay
but I don't know that much about them. There is a horse farm that has two and they seem to work for them. Thanks for
calling us.

I live in another electric company's area and Vermont Electric is way higher. We need to make a living too! This is a dairy
and the milk has to be kept cold so we need power all the time and blips can be an issue for us. I am fine with windmills
and nuclear as long as it's not in my backyard!
Additional Comments
Renewable Energy
(continued)

I was entirely for windmills on the ridge, but upon further research and finding out it is affecting the migration of birds, I'm not so much for it anymore.

I will say that Vermont Electric does a good job. As far as the green power, it has to be economical and if the rates go up 5 times over to pay for it, how economical is that? In some areas it would be up to a public vote as to whether it would be used or not. I could not make the decision on my own having a government connection. The rates can be high, but Vermont Electric does a good job. Thanks.

I work with the public and hear a lot of gripes, but I can't complain about my electric bill for all I use. I do feel there are too many chiefs over there at the co-op, chiefs that oversee other chiefs; maybe they need more workers! I do think the solar panels are ugly, I don't mind the windmills at all. Windmills on the mountains are no different than the ski areas clearing out trees and putting their stuff up. We have to do something to help with costs. Why do we send our bills away from the office here? It seems a waste to have to send the bills away from here. It's a pain to get a different person every time; having one person to talk to would be good! Thanks.

I would give my e-mail address, but I'm not sure what you will use it for. I do not want to get messages all the time; I just only want messages that are important to my business! I just returned from Europe and the windmills on the countryside are so pretty. I like them. I always need to know when the power is going to be off. All electric and other utilities do not have the consumers’ interests at heart; they they have their bottom line at heart. All charges for power are too high. I like all the green power choices if they are reliable. Thanks.

I would like to get more information on the different types of renewable energy.

I would love to put you all on my facebook; right now with the storm I am getting all kinds of warnings from people on facebook. I do not want my e-mail used just to chat, use for important announcements! What would a rep do? If it would help hold down our costs in the dairy, etc. that would be good to just call, anyone can call. You are maybe the second person I have talked to that is connected to Vermont Electric in any way so they are hard to rate, but I would give you a '5'! Newsletter, the type is not good and I do not look at it. It is not easy to read at all. Hurry up with green powers, as the Yankee plant is past its prime; nuclear in Europe is great!

In a nutshell, are the windmills pretty, NO; do they make sense, YES! I would promote any of the green energies that are reliable or save money. I really can’t answer a lot of the bill questions because I don't have enough information. (Our headquarters are in Ontario.)

In the area we are in, the power goes out probably once a week during the winter and it messes up our computers and phones. The electricity is very expensive here, and they need to try to keep the rates down. I am not sure Vermont Electric does anything for the community, if they do, I don’t see it. I don't want the nuclear plant to close down and make our rates go up even higher. I am for nuclear power or any of the green power sources if they hold down our rates or lower our rates.

Just let us know when outages are planned as we have a dairy farm and need power 24/7! Be here as soon as you can! We have our own turbine here, but lightning has hit it twice and the insurance company has pretty much said they can't cover it, we have to replace blades! I would like to see a small wind farm -- maybe not the whole ridge or put some on J Peak rather than ship it all. Since Citizens, I feel our reliability has gotten better. It's confusing at times with billing and the turbine, but even with the turbine our electric cost is still our highest utility bill.

Keep up the good work. I would be fine with wind energy if it is not tacky and an eyesore to the scenery of Vermont. Nuclear would be okay if it was maintained correctly and in a safe manner.
Additional Comments

Renewable Energy
(continued)

Their service is reliable but expensive. The Green Mountain customer charge is $3 less a month and the kWh charge is much less than mine. I do not want the Vermont scenery messed up with those windmills, and I hear they are killing birds in other areas. In the newsletter, they report that additional meters are lower in cost and do not have the high customer charge. However, I have additional meters and have no change in cost. I have six accounts and they tried to bill me for a seventh that was not mine. I charged Vermont Electric $100 for doing that and never even got a call about it or paid! (This is the reason for the lower rating for charges and contact with customer questions.)

They are doing a wonderful job. When the men are out there in 30 below weather and people are calling in complaining, they need to get a fine. That is just awful. I remember when 30-40 years ago, every time the wind blew or it stormed, we were out of power. This is 300% better than then. I love the windmills! I feel the extra fees should be charged the same at households and businesses, and businesses not charged higher fees. There should just be a flat fee. Thanks for calling.

We did have the storm this morning and had a blip, but we don’t have many of those. As far as wind and solar, etc., I’m not sure solar would work in Vermont and wind, I am not a tree hugger, but whether we would want windmills on our horizon, I just don’t know. My husband might have better thoughts on all of that, I just don’t know. I guess I would want to know that the green power would be effective and reliable, I just really don’t know. I have a beauty shop here and it could be critical if I’m doing a perm or color and had no power. Thanks.

Other Comments

Please send the Co-op Life newsletter every 6 months, and that breakfast they offer once a year is totally out of line as far as an expense.

I would have to know more to answer some of the questions, and being a government agency, I cannot answer some of this.
Appendix C:
Questionnaire
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 10 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)
   [ ]1 Less than 1 year  [ ]3 3 to 5 years  [ ]5 10 to 14 years  [ ]7 20 years or more
   [ ]2 1 to 2 years  [ ]4 6 to 9 years  [ ]6 15 to 19 years  [ ]8 Don't Know/Refused

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 after B)

   a. the overall customer service they provide (cust_svc) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   b. delivering good value for the money (value) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   c. resolving any issues or problems (resolve) 1 2 3 4 5 6
   d. having highly-trained, professional employees (htemp) 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

2012 Vermont Electric Cooperative
C&I MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

ID # ________________  Interviewer Code # ____________________
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 … [READ] (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?

   Not valuable at all  Extremely Valuable  DK/Ref
   1 2 3 4 5 6

Electric Service Performance

9. 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)

   On …

   a. Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum (limit_blink)  1 2 3 4 5 6
   b. Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum (limit_outg)  1 2 3 4 5 6
   c. Keeping you informed on the status of outages (outinfo2)  1 2 3 4 5 6
   d. Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts (pwr_qal2)  1 2 3 4 5 6

10. 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
11. 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

12. 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 (rearsrate)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Their monthly service fees (svcfees)</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>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>[ ]1 Higher</th>
<th>[ ]2 Lower</th>
<th>[ ]3 About the same</th>
<th>[ ]4 Not aware</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>[ ]1</th>
<th>[ ]2</th>
<th>[ ]3</th>
<th>[ ]4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Electric power costs are the single biggest expense in your business, greater than labor or insurance costs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Electric power costs are the single biggest utility cost but not the biggest cost overall in the business.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Of all the fixed or variable costs of your business, electric power is among the lowest.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. DK/Refused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Power Supply

15. 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>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>[ ]1</th>
<th>[ ]2</th>
<th>[ ]3</th>
<th>[ ]4</th>
<th>[ ]5</th>
<th>[ ]6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Up to 15% more per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Up to 10% more per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Up to 5% more per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Nothing more per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Up to 3% more per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Don’t Know/Refused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
17. Do you support large-scale wind development on Vermont’s ridgelines? Please rate your opinion of this on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you are “entirely against” wind development on the ridgelines and 5 means you are “entirely for” it. 
Entirely opposed 1 2 3 4 5 Entirely for

18. 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
19. How would you prefer Vermont Electric communicate with you about what is going on at the cooperative, including renewable energy and energy saving tips? Would your first choice be…? What would be your second choice? (RANDOMIZE) 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Choice</th>
<th>2nd Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Co-op Life” newsletter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill stuffers (information included with billing statement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated phone message/voice mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their website, <a href="http://www.vermontlectric.coop">www.vermontlectric.coop</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media (Twitter, Facebook)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. How would you prefer to receive critical or time sensitive information from VEC, such as outage information or co-op issues? (RANDOMIZE AND CHOOSE ONE) 
|   |   |
| “Co-op Life” newsletter |   |
| Bill stuffers (information included with billing statement) |   |
| Newspaper |   |
| Radio |   |
| Automated phone message/voice mail |   |
| Their website, www.vermontelectric.coop |   |
| Email |   |
| Text message |   |
| Social media (Twitter, Facebook) |   |

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

21. How often do you read the quarterly newsletter called “Co-op Life”?  
[ ]1 always [ ]2 usually [ ]3 sometimes [ ]4 rarely [ ]5 never/don’t receive it

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

24. Do you have Internet access either at home or at work? (has_isp)
   [ ] 1 At home  [ ] 2 At work (Skip to Q23)  [ ] 3 Both at home and work  [ ] 4 Neither (Skip to Q23)

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

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.

26. Which of the following best describes your company or organization’s primary business? (ageresp)
   □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)________________________

27. 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.

28. Zip Code at your business location_________________________________

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

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