

2014 RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION



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Vermont Electric Cooperative

Survey Results Prepared by:

NRECA
**MARKET
RESEARCH
SERVICES**

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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2014 Residential Satisfaction

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following are the top-line findings based on the results of a telephone/online survey of 526 residential members of Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) conducted in May and June of 2014:

- Overall satisfaction with VEC is good, with a mean rating of 8.44. The mean satisfaction rating is somewhat higher among phone respondents (8.51) than among online respondents (8.22), which is typical when comparing scaled questions in an interview-administered survey to one that is self-administered. Among phone respondents, mean satisfaction is significantly higher than the co-op's surveys conducted in 2011 and earlier.
- The mean ratings for 17 of the 23 performance attributes evaluated are above 4.00, which can be considered good. The co-op is rated highest on attributes related to employees, customer service, billing, and electric service reliability. Among telephone respondents, none of the mean attribute ratings have changed significantly from the 2013 survey.
- “Member Service” is the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction among VEC members, which is good news because the co-op receives high marks in this area. In fact, the two highest-rated attributes in the study are related to employee performance. Still, there is still room for improvement in this area, as several mean ratings have declined from the 2011 and 2012 studies. On the other hand, they remain higher than the 2010 study. Among those who contacted VEC in the past year, evaluations are high and the majority of issues are resolved on the first contact.
- The second-strongest key driver of overall satisfaction among VEC members is “Cost”. As is typical in satisfaction studies, *the monthly service fees, charging reasonable rates, and helping customers keep bills as low as possible* are the attributes evaluated least positively in the study. The mean ratings for these attribute fall below 4.00 and the Co-op Norms.
- The next key driver of overall satisfaction is “Electric Service”. VEC is rated very positively in this area and the mean ratings for attributes related to electric service reliability and outages have improved significantly from the 2010 and/or 2011 studies. One attribute that is evaluated more positively than the Co-op Norms is *keeping members informed on the status of an outage*.
- “Social Responsibility” and “Meter Reading and Billing” are also key drivers of overall satisfaction. Evaluations in these areas are good with mean ratings above 4.0. However, ratings among VEC members are lower than the Co-op Norms for *supporting the local community and operating with concern for the environment*. VEC members place high importance on renewable energy sources, especially hydro and solar. However, they are less willing than in past studies to pay anything extra for renewable power.

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 32,000 residential members in 74 communities with more than 2,800 miles of distribution line over 2,056 square miles in northern Vermont (Addison, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, and Orleans Counties).



VEC has previously conducted residential member satisfaction studies with the most recent survey completed in 2013. 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:

- The last rate increase (2.93%) was in January 2014. The co-op started informally discussing the increase when they filed for it in November 2013.
- VEC distributed its first-ever patronage capital in 2013.
- The co-op is considering some new programs/services including SmartHub and a VEC community fund.
- It was announced in November 2013 that the co-op would be developing a community solar project.
- An ice storm hit the area in December 2013. This was the largest, most expensive storm the co-op has experienced, with \$7 million in damage. FEMA will reimburse all but \$2 million.
- In July 2013, VEC reached Vermont's cap on net metering installations and had to freeze the program. Many members perceived this as being a choice of the co-op's, when in actuality it was mandated by the legislation. The co-op worked with the Vermont legislature in 2014 to draft new legislation that raises the cap.

OBJECTIVES

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

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

METHODOLOGY

Data was collected through telephone and online surveying. This is the first year that online surveying was added to the methodology. Telephone interviewers were thoroughly trained on interviewing techniques and on the questionnaire prior to initiating the survey. During this training, the survey instrument was reviewed to ensure that all surveys would be completed in the same manner. On average, the telephone interviews lasted approximately 10 minutes.

Telephone surveys were completed with a total of 375 residential members of Vermont Electric Co-op between May 29 and June 21, 2014, with random sampling done proportionate to connect date and district. Of those contacted, 434 declined to participate, resulting in a response rate of 46%. Additionally, 284 of the phone numbers attempted were disconnected.

An e-mail invitation was sent to a random sample of 1,250 members for whom VEC has an e-mail address. A total of 151 surveys were completed online, resulting in a response rate of 13%. The data are weighted so that the online methodology represents 25% of the total data.

The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for the entire sample is plus or minus 4.4 percentage points. This means that a result of 50% in the survey may be between 45.6% and 54.4% if the entire residential 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 ten studies conducted between 2003 and 2013. Comparisons are also made to results from similar studies conducted by 75 co-ops among more than 24,000 residential members across the nation between January 2011 and December 2013. These “Co-op Norms” are not taken from the universe of all cooperatives; rather these are co-ops who value, monitor and measure the satisfaction of their members and therefore represent higher performing co-ops, not all co-ops.

Because previous studies were conducted as phone surveys, comparisons to previous years are made to just the phone respondents.

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

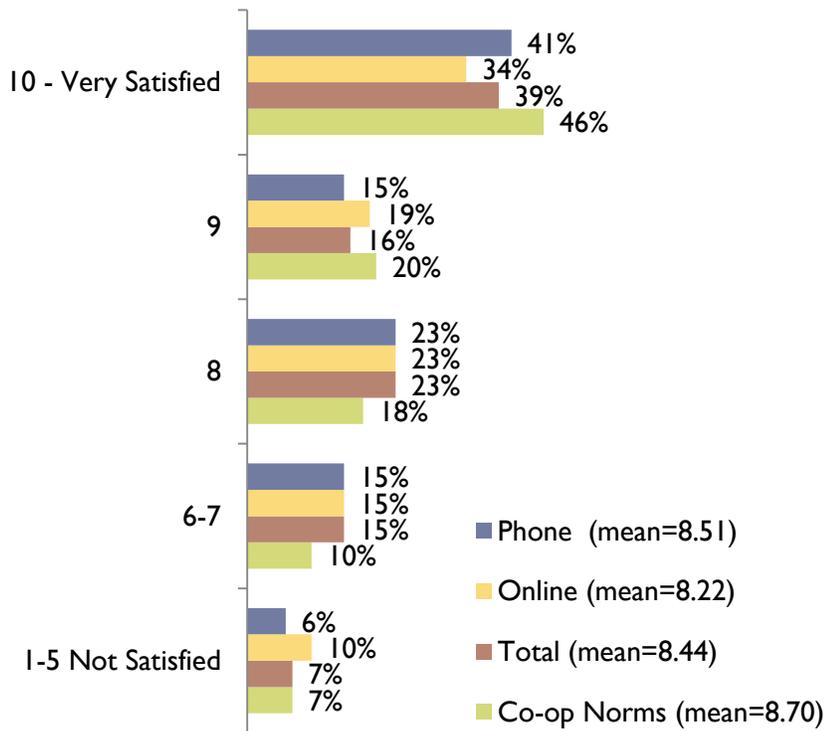
When evaluating the mean ratings in this report, on a 5-point scale a mean of 4.50 or above should be considered “excellent” and a mean between 4.00 and 4.49 is considered “good”. Means below 4.00 may be cause for concern and those below 3.75 indicate problems and a need for improvement.

KEY FINDINGS

Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction among Vermont Electric Cooperative’s residential members is good. The mean overall satisfaction rating is 8.44 on a 10-point scale and 55% give ratings of “9” or “10”.

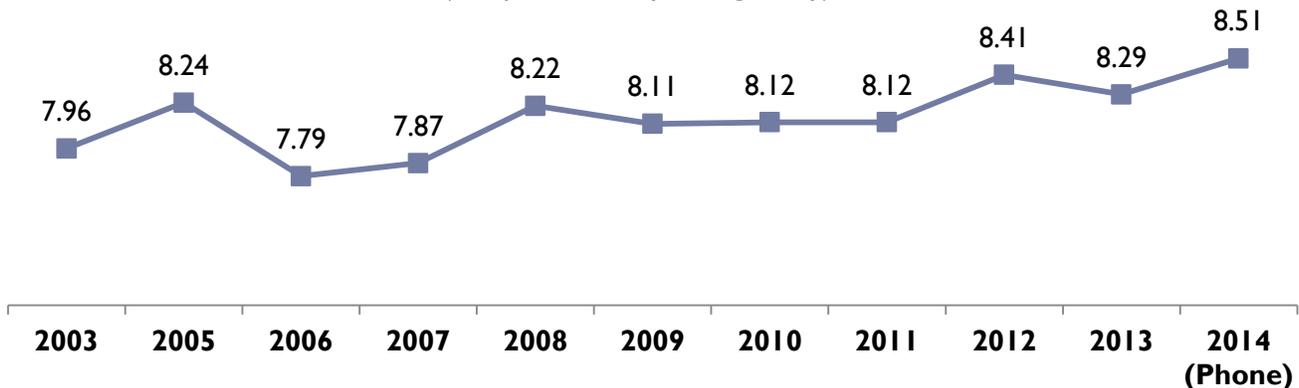
Overall Satisfaction



The mean satisfaction rating among VEC members has not changed significantly from 2013 but is significantly higher than in all of the studies prior to 2012. However, it is lower than the Co-op Norms mean of 8.70. For comparisons to past surveys, the mean rating for only those completing the survey by phone is used (8.51).

Older members, newer members, those paying lower electric bills, those living alone or with one other person, and retired members are significantly more satisfied with the co-op than are their individual counterparts.

Mean Satisfaction by Year
(Telephone Survey Ratings Only)



Performance Quality Attributes

Members were asked to evaluate 23 performance quality attributes related to member service, electric service, communication, billing, and cost. On 17 of the attributes measured, the mean ratings are higher than 4.00, a “good” rating on a 5-point scale.

Additionally, mean ratings for two attributes are approximately 4.50 or higher which can be considered excellent. Eighty-five percent or more rate each of the following positively (“4” or “5”):

- Having professional employees (4.58)
- The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems (4.48)
- The overall customer service they provide (4.46)
- Providing accurate, easy to understand bills (4.43)
- Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts (4.41)
- The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions (4.40)
- Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum (4.39)
- Keeping blinks, momentary outages to a minimum (4.36)
- Having convenient payment options (4.32)
- The accuracy of meter reading and billing (4.32)
- Resolving any issues or problems (4.29)
- Communicating with members and keeping them informed (4.29)

Conversely, the attributes on which VEC is rated least well are *the monthly service fees* (49% rating “4” or “5”), *charging reasonable rates* (50%), and *helping customers keep bills as low as possible* (50%). These are areas that are often rated lower in cooperative satisfaction research and mean ratings often fall below the “good” threshold of 4.00. However, with mean ratings well below 4.0 (3.40, 3.44, and 3.55 respectively), this may be of concern.

Although telephone respondents generally give higher ratings than do online respondents on all of the performance attributes, not all of the differences are statistically significant.

Performance Quality Trends and Benchmarks

Among telephone respondents, mean ratings and top-two-box ratings on all of the performance quality attributes have not changed significantly from 2013.

There are a number of attributes for which mean ratings have improved significantly from the 2010 and/or 2011 studies. However, some have declined from 2011 and/or 2012.

Mean Improved from 2010/2011	Mean Declined from 2011/2012
<i>The overall customer service provided</i>	<i>The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees</i>
<i>Resolving any issues or problems</i>	<i>The overall customer service they provide</i>
<i>Having professional employees</i>	<i>The speed and efficiency of responding to customers</i>
<i>Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum</i>	<i>Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests</i>
<i>Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum</i>	<i>The accuracy of meter reading and billing</i>
<i>The restoration of power after an outage</i>	<i>Having convenient payment options</i>
<i>The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions</i>	
<i>Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts</i>	
<i>Supporting the local community</i>	
<i>Providing accurate and easy to understand bills</i>	

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

Attribute	VEC Mean Rating	Co-op Norms Mean Rating	Gap
<i>Keeping members informed on the status of outages</i>	3.94	3.84	+0.10
<i>Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity</i>	3.67	4.05	-0.38
<i>Charging reasonable rates</i>	3.44	3.80	-0.36
<i>Supporting the local community</i>	4.17	4.50	-0.33
<i>Delivering good value for the money</i>	3.83	4.13	-0.30
<i>Operating with concern for the environment</i>	4.20	4.44	-0.24
<i>Their monthly service fees</i>	3.40	3.61	-0.21
<i>Having convenient payment options</i>	4.32	4.52	-0.20
<i>Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests</i>	4.11	4.28	-0.17
<i>Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts</i>	4.41	4.58	-0.17
<i>The restoration of power after an outage</i>	4.27	4.43	-0.16
<i>Resolving any issues or problems</i>	4.29	4.44	-0.15

Prioritizing Improvement and Maintenance Efforts

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

Regression analysis was used to determine the key drivers of overall satisfaction. The scores are to be interpreted relative to each other. For example, since *member service* has a score of 0.50 and *electric service* has a score of 0.28, we can say that members' perceptions of the employees and the member service they receive have almost twice the impact on overall satisfaction as their perceptions of outages and reliability. Attributes and factors not shown below are not significant drivers of overall satisfaction. More information on how the factors were formed and importance scores derived can be found in Appendix A.

Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction

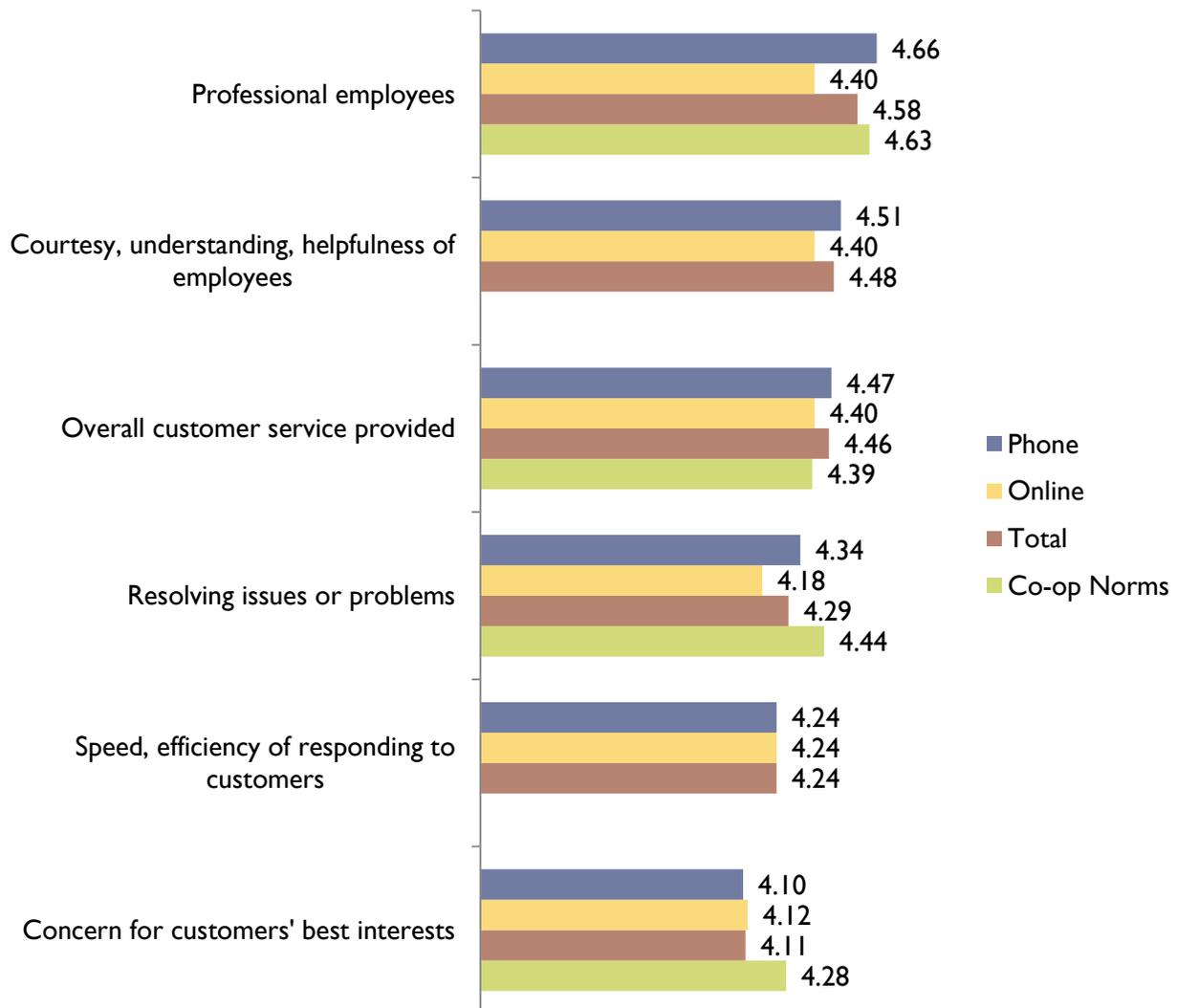
Member Service	Cost	Electric Service	Social Responsibility	Meter Reading & Billing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The courtesy, understanding, and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems • The overall customer service provided • Resolving any issues or problems • Speed and efficiency of responding to customers • Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests • Having professional employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping customers keep bills as low as possible • The monthly service fees • Charging reasonable rates • Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity • Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum • Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum • The restoration of power after an outage • The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions • Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating with concern for the environment • Supporting the local community • Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accuracy of meter reading and billing • Providing accurate, easy to understand bills
0.50	0.35	0.28	0.18	0.16

Member Service

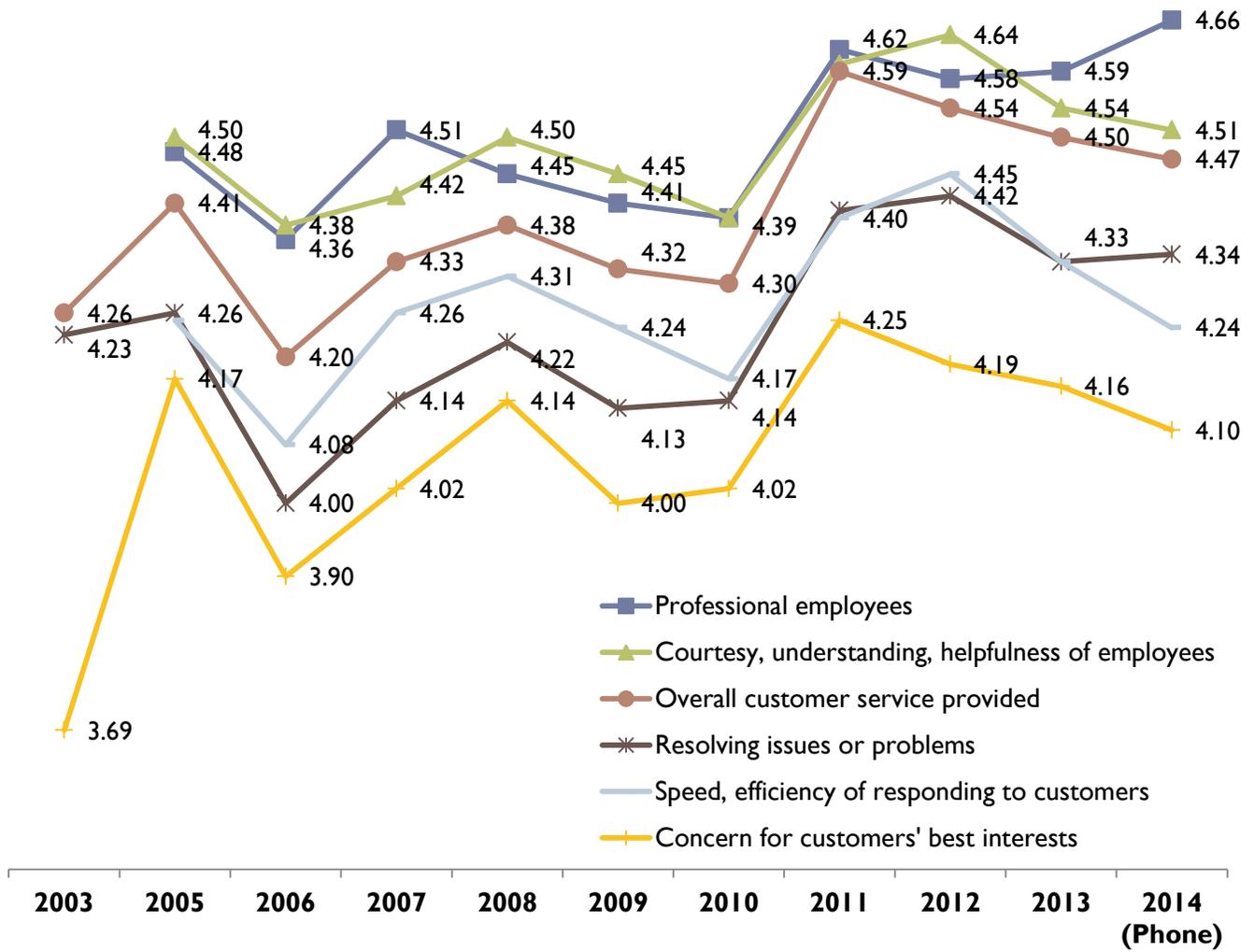
“Member Service” is the strongest key driver of overall satisfaction. This is an area in which VEC receives positive ratings, with some room for improvement.

Having professional employees and the courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to inquiries or problems are rated as excellent, with mean ratings near or above 4.50. None of the mean ratings have changed significantly since 2013, although the courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees and speed and efficiency of responding to customers have decreased significantly since 2012. Also, the mean ratings for resolving any issues or problems and demonstrating concern for customers’ best interests are significantly lower than the 2011 study and the Co-op Norms.

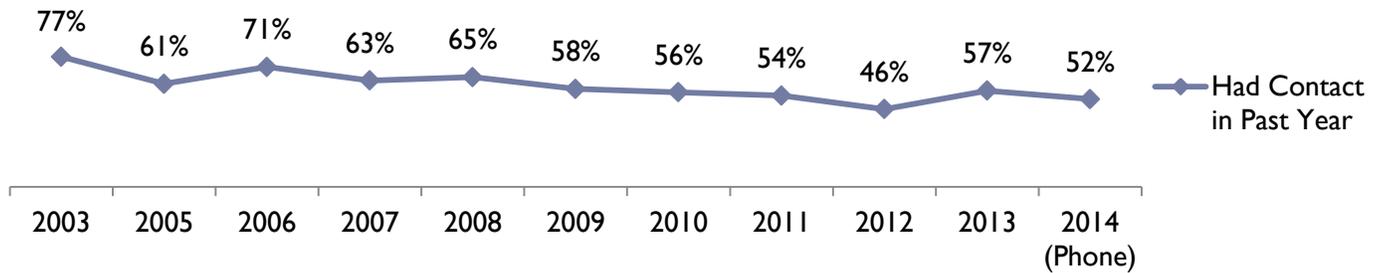
Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year

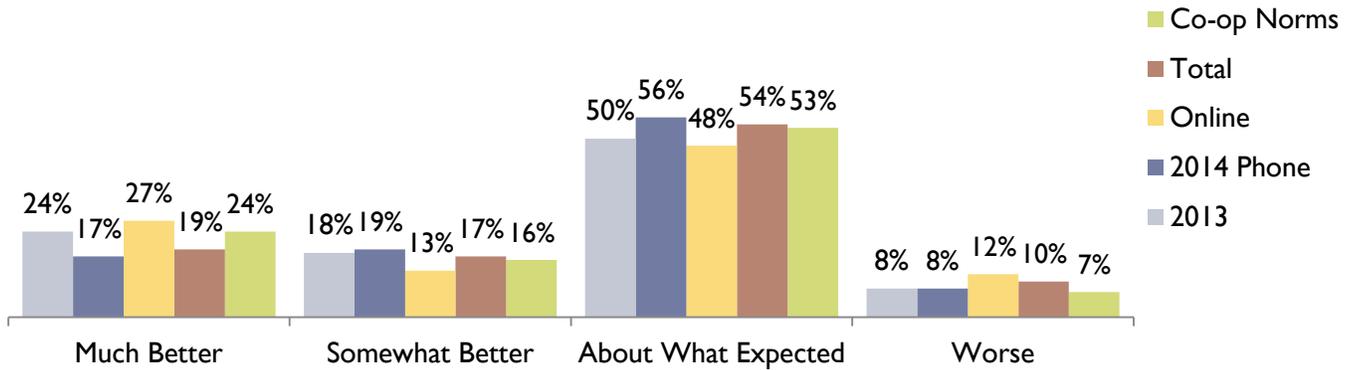


Just over half of the members say they have contacted VEC over the past year. This does not differ significantly from recent studies. Those less satisfied with the co-op and those paying higher electric bills are significantly more likely than their counterparts to have contacted the co-op.



Almost all of those who contacted the co-op in the past year say their expectations were met or exceeded. Thirty-six percent say the contact was somewhat or much better than expected.

Contact Evaluation



Of those who contacted VEC, 51% did so to report or get information on an outage. Contact evaluations are lowest among those who called regarding an outage. Ratings are highest among those paying their bill.

Reason for Most Recent Contact	% of Those Who Contact	% Evaluate "Much Better"
Outage	51%	12%
Bill question	7%	29%
Pay bill	6%	41%
General svc	5%	21%
General info	5%	20%

Number of Contacts*	% of Those Who Contact	% Evaluate "Much Better"
1	69%	20%
2	15%	15%
3-4	11%	16%
5+	4%	8%

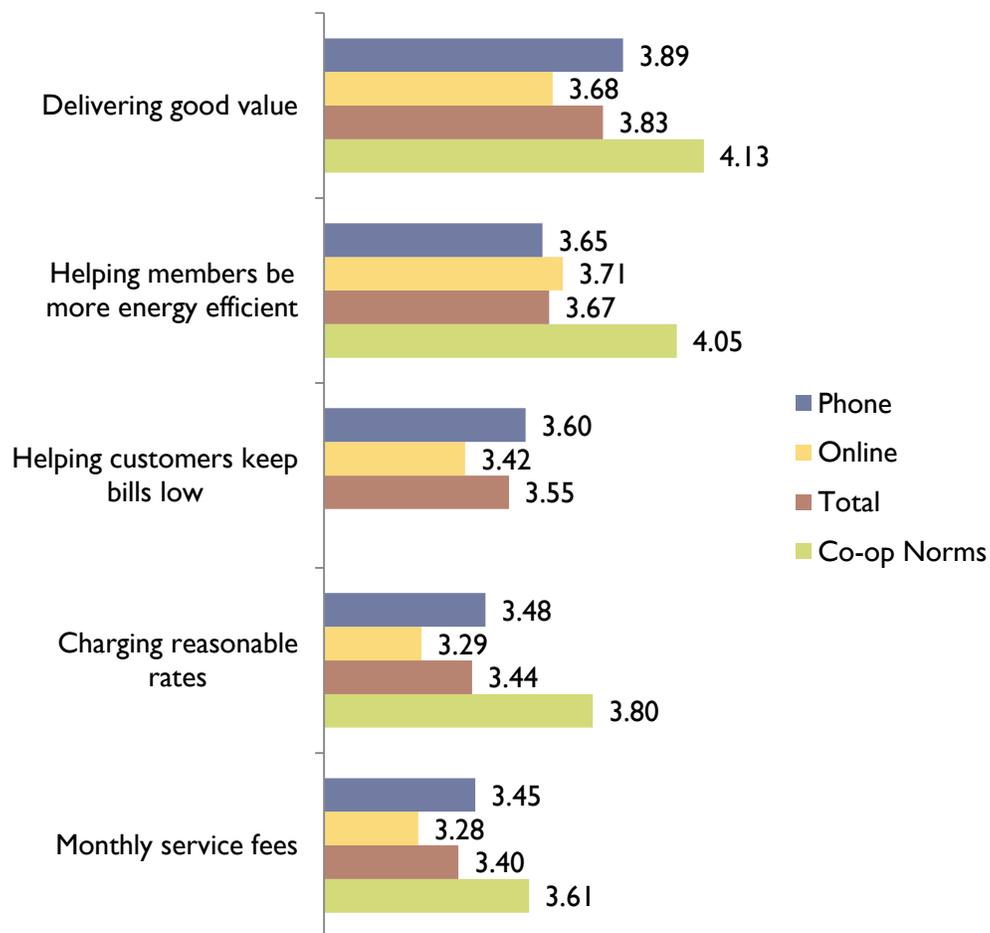
*Number of contacts does not include those who were paying bills

Cost and Value

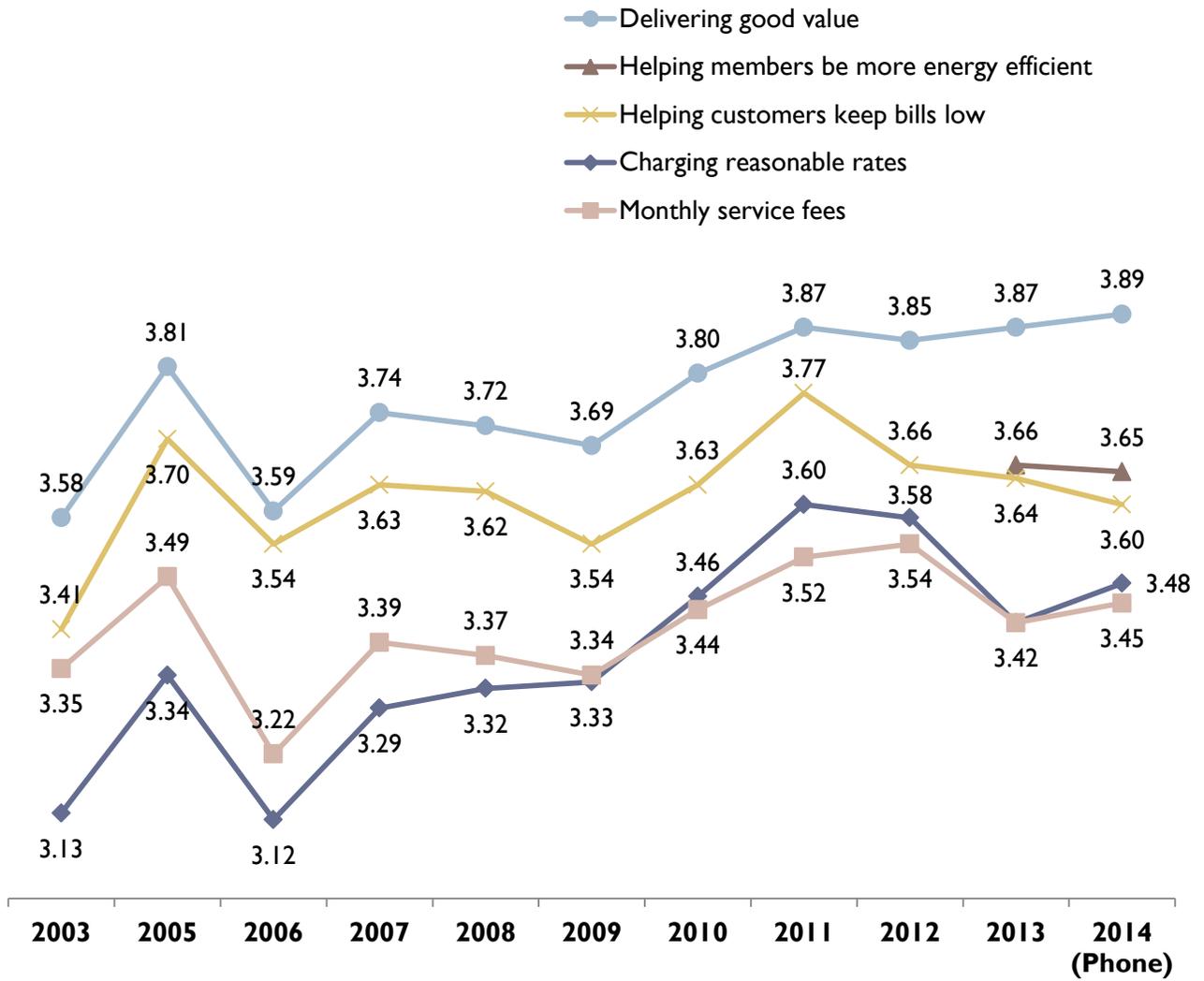
The second-strongest key driver of overall satisfaction is “Cost”. This is the area that includes the lowest rated attributes in the study, which is typical, especially in a still-struggling economy.

The mean ratings for all of the attributes do not differ significantly from any of the previous studies, but are much lower than the Co-op Norms.

Mean Ratings by Method

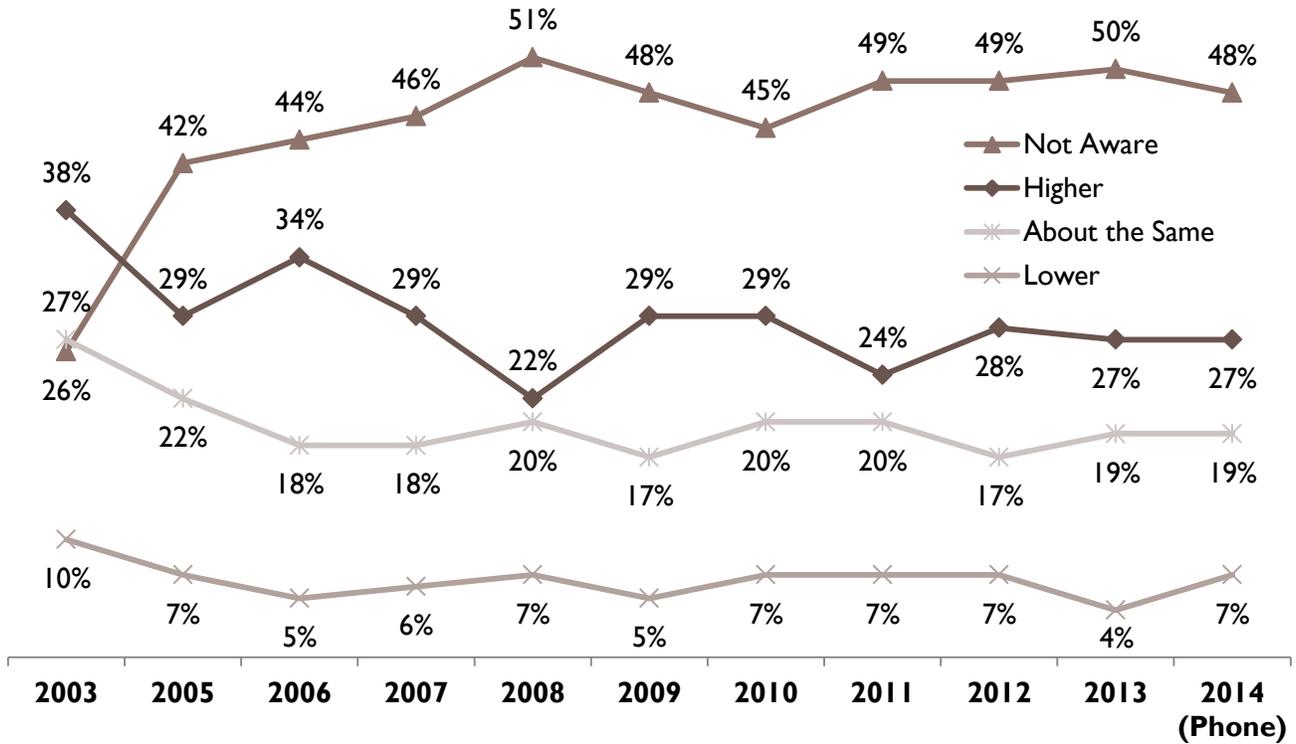


Mean Ratings by Year



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

VEC's Rates Compared to Other Electric Companies



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

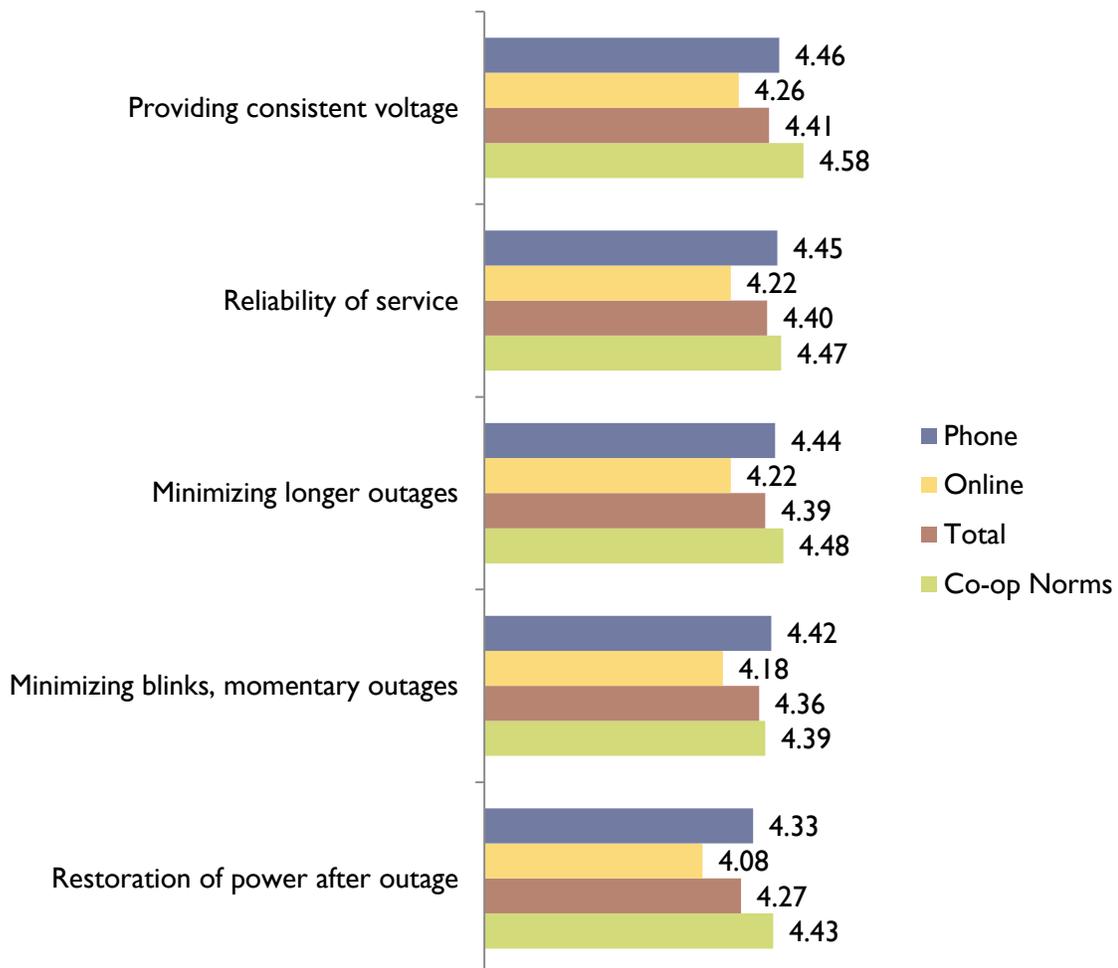
Key Drivers of Value	
Cost	0.56
Member Service	0.37
Electric Service	0.24
Social Responsibility	0.16
Meter Reading & Billing	0.15

Electric Service

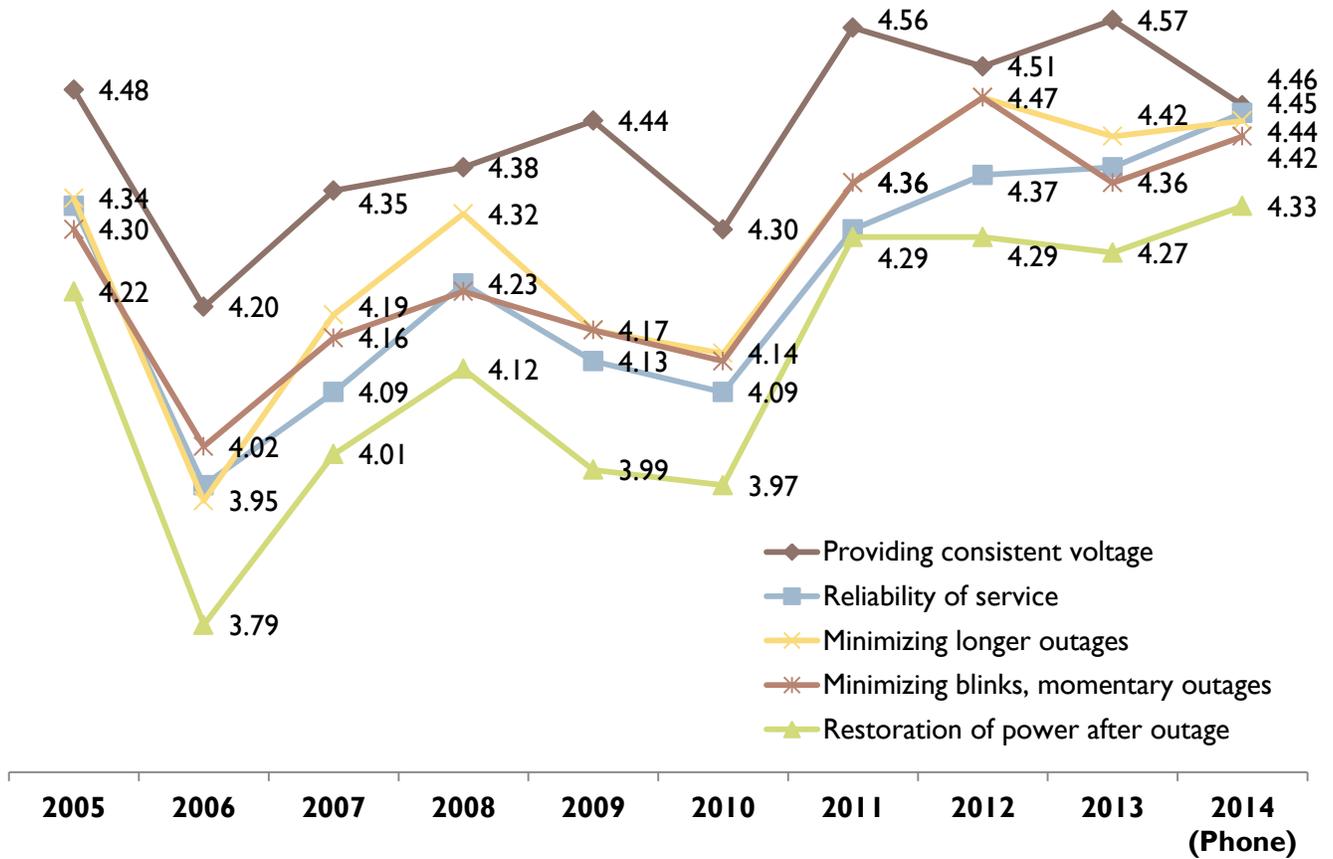
“Electric Service” is the next key driver of overall satisfaction. Electric Service is another area in which the co-op receives positive performance ratings.

The mean ratings for the attributes that make up the Electric Service factor are well above 4.00. Although they have not changed significantly since 2013, the mean ratings for all five of these attributes have improved from the 2010 and/or 2011 studies. The means for *providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts* and *the restoration of power after an outage* are lower than the Co-op Norms. Phone respondents give significantly higher ratings than do online respondents.

Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year

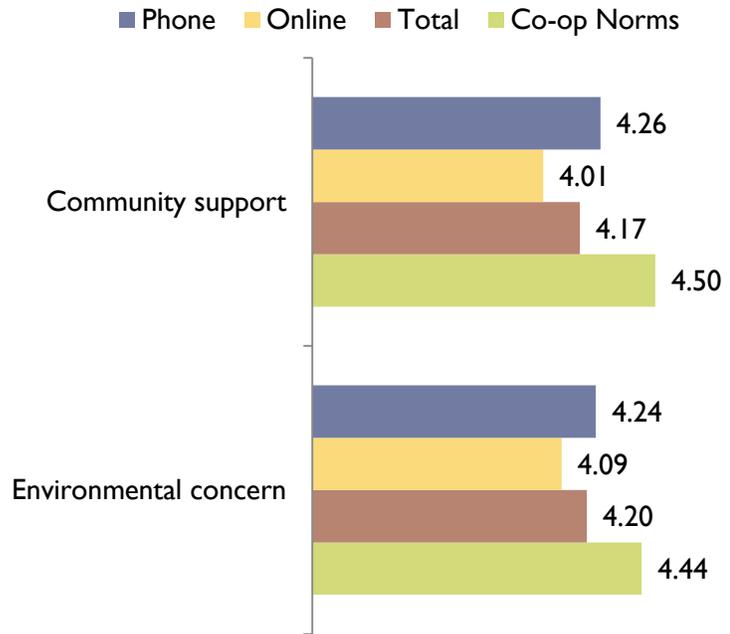


Social Responsibility

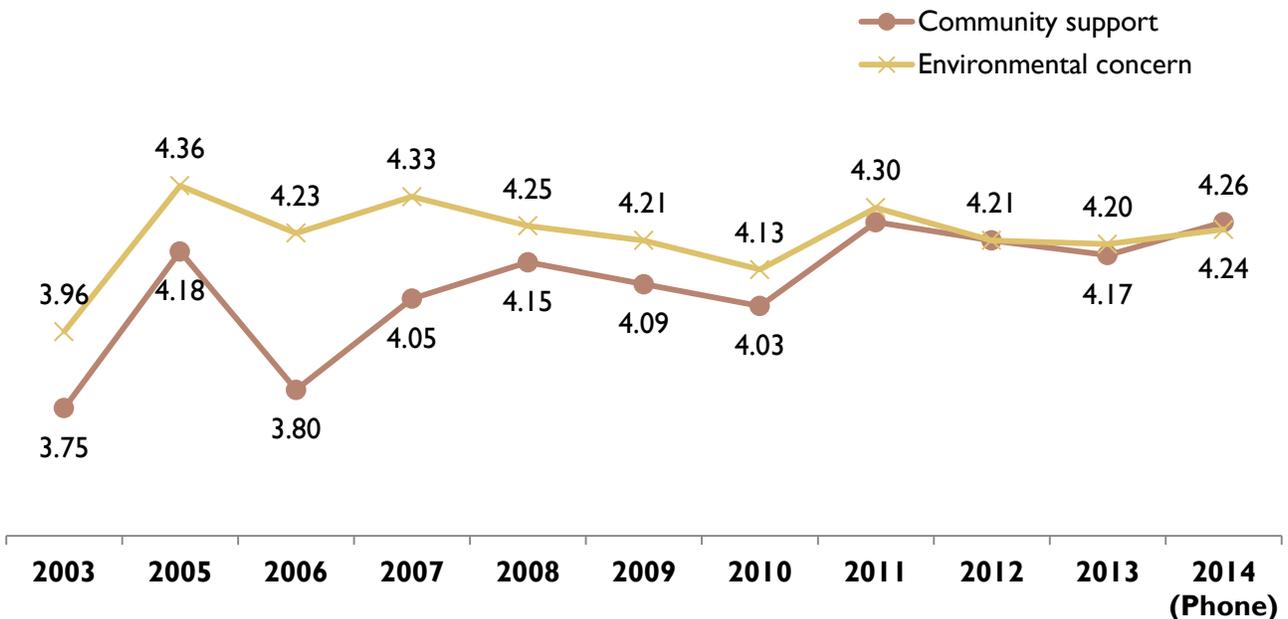
The next key driver of overall satisfaction is “Social Responsibility”. This is another area in which the co-op is evaluated positively.

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

Mean Ratings by Method



Mean Ratings by Year



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

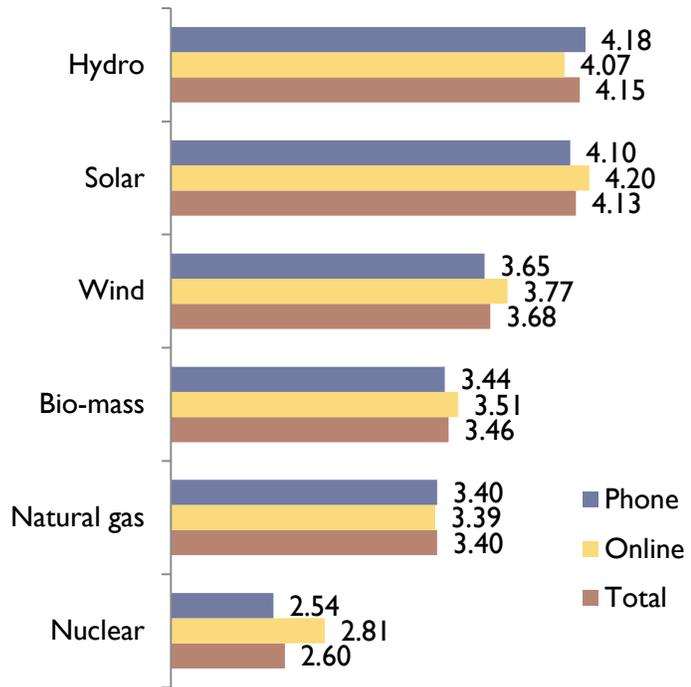
Importance has fallen significantly since 2011 for wind power and since 2012 for bio-mass. The perceived importance of solar and hydro power has not changed significantly since first tested in 2009.

Those more satisfied with the co-op overall place higher importance on hydro, bio-mass, and natural gas power.

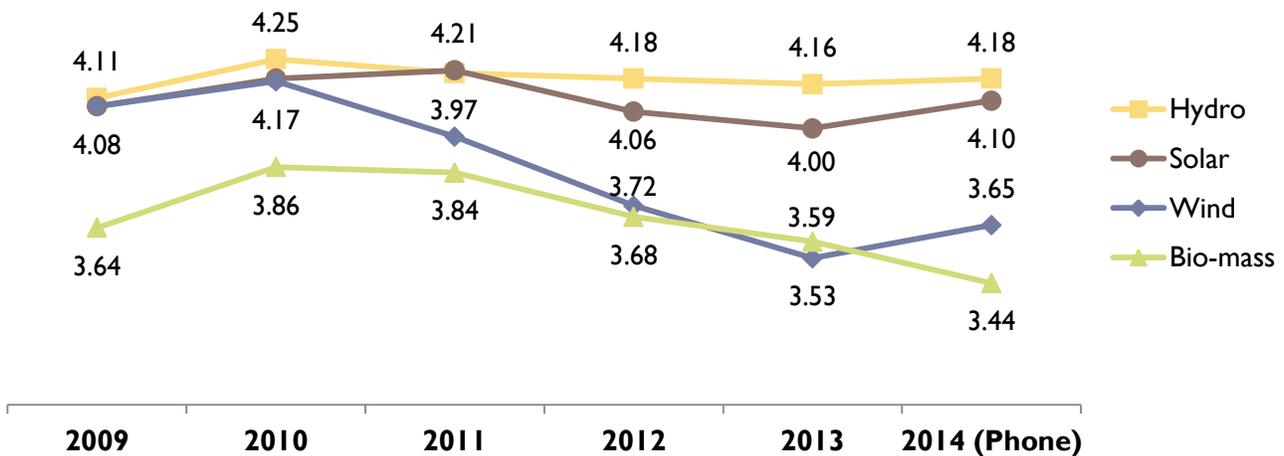
Older members and retired members give higher importance ratings for hydro and nuclear power. Longer-tenured members give higher

importance ratings for nuclear power. Those living alone or with one other person give higher ratings for hydro power. Females give higher ratings than males for wind and solar power while males give higher ratings than females for nuclear.

Importance of Power Sources
2014 Mean Ratings



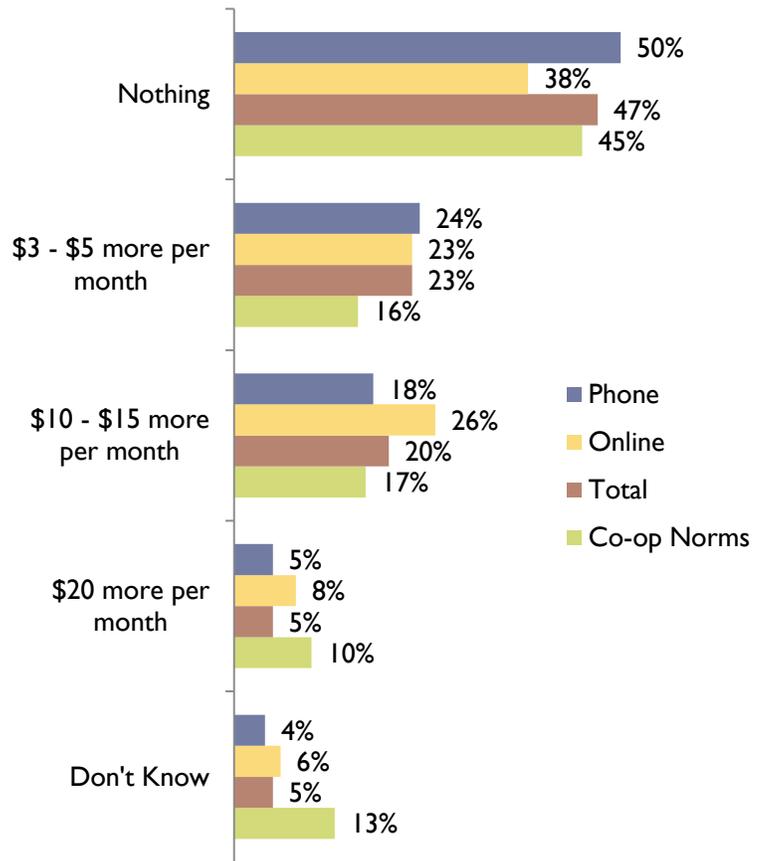
Mean Ratings by Year



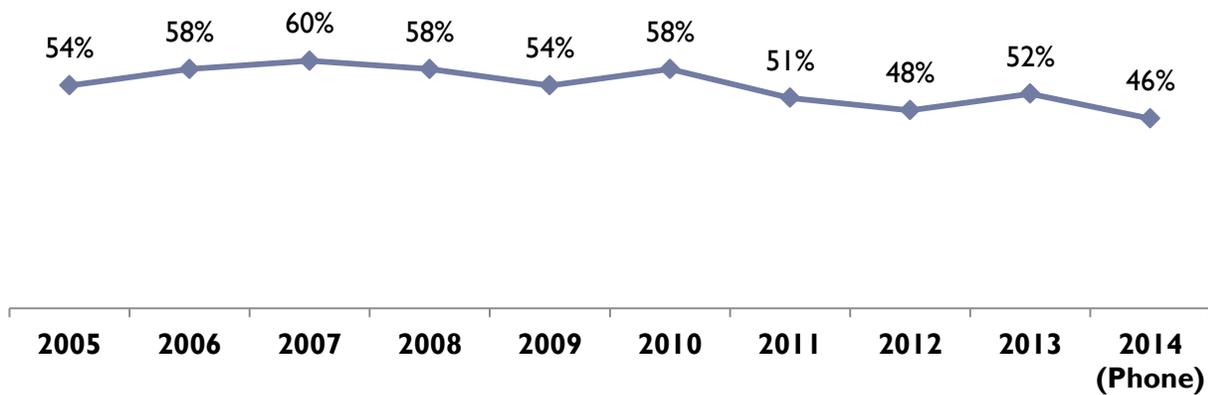
Although half say they are not willing to pay anything extra each month for renewable energy, one-quarter say they would be willing to pay \$10 or more per month. The proportion of members who are willing to pay something extra to get renewable power is significantly lower than almost all of the past studies.

Those more satisfied with VEC overall, younger members, newer members, those paying lower electric bills, those living in larger households, those currently employed, and females are significantly more willing than their individual counterparts to pay something extra.

How Much More Willing to Pay for Renewable Power



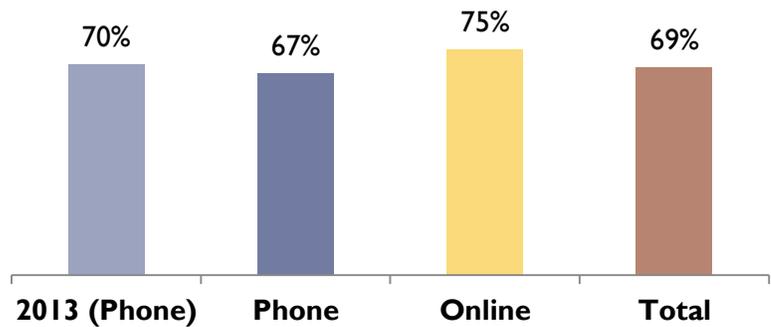
Willing To Pay Additional Amount (\$3 or More)



Approximately seven in ten say they have heard of the energy efficiency utility Efficiency Vermont. This has not changed significantly since 2013.

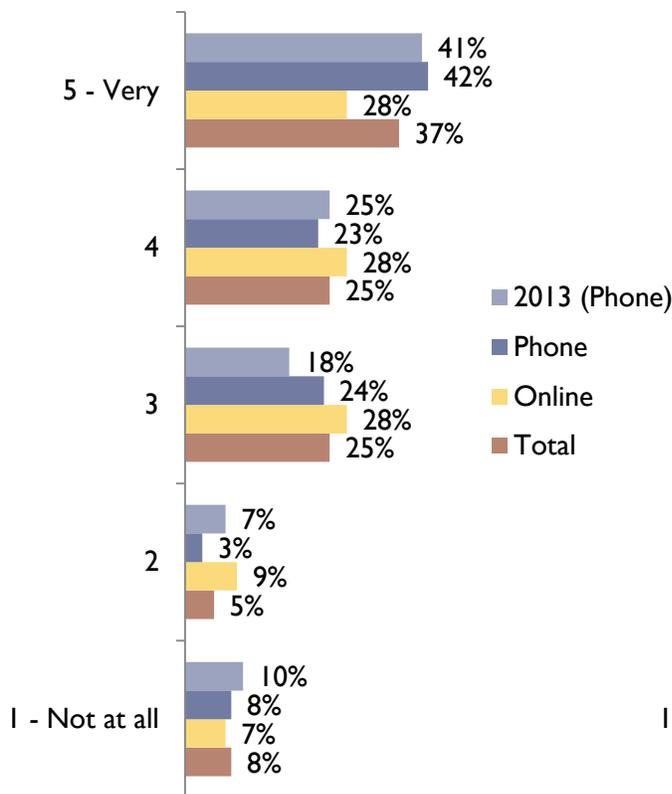
Longer-tenured members, those living in larger households, and those who are currently employed are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to have heard of Efficiency Vermont.

Have Heard of Efficiency Vermont

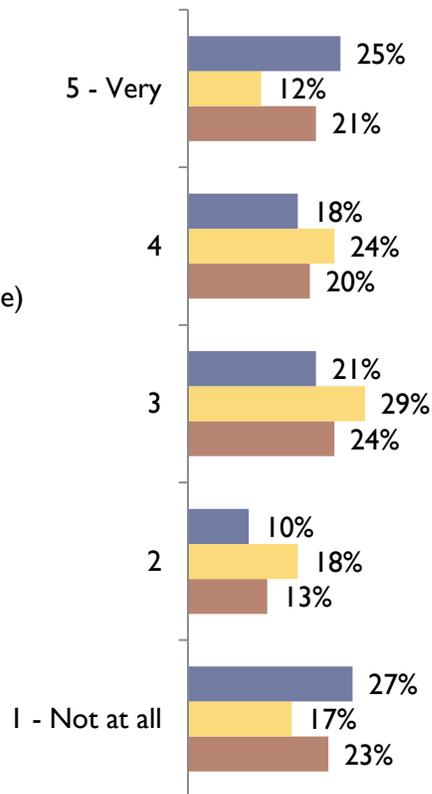


Among those aware of Efficiency Vermont, 62% give high ratings for how beneficial it is for consumers, which is consistent with the 2013 study, and 41% give high ratings for how beneficial it is to them, personally.

How Beneficial for Vermont Consumers

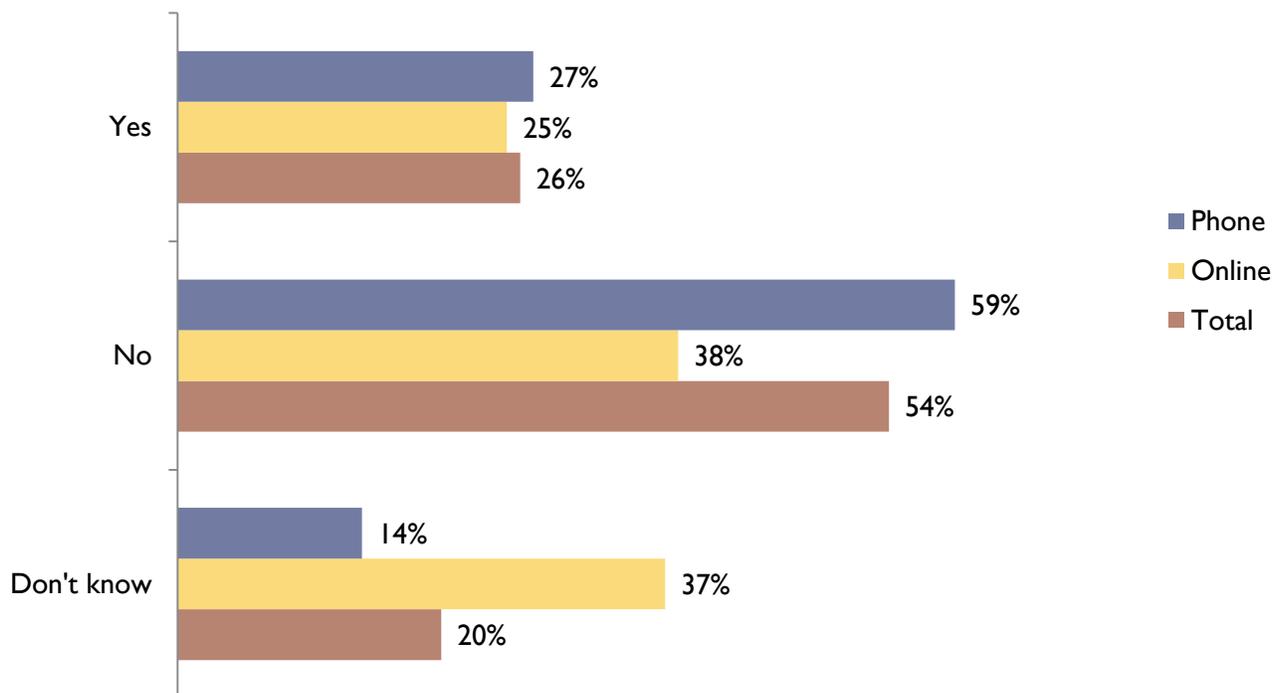


How Beneficial for Members, Personally



One-quarter of the members say they would support an electric rate increase if it were caused by Vermont state requirements to increase the amount of renewables in VEC's portfolio of electric generation sources. Those very satisfied with VEC overall, those who have been served by the co-op for three to 19 years, and those paying lower electric bills (\$150 or less) are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to support a rate increase for this reason.

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

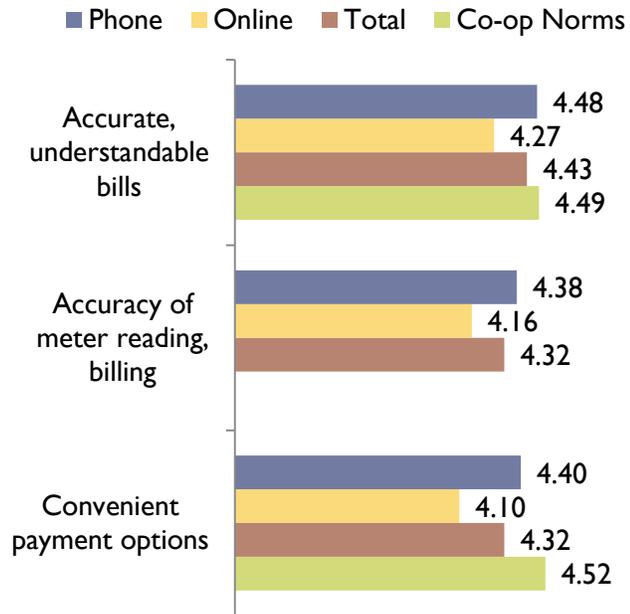


Meter Reading and Billing

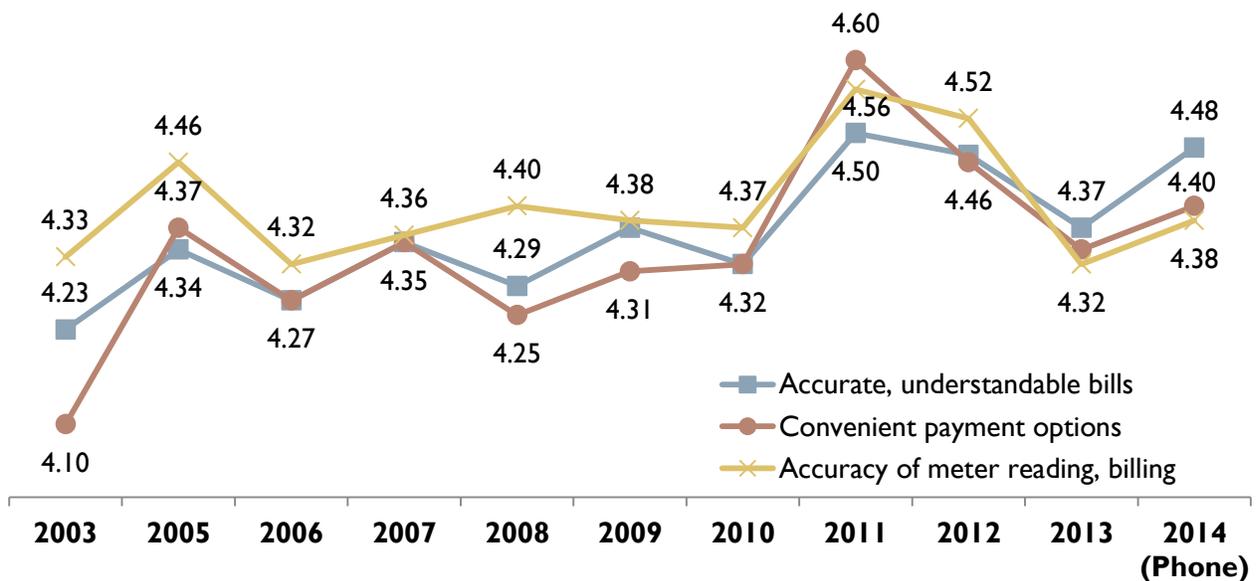
The final key driver of overall satisfaction is “Meter Reading and Billing”. Again, this is an area in which VEC is rated very well with mean ratings well above 4.0.

The mean ratings for these three attributes are higher than 2013, although the differences are not statistically significant. The mean ratings are significantly lower than 2011 for the accuracy of meter reading and billing and having convenient payment options. Having convenient payment options is also evaluated below the Co-op Norms.

Mean Ratings by Method



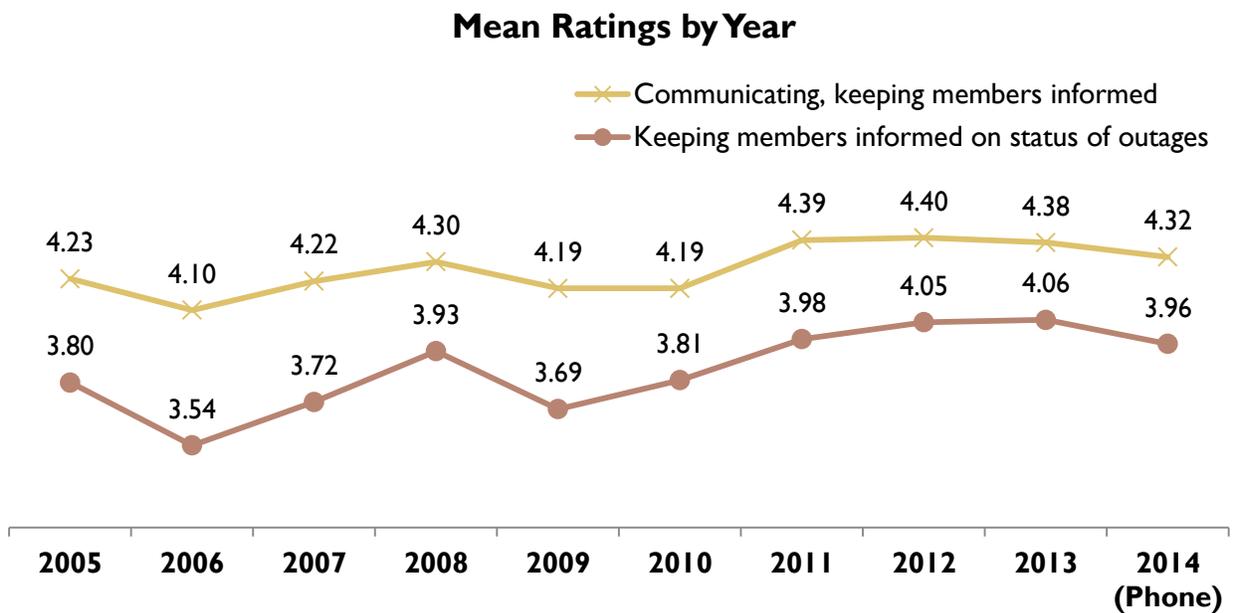
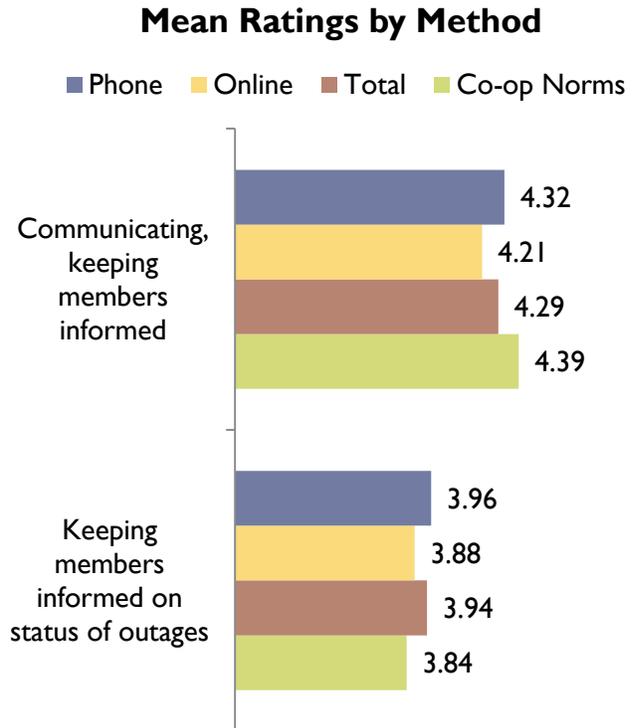
Mean Ratings by Year



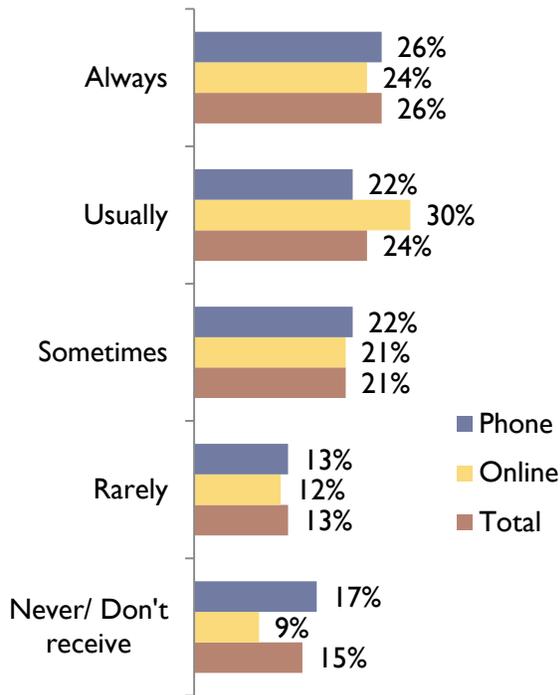
Communication

Communication is not a key driver of overall satisfaction, although it is certainly important to members and underpins the areas that are key drivers.

Communicating with members and keeping them informed is evaluated above the 4.0 “good” threshold, but lower than the Co-op Norms. Conversely, keeping members informed on the status of outages is rated just below 4.0, but higher than the Co-op Norms. Neither of these mean ratings differs significantly from recent studies.

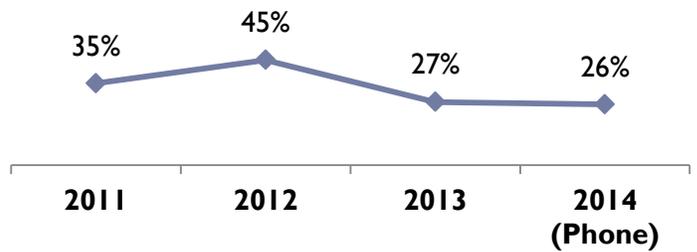


Frequency of Reading Co-op Life Newsletter



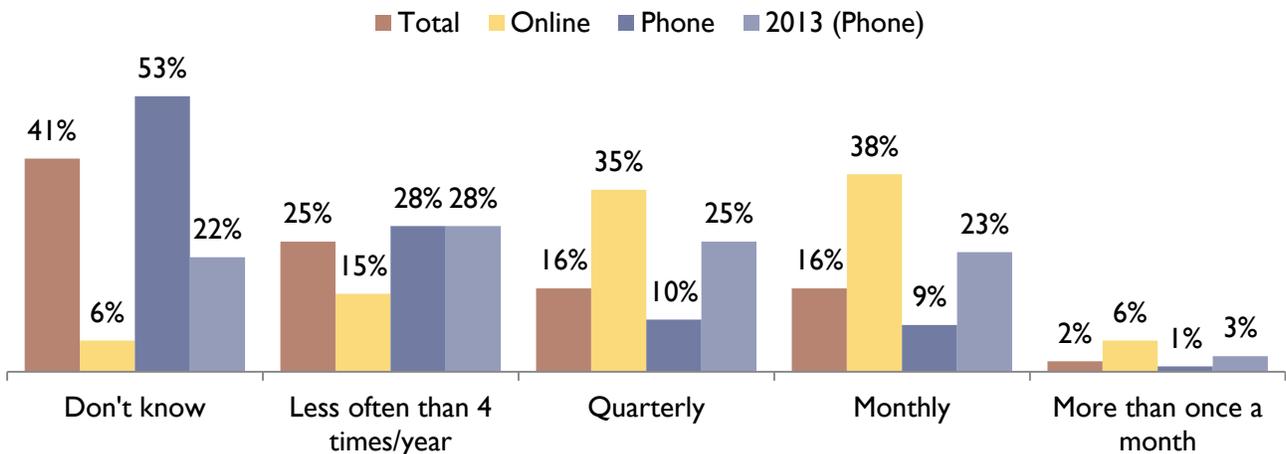
Twenty-six percent say they always read *Co-op Life*. This is consistent with 2013 but significantly lower than both 2011 and 2012. Older members, those living alone or with one other person, and retired members are significantly more likely than their counterparts to always read the newsletter.

“Always” Read Newsletter



Four in ten members say they would like e-mails from the co-op on a quarterly basis or less often. Compared to 2013, members in 2014 are significantly more likely to be unsure how often they would like e-mails from VEC.

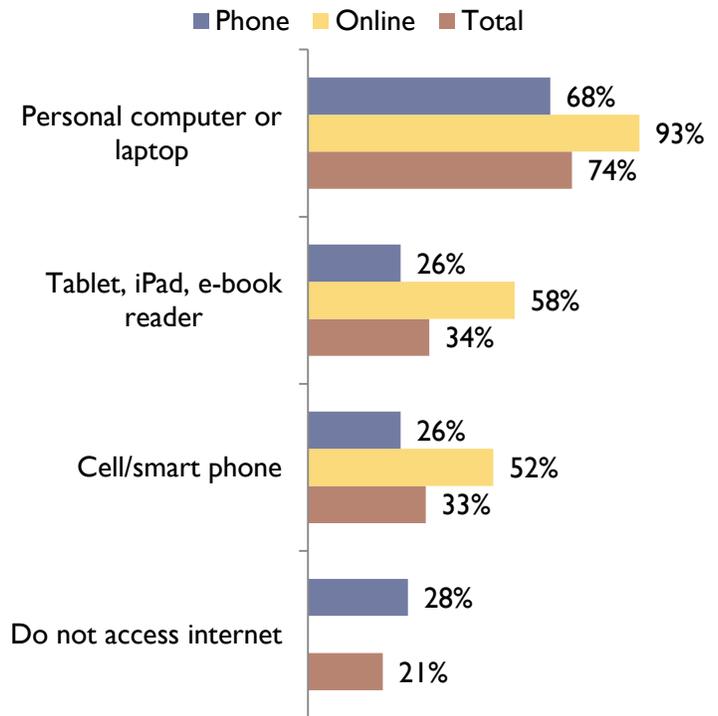
How Often Would Prefer to Receive E-Mail From Co-op



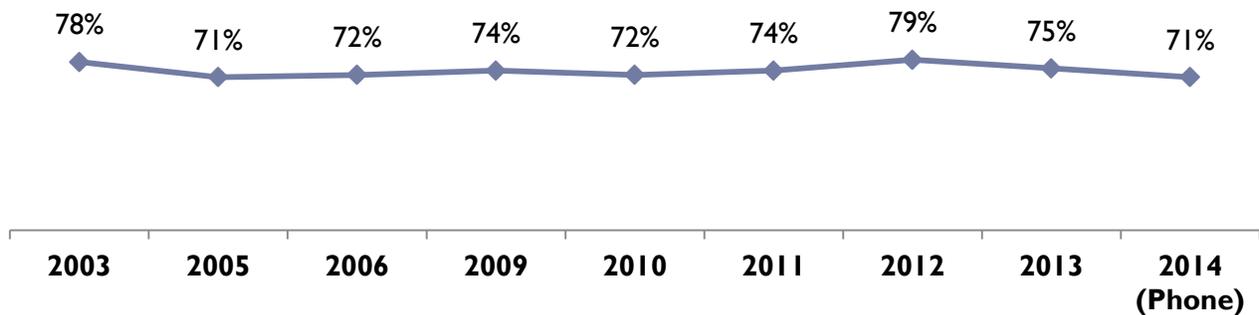
Among phone respondents, seven in ten have Internet access, most often through a personal computer or laptop.

Younger members, those living with at least one other person, and those who are currently employed are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to have Internet access.

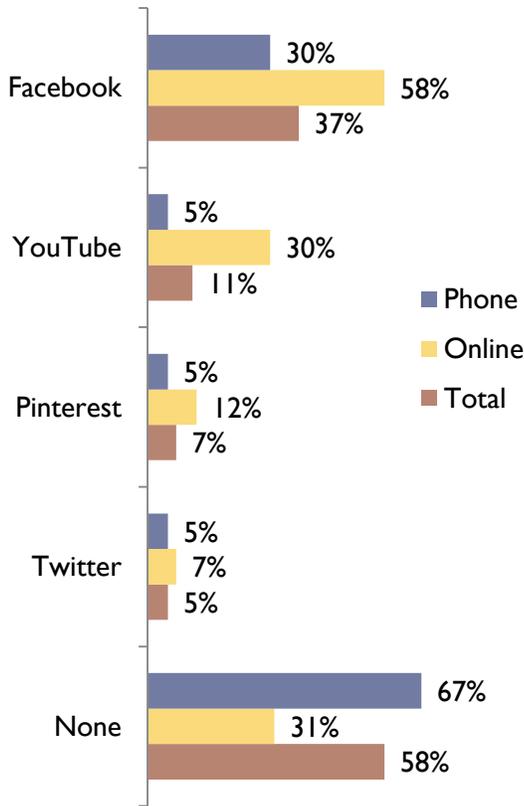
Device(s) Used to Connect to Internet



Internet Access By Year



Participate in Online Social Media Group



Aware VEC Has Facebook Page



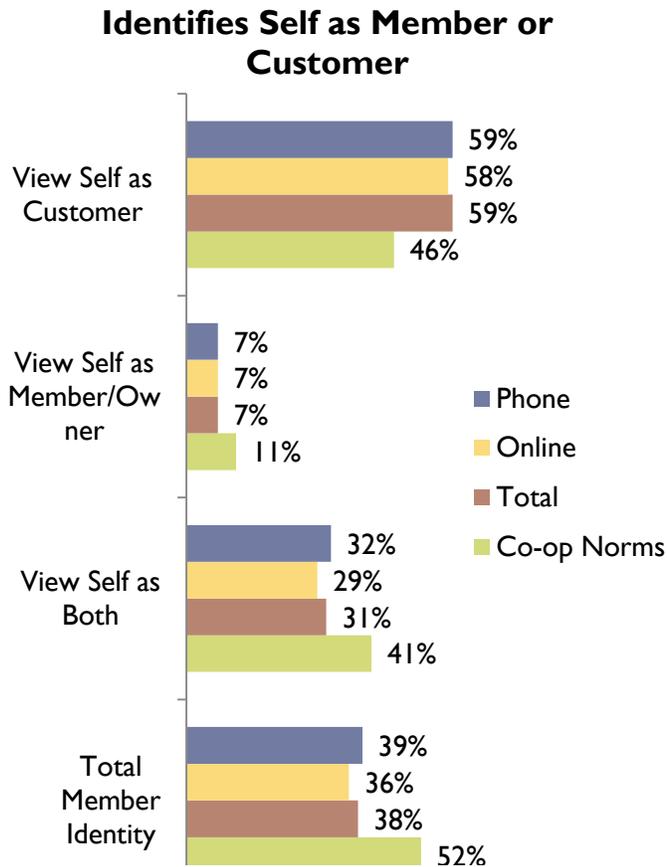
It is not surprising that younger members and online respondents are significantly more likely than older members or phone respondents to use social media and be aware that VEC has a Facebook page. Among those under 45 years of age, nearly two-thirds participate in social media and 23% are aware of VEC's Facebook page.

Those living in larger households, those who are currently employed, and females are also significantly more likely than their counterparts to use social media. With the exception of females, these are the same groups that are significantly more likely to be aware of VEC's Facebook page.

Communication Preferences By Age	Under 45	45-54	55-64	65 or older
<i>Always read Co-op Life</i>	12%	20%	26%	35%
<i>Co-op emails at least monthly</i>	27%	18%	20%	14%
<i>Has Internet access</i>	91%	87%	83%	67%
<i>Use social media</i>	64%	51%	44%	27%
<i>Aware of VEC's Facebook page</i>	23%	13%	11%	9%

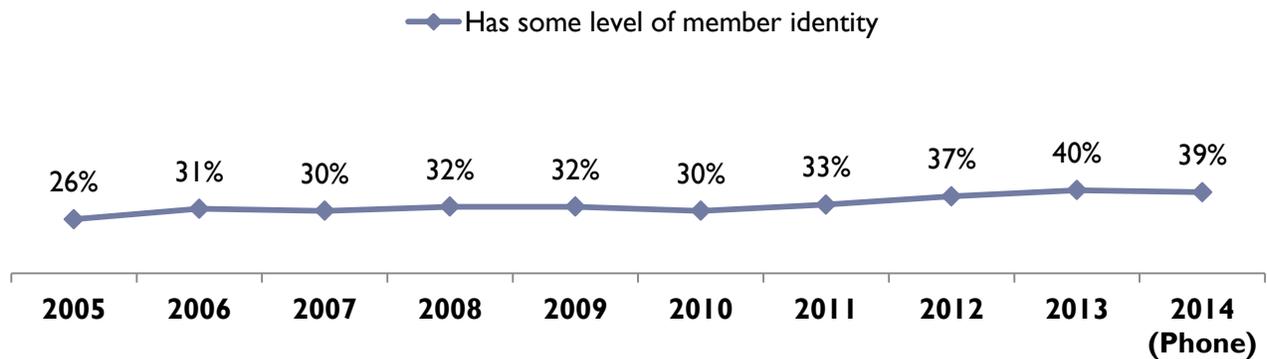
Member Identity

Thirty-eight percent have member identity, viewing themselves as a member-owner or both a member-owner and a customer, as opposed to feeling they are just a customer. Member identity has increased significantly since 2010 but is lower than the Co-op Norms (52%).



Those who are more satisfied with VEC overall, older members, longer-tenured members, those paying lower electric bills, those living alone or with one other person and retired members are significantly more likely than their individual counterparts to have member identity.

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



Member Demographics and Segmentation

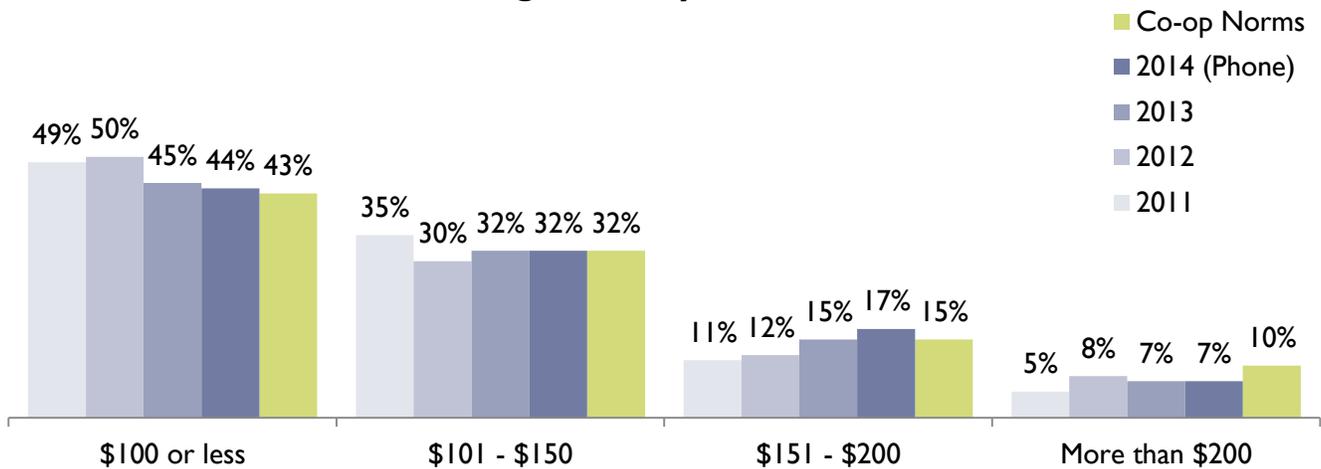
Nearly four in ten responding members are 65 years of age or older and 46% have received their electricity from VEC for more than 20 years.

Demographically, phone and online respondents are very similar. Compared to the Co-op Norms, VEC members are longer-served and are more likely to be employed.

	2014 (Total)	2014 (Online)	2014 (Phone)	2013	2012	Co-op Norms
Under 55	33%	31%	34%	37%	NA	35%
55 to 64	28%	33%	27%	28%	NA	25%
65 or Older	38%	36%	39%	35%	NA	42%
Served < 10 Years	27%	22%	27%	29%	29%	39%
Served 10 – 19 Years	28%	27%	28%	30%	31%	23%
Served 20+ Years	46%	51%	44%	41%	40%	38%
1 or 2 in Household	72%	70%	72%	67%	66%	72%
Employed FT/PT	54%	54%	54%	58%	54%	46%
Retired	41%	38%	42%	34%	38%	45%

Forty-four percent say they pay an average electric bill of \$100 or less. Bills have not changed significantly from 2013.

Average Monthly Electric Bill



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

These member segments also tend to give more positive evaluations of the service attributes, although not all of the differences are statistically significant.

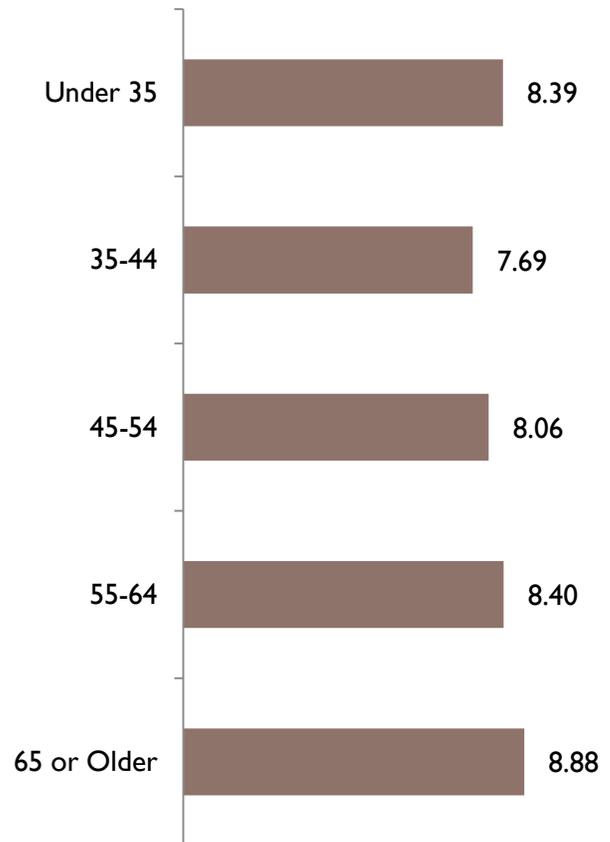
In addition to giving lower performance ratings, younger members are significantly less likely to:

- Feel they are a member-owner of the co-op
- Read the *Co-op Life* newsletter
- Feel power from hydro and/or nuclear power is important
- Believe Efficiency Vermont has been beneficial to them personally

Conversely, younger members are significantly more likely to:

- Be willing to pay more to get renewable energy
- Support a rate increase if it were caused by Vermont state requirements to increase the amount of renewables in VEC's portfolio
- Have Internet access, participate in a social media group online, and be aware of the co-op's Facebook page

Mean Satisfaction by Age



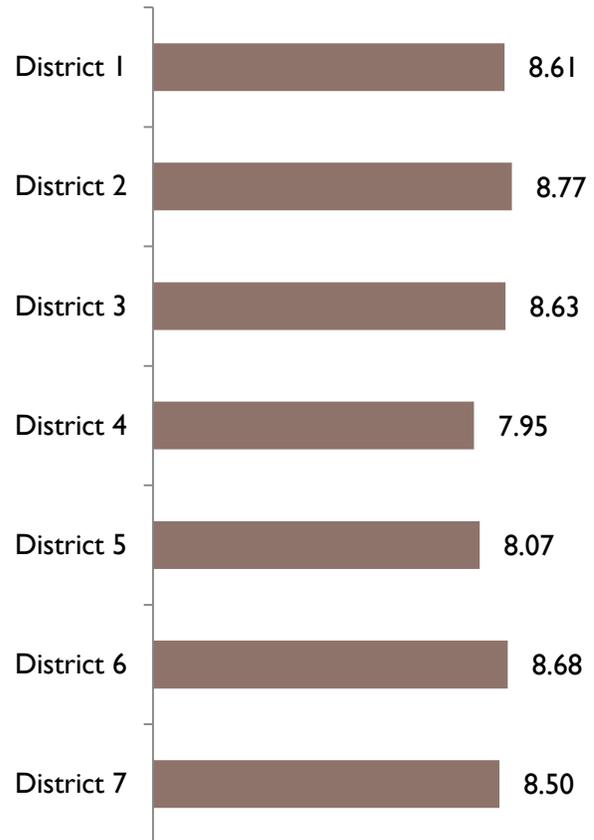
The mean overall satisfaction rating is highest among members in Districts 2, 3, and 6, significantly higher than those in Districts 4 and 5.

On the performance attributes, members in Districts 2 and 6 tend to give the highest ratings while those in Districts 4 and 5 generally give the lowest ratings. Many of these differences are statistically significant, especially in the area of electric service and outages.

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

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

Mean Satisfaction by District



Verbatim Comments

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

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

Subject/Topic	Total # Comments	Positive	Negative	Neutral
<i>Rates/Fees</i>	66	2	60	4
<i>Overall Satisfaction</i>	47	44	3	0
<i>Operations/Engineers – blinks, outages, tree trimming, AMI/AMR</i>	38	17	20	1
<i>Renewable Energy</i>	36			
<i>Member Services/Marketing – resolving issues, customer service reps</i>	14	9	4	1
<i>Problems With Bills</i>	10	0	4	6
<i>Management/Board</i>	9	2	6	1
<i>Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits</i>	9	1	4	4
<i>Newsletter/Information</i>	6	0	2	4
<i>Additional Services</i>	4	0	1	3

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 Electric Service, Member Service, Cost, Social Responsibility, and Meter Reading and Billing.

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

Electric Service Factor

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

Member Service Factor

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

Cost Factor

- Helping customers keep bills as low as possible
- The monthly service fees
- Charging reasonable rates
- Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity
- Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests

Social Responsibility Factor

- Operating with concern for the environment
- Supporting the local community
- Helping members to be more efficient in their use of electricity

Meter Reading and Billing Factor

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

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

- Communicating with members and keeping them informed
- Keeping members informed on the status of outages
- Having convenient payment options

Key Driver Analysis

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

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

Appendix B:

Verbatim Responses

VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE VERBATIM RESPONSES**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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

Overall Satisfaction – Positive Responses

I think they do a good job. (3 mentions)

Overall they are very good. (2 mentions)

Keep up the good work! (2 mentions)

I am a pretty satisfied person.

I am happy with the co-op.

I am so grateful that I am one of their customers and their service is wonderful.

I am very well satisfied.

I am very, very satisfied with them. When there is an outage, they are right here. They are very prompt on what they do. I give them an A+.*

I am well satisfied.

I have been satisfied with them.

I have been very satisfied with them.

I have had no trouble or problems.

I think they are doing the best they can and we are pretty much satisfied.

I think they are really trying to do a good job and I think it helps that we are member owners and not just rate payers.

I think they do a pretty good job, with how rough the terrain is. I think that electric is pretty cheap overall.

I think they do a pretty good job.

I think they do a really good job.

I think they do an excellent job overall.

I think they do very well.

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

I'm glad that we are serviced by a co-op.

I'm happy with the way they are going.

I'm pleased that they are a co-op.

I'm pretty happy with the co-op.

I'm very pleased to have a local company.

So far they have used me very well. Their phone system is pretty decent and don't make me go through a lot of trouble.

They are pretty good, outside of that last power outage before Christmas.

They do a fantastic job and I have no complaints.

They do a great job!

They do a heck of a good job. If there is a storm or anything, they have been very efficient on how they got it back on.

They do fine.

They do the best they can.

They have gotten dramatically better over the years and we really appreciate the current CEO and the job they are doing. Unfortunately the rates keep going up. I'd like to know what their plans are for the future to stabilize the rates.

They have just been fine.

Keep trying ways to provide affordable, cheap power.

Keep up the effort!

Overall, good company, good people. I think overpriced. I have a house in Westchester County, NY under Con Ed. Con Ed is pretty much recognized as one of the highest priced electric companies in the country. When we came to Vermont, I thought our electric costs would drop but they didn't. The rate seems very similar to Con Ed so it is very high. Could have been much less had Vermont Electric Co-op gone with Hydro Quebec back 30 or more ago. One good thing was that we were able to participate in Efficiency Vermont variable rate pricing for the last couple years (18 months). That was good and did result in somewhat lower bills for us. Too bad that program will be ending this June.

So far Vermont Electric is a good, fair company.

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

Thank you for all that you do for us.

Vermont Co-op made some bad decisions, did not have good service and had a bad reputation for a long time but in the past 10 years or so the co-op learned from its mistakes and has put itself on a good track and I am happy to be a member. I am especially pleased by Dave Hallquist and his vision and openness to ideas for a better cooperative and his common sense answers to problems and complaints. I especially like that the cooperative is feeling its way into greener energy. All the cooperative employees have always been great to deal with even in the dark days! Keep up the good work.

Overall Satisfaction – Negative Responses

I am totally exasperated about the whole subject.

This company doesn't feel like a co-op, but just another power company that consistently raises rates. Very rare have I seen rates unchanged or go lower. I'm not really sure what, if any, the benefit is of being a co-op or regular utility company.

Yes. Get the trees cleared better on the Westford line. It's not right that just because we are on the end of it, we don't get power restored over other people who were out for hours and we are out days. It's a recurring issue and if you feel like lowering my bill, and then I'll feel better about constantly being put on the bottom of the list. The last snow storm was appalling at how long and how many times we were bumped. I don't feel like an "owner" and get a kick out of that question. I don't even feel like a full-fledged customer. And I'm in Essex, not the middle of nowhere. As for your customer service and linemen - they are awesome, very polite, cared about our issue even though they couldn't help more.

Management/Board – Positive Responses

They have gotten dramatically better over the years and we really appreciate the current CEO and the job they are doing. Unfortunately the rates keep going up. I'd like to know what their plans are for the future to stabilize the rates.

Vermont Co-op made some bad decisions, did not have good service and had a bad reputation for a long time but in the past 10 years or so the co-op learned from its mistakes and has put itself on a good track and I am happy to be a member. I am especially pleased by Dave Hallquist and his vision and openness to ideas for a better cooperative and his common sense answers to problems and complaints. I especially like that the cooperative is feeling its way into greener energy. All the cooperative employees have always been great to deal with even in the dark days! Keep up the good work.

Management/Board – Negative Responses

I wish they would focus more on the Heinzberg area, instead of right where their home office is.

Additional Comments
Management/Board – Negative Responses
(continued)

I don't like the wording on the bill about "if you don't pay your bill we will disconnect your service". I think the wording is threatening. I think they could do better on "hook-up" costs. Right now it costs a fortune to put in a pole. They want to put in a new line. They asked for a 50 foot easement. It ended up being about 5 acres of my land. We told them we would do it, but we wanted to be compensated. Then a letter came that they didn't need the land. I wasn't impressed, but my blood boils thinking about that, because that letter told me they wanted the land for nothing.

I feel they ride on this cooperative's coat tail to charge us more and they are the highest in the state for electrical charges. They are the only company that charges for all the materials in a new service. The only co-op that would waste our tax dollars on fighting against renewable sources after we just paid for their solar field. As a business owner, I have actually had customers cry and wish they could be a part of a different electrical company.

They can give me my \$2,700 that they owe me. There was a commitment made by the developer that if I allowed him to put the electrical hookup on my land. He made a verbal commitment to me and they have it on record in three places that Robert Jones said he would pay his half. He is the developer. Vermont Electric refused to hook us up until we paid the whole hookup fee of \$5,400. So ultimately it cost me \$4,400 more than it needed to. They should have made him pay the \$2,700. That was Robert Jones' commitment. I request that this issue be resolved by receiving communication and sit down in a meeting with President David Hallquist.

I think the Board should be held more accountable. I think there should be a limit on the number of Board members allowed to attend conferences, etc. A few could attend and report back to create savings on expenses. Also, Board minutes are open to members, but not worksheets. At least this is the way it was a few years ago. This allows the Board to vote to accept worksheets and the members would never know what was actually voted on.

Management/Board – Neutral Responses

I'm a disabled American Veteran. Is there anything they can do to help us? My wife is disabled too. Anything would be a big help. They have special rates for businesses, why can't they have a special rate for us? I'm thinking of older people too who are on fixed incomes.

Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses

I am so grateful that I am one of their customers and their service is wonderful.

I am thankful to see that they are finally out, clearing lines. That wasn't the case years ago. It is so good seeing people come out and taking care of the lines to prevent outages that many times resulted in food spoilage and other things.

I am very, very satisfied with them. When there is an outage, they are right here. They are very prompt on what they do. I give them an A+.

The service has been wonderful. Lowering the rates would be good.

Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Positive Responses
(continued)

I have been happy since they re-did that new substation, or whatever it was. There has been a great improvement.

Overall, they have been a great supplier. They have improved over the years. It would be good to have another source of power, instead of relying on Canada.

They are providing good service.

They are usually pretty prompt and they let us know ahead of time when they will be coming.

They did a fantastic job at Christmas time when we had the ice storm.

They do a heck of a good job. If there is a storm or anything, they have been very efficient on how they got it back on.

They have certainly improved over the years.

They provide a good service for my home, but they are expensive.

With the way that our weather is, they do the best they can.

We are currently under contract with Sun Common to have three solar panels installed. As a long time customer of the co-op, it would be nice if you waived any fees associated with hooking up. The use of solar will benefit all of us. Also, I would like to say how much we appreciated the co-op workers that came out and tried to get our power back up after the ice, rain, and snow storm this winter. They were terrific!

First off, I love you folks, but ratings on power and outages; I have to take points off. I have a place in Smugglers and every time I visit, all my clocks are blinking due to a power outage. It is SO aggravating. Also, there have been times, out of the blue, that I will be sitting there and the lights just go out. Sometimes in nice weather. But definitely in bad weather. Comment on paying more for electricity, is a negative on my part. Using solar (sun), wind, hydro water, and natural gas has been around since the creation of the earth. It is 2014 and everyone thinks this is the latest and greatest. It is great and has been proven and done for years, but due to political oil groups entertaining Congress, the whole country cannot move in a positive direction. Europe has been doing natural energy for years. So this topic could go on forever. One more item, at Smuggs in an outside closet, we have two electric meters. Why don't you folks make it just one? This was done years ago in 1960 or so, and in 2014 it still exists. Just fix it please, and NO I should not be charged. It's your idea and equipment. If it was mine I would have fixed it 20 years ago. Plus, I think that my place does not even have enough juice, as I wanted to put in a tankless water heater and could not. So equipment and power wise, I have to rate you low in taking care of it. On the same note, I have a big green ugly box that sits in front of our unit/house. Why? The cables run underground, which is great. But why a big ugly junction box in front of a house? This should be moved or eliminated. I understand your moving the mass electrical / poles / coral across the street. While you're at it, take out this ugly green box in front of the house that gives off God knows how many volts and fix the situation. Plus when it rains hard, the green ugly box sits in water, and when the cesspool over flows in the front of Smuggs, the water gathers around and hugs this box. Other than that, I commend you on all your work and taking care of things in the cold of winter. I know it's a tough job and you make it look easy. Thanks for listening.

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

What do you guys make your power poles out of? Originally from Florida and as soon as the thunder rolls and the wind hit 25 knots, the power would go out! Not to mention hurricanes (four in all that I've been through). I've gone without power for weeks down there, four times in fact. Up here I've seen hurricane force winds, ice storms, and tree snapping thunderstorms and have been out of power 72 hours. In Florida, a squirrel can cause that much of an outage! You can teach those guys something about preparedness and keeping up on maintenance. I will always brag your company up wherever I find myself next! Keep your course steady and you will do well.

Having been a member for over 20 years, I have experienced in the early years numerous power outages and brown outs. I lost many appliance circuitry boards from these occurrences. These events were considered while answering the survey. However, as of late I have found the service has improved.

Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses

I feel like they lag behind Green Mountain Power for support of individual use for solar, as well as renewable energy sources. When there are outages, the period of the outage is quite long for me as a customer.

I think their "overall" fees are too high. I think their winter rates are too high. Their provider fees are very high. I'm on the end of their line, so we are usually the last to get restored when there is an outage. I can't see a raise in rates for them for any reason.

I think they should provide everybody with a generator, or provide a rebate if a person buys a generator. Keep their right-of-ways clear.

I understand that we are on a back road, but it seems to always be the last to come back on. I think my bills are very high, so I contacted Efficiency Vermont and they sent us a meter that we plugged into our appliances and said it sounded about right for what we have in our home. I feel that our electric bill is very high for what we use. We both work full time and are not using that much electricity. Their customer service is good.

I'd like them to maintain power year round to my residence. The frequent outages are a pain.

It would be good if they could look through the lines and make sure they are in good working order. I think they should double check so we don't have so many outages.

Personally, I think we're considered to be at the end of the line, yet we are in a very populated area. I find it upsetting when my neighbor down the street has power and we have to wait. My neighbor has Green Mountain Power. We have had to be out of power for long lengths of time, while my neighbors have power.

They are pretty good, outside of that last power outage before Christmas.

We have a lot of power surges.

We have had more power outage in this location in 9 years than we had in 19 in our previous location.

We have too many outages.

Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses
(continued)

I have heard and seen the aftermath of people that Vermont Electric Co-op has hired to clear their right-of-way from power lines. They outright lied that they would be back in a couple of days, giving the land owner an opportunity for questions, etc. They just cut it within a day. I see that as big problem, not checking on their contractor's work. Vermont Co-op gets a bad rap, though they deserve a bit of the complaint.

It would be cost effective for the co-op to take care of their lines, tree trimming, etc. as Green Mountain Power does. When outages occur as a result of storms, it takes more money and a longer period of time to reinstate power due to unkept lines and trees along the lines.

The six day blackout at our home in January 2014 was a disgrace in this day and age. The co-op rates are amongst the highest I have ever seen. I get the feeling that generating plant utilization is way too high. You have caused me to invest in a standby generator. That is how confident I am in your future performance.

The website for bill pay does not reflect a technology company on the cutting edge. I am more concerned about lower bills than renewable energy. I had an Efficiency Vermont audit performed with contractor work follow-up. It had nothing to do with Vermont Electric Co-op though. It would be nice to have VEC help customers on a small scale power generation. Given the number of outages, and the length of outages when they occur, I could not imagine having VEC and not owning a generator. I like that I can call and get an estimate of when the power will come back on. It would be nice for VEC to offer customers some device to indicate when the power comes back on after an outage so we can turn off our generators.

We are located in an area in Georgia (St. Albans end) that has Green Mountain Power on both sides of us. It is very frustrating when we lose power during large storms and we stand outside and look all around our house and see power everywhere except for where Vermont Electric Co-op is located. If we moved just 30 feet down the road past the railroad tracks we would have power and our friends who live past the railroad tracks have never lost power and we lose power at least 2-4 times a year :(

First off, I love you folks, but ratings on power and outages; I have to take points off. I have a place in Smugglers and every time I visit, all my clocks are blinking due to a power outage. It is SO aggravating. Also, there have been times, out of the blue, that I will be sitting there and the lights just go out. Sometimes in nice weather, but definitely in bad weather. Comment on paying more for electricity, is a negative on my part. Using solar (sun), wind, hydro water, and natural gas has been around since the creation of the earth. It is 2014 and everyone thinks this is the latest and greatest. It is great and has been proven and done for years, but due to political oil groups entertaining Congress, the whole country cannot move in a positive direction. Europe has been doing natural energy for years. So this topic could go on forever. One more item, at Smuggs in an outside closet, we have two electric meters. Why don't you folks make it just one? This was done years ago in 1960 or so, and in 2014 it still exists. Just fix it please, and NO I should not be charged. It's your idea and equipment. If it was mine I would have fixed it 20 years ago. Plus, I think that my place does not even have enough juice, as I wanted to put in a tankless water heater and could not. So equipment and power wise, I have to rate you low in taking care of it. On the same note, I have a big green ugly box that sits in front of our unit/house. Why? The cables run underground, which is great. But why a big ugly junction box in front of a house? This should be moved or eliminated. I understand your moving the mass electrical / poles / coral across the street. While you're at it, take out this ugly green box in front of the house that gives off God knows how many volts and fix the situation. Plus when it rains hard, the green ugly box sits in water, and when the cesspool over flows in the front of Smuggs, the water gathers around and hugs this box. Other than that, I commend you on all your work and taking care of things in the cold of winter. I know it's a tough job and you make it look easy. Thanks for listening.

Additional Comments
Operations/Engineering – Negative Responses
(continued)

The need to control vegetation around power lines is done in a destructive manner.

Yes. Get the trees cleared better on the Westford line. It's not right that just because we are on the end of it, we don't get power restored over other people who were out for hours and we are out days. It's a recurring issue and if you feel like lowering my bill, then I'll feel better about constantly being put on the bottom of the list. The last snow storm was appalling at how long and how many times we were bumped. I don't feel like an "owner" and get a kick out of that question. I don't even feel like a full-fledged customer. And I'm in Essex, not the middle of nowhere. As for your customer service and linemen - they are awesome, very polite, cared about our issue even though they couldn't help more.

Having been a member for over 20 years, I have experienced in the early years numerous power outages and brown outs. I lost many appliance circuitry boards from these occurrences. These events were considered while answering the survey. However, as of late I have found the service has improved.

Operations/Engineering – Neutral Responses

Keep up the tree trimming to avoid trees on the lines.

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Positive Responses

I think they have a really good team.

I understand that we are on a back road, but it seems to always be the last to come back on. I think my bills are very high, so I contacted Efficiency Vermont and they sent us a meter that we plugged into our appliances and said it sounded about right for what we have in our home. I feel that our electric bill is very high for what we use. We both work full time and are not using that much electricity. **Their customer service is good.**

I very much appreciate that when I call in I get to talk to a real person and not a computer.

The website for bill pay does not reflect a technology company on the cutting edge. I am more concerned about lower bills than renewable energy. I had an Efficiency Vermont audit performed with contractor work follow-up. It had nothing to do with Vermont Electric Co-op though. It would be nice to have VEC help customers on a small scale power generation. Given the number of outages, and the length of outages when they occur, I could not imagine having VEC and not owning a generator. I like that I can call and get an estimate of when the power will come back on. It would be nice for VEC to offer customers some device to indicate when the power comes back on after an outage so we can turn off our generators.

Vermont Co-op made some bad decisions, did not have good service and had a bad reputation for a long time but in the past 10 years or so the co-op learned from its mistakes and has put itself on a good track and I am happy to be a member. I am especially pleased by Dave Hallquist and his vision and openness to ideas for a better cooperative and his common sense answers to problems and complaints. I especially like that the cooperative is feeling its way into greener energy. **All the cooperative employees have always been great to deal with even in the dark days! Keep up the good work.**

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

When I set up my service, the woman in customer service made the whole process easy for me.

When there are outages, they are very good at keeping us informed.

Yes. Get the trees cleared better on the Westford line. It's not right that just because we are on the end of it, we don't get power restored over other people who were out for hours and we are out days. It's a recurring issue and if you feel like lowering my bill, and then I'll feel better about constantly being put on the bottom of the list. The last snow storm was appalling at how long and how many times we were bumped. I don't feel like an "owner" and get a kick out of that question. I don't even feel like a full-fledged customer. And I'm in Essex, not the middle of nowhere. As for your customer service and linemen - they are awesome, very polite, cared about our issue even though they couldn't help more.

Your communications are excellent, especially the messages from the CEO. Very well done indeed.

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Negative Responses

I think if there is going to be a blackout or outage, it would be nice if they made us more aware and if there is going to be a larger storm, as we live up in the mountains, so that we can be prepared as to know if we need a generator.

The co-op is the ONLY company I deal with that does not provide easy/modern payment facility. And, if for some reason a payment is overdue, the first notice is downright rude!

They aren't very accommodating or flexible with requests.

Your phone service when off for hours and we have an outage is TERRIBLE. In the old days it would tell us how long we could expect to be without power. It no longer does. It claims it is marking you as out by your phone number, but what if you are calling for a neighbor on another road? There is no humanity in your phone system; no "NONE OF THE ABOVE" button. No "A TREE IS DOWN AND THE LINE IS SIZZLING" button. I should not have to call 911!

Member Services/Marketing/Communications – Neutral Responses

I believe that they should make customers more aware that you can set usage alerts on My Meter, so that when you exceed a certain limit in a day, an e-mail will be sent to let me know that we have exceeded the threshold.

Billing/Finance – Negative Responses

Too bad that you discontinued cooperating with the online payment system that Passumpsic Bank uses. It used to be, I'd get the bill through my Passumpsic bill payment system. Now, in order to pay my bill, I have to look up my driver license number and my checking account number. I'm not happy that you made it harder to pay my bill!

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

The co-op is the ONLY company I deal with that does not provide easy/modern payment facility. And, if for some reason a payment is overdue, the first notice is downright rude!

We have solar collectors and the current bill does not easily tell us how much we generate or how much our neighbor gets from our group metering system. The bill needs to be redone to reflect the new way that people are generating electricity.

I don't like the wording on the bill about "if you don't pay your bill we will disconnect your service". I think the wording is threatening. I think they could do better on "hook-up" costs. Right now it costs a fortune to put in a pole. They want to put in a new line. They asked for a 50 foot easement. It ended up being about 5 acres of my land. We told them we would do it, but we wanted to be compensated. Then a letter came that they didn't need the land. I wasn't impressed, but my blood boils thinking about that, because that letter told me they wanted the land for nothing.

Billing/Finance – Neutral Response

Allow online payments with credit card.

Automatic bill pay would be nice.

I would like to pay auto with my credit cards.

If I could get on a budget program.

Make their bill much more easy to understand. It is very important to let people know what they are doing. The newsletter does that, but I think they could put more in the newsletter about them, rather than the light bulbs. I would like to know more of what is going on.

Provide for auto payment.

Rates/Fees – Positive Responses

I am sure they are working to keep their rates low. They need to keep in mind retired people and their limited income. It would be nice if they could provide a refrigerator magnet with just their telephone number and/or logo.

I think they do a pretty good job, with how rough the terrain is. I think that electric is pretty cheap overall.

Rates/Fees – Negative Responses

Lower the rates. (7 mentions)

Any way we can get ours down lower?

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

Be conservative on their rates.

Better rates.

Don't raise the price every year.

Find ways to lower my bill.

I am dissatisfied with the cost of electricity. I do try to keep it down.

I don't like the wording on the bill about "if you don't pay your bill we will disconnect your service". I think the wording is threatening. I think they could do better on "hook-up" costs. Right now it costs a fortune to put in a pole. They want to put in a new line. They asked for a 50 foot easement. It ended up being about 5 acres of my land. We told them we would do it, but we wanted to be compensated. Then a letter came that they didn't need the land. I wasn't impressed, but my blood boils thinking about that, because that letter told me they wanted the land for nothing.

I don't understand the charging more during the winter months than the summer months.

I feel they ride on this cooperative's coat tail to charge us more and they are the highest in the state for electrical charges. They are the only company that charges for all the materials in a new service. The only co-op that would waste our tax dollars on fighting against renewable sources after we just paid for their solar field. As a business owner, I have actually had customers cry and wish they could be a part of a different electrical company.

I paid for a meter box when I lived in Franklin. The box is still on the house. I would like my money. Can you help me with that?

I think by lowering our rates, you can pursue alternative energy.

I think their "overall" fees are too high. I think their winter rates are too high. Their provider fees are very high. I'm on the end of their line, so we are usually the last to get restored when there is an outage. I can't see a raise in rates for them for any reason.

I understand that we are on a back road, but it seems to always be the last to come back on. I think my bills are very high, so I contacted Efficiency Vermont and they sent us a meter that we plugged into our appliances and said it sounded about right for what we have in our home. I feel that our electric bill is very high for what we use. We both work full time and are not using that much electricity. Their customer service is good.

I was gone overseas and while I was gone my bills have been quite high. I don't understand it. I am unhappy that I would have a high bill when no one was living here.

I wish the prices were lower.

I would like to have my bill cut down, as it is extremely high.

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

If possible, work on lowering rates.

It seems to be kind of expensive, since I pay \$90 a month when I only stay there for eight days a month.

It would be nice to get renewable energy and have the rates go down, if possible.

Keep the rates down.

Lower my bill. My same usage when I was with Green Mountain Power was almost half in a home that wasn't efficient. My new house is 2 years old and was built at max efficiency due to the fact that I'm a carpenter and in summer months I have over a \$400 bill because of air conditioning and winter averages \$250. GMP averaged \$225 all year long with more usage than I have now. I've also compared with my father's usage and his is far greater than mine with the same or less expense. Extremely unhappy with my service prices and will be installing solar.

Lower the bill.

Lower the price. I am on oxygen every day.

Lower the prices. Prices are too high.

Lower their rates for the winter. I am paying more per kilowatt in the winter.

Overall, good company, good people. I think overpriced. I have a house in Westchester County, NY under Con Ed. Con Ed is pretty much recognized as one of the highest priced electric companies in the country. When we came to Vermont, I thought our electric costs would drop but they didn't. The rate seems very similar to Con Ed so it is very high. Could have been much less had Vermont Electric Co-op gone with Hydro Quebec back 30 or more ago. One good thing was that we were able to participate in Efficiency Vermont variable rate pricing for the last couple years (18 months). That was good and did result in somewhat lower bills for us. Too bad that program will be ending this June.

Prices are MUCH higher than in neighboring states.

Rates seem high. I am also a GMP (former CVPSC) customer.

Reduce the rates.

Seasonal users should not have to pay a monthly service fee. If you are not using, you should not be paying. Is it cheaper to keep the power on or send a truck and a tech to pull the meter in the fall and reinstall the meter in the spring?

Take the energy efficient charge off the bill.

The six day blackout at our home in January 2014 was a disgrace in this day and age. The co-op rates are amongst the highest I have ever seen. I get the feeling that generating plant utilization is way too high. You have caused me to invest in a standby generator. That is how confident I am in your future performance.

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

The cost of electric is really high.

The more I conserve energy, the more you increase the rate. Everyone who doesn't conserve should pay more.

The power that services my home comes from Canada, which has a much lower rate, so why am I not receiving that lower rate?

The rates are extremely high and I can't pay much more.

The service has been wonderful. Lowering the rates would be good.

Their rates are very high. I'm alone here in my house and to have a monthly bill of \$70-\$80 a month is too high. I will go with any kind of generation that will lower my bill.

They could lower the bill, or find a cheaper source. Canada is buying all the resources that they can.

They could lower the cost.

They could reduce rates. Stop this buying "wind" stuff that is costing us more money.

They could serve me better with cheaper power.

They have gotten dramatically better over the years and we really appreciate the current CEO and the job they are doing. Unfortunately the rates keep going up. I'd like to know what their plans are for the future to stabilize the rates.

They have the highest rates in the nation. I'm across the lake at Rouses Point and they pay 30% less than we do.

They have to get my bill down. They need to offer more efficient ways to get the bill down. Be more creative.

They provide a good service for my home, but they are expensive.

They should work on their rates. They seem pretty high.

This company doesn't feel like a co-op, but just another power company that consistently raises rates. Very rare have I seen rates unchanged or go lower. I'm not really sure what, if any, the benefit is of being a co-op or regular utility company.

Try to keep rates low.

We are not full time residents of Vermont and find electricity here to be much more expensive than what we pay in Montreal. We would like them to provide a detailed break-down of all of their expenses.

We cut back on energy and they raise the rates.

We find it to be very high, compared to our state in Illinois.

Additional Comments
Rates/Fees – Negative Responses
(continued)

With a seasonal camp, where we only use power for six months of the year, the recent doubling of the service charge was troubling. We used to disconnect in the fall, now the fees no longer make this option economical. It's all part of the double standard which exists in Vermont for property owners who reside out of state.

Work on ways to lower the rates.

Rates/Fees – Neutral Responses

Do the customers who sell power back to the co-op have to pay a charge for the line usage? I have to pay a line charge.

Keep rates as low as possible while pursuing renewable power generation.

There ought to be a senior citizen discount. I would like to see VEC involved in a rent-to-own individual solar panel system for its customers, or perhaps a community wide system of solar panels for towns and cities served. I would even be willing to pay more for several years with the expectation that my monthly outlay would decrease once my solar system was paid off.

We are currently under contract with Sun Common to have three solar panels installed. As a longtime customer of the co-op, it would be nice if you waived any fees associated with hooking up. The use of solar will benefit all of us. Also, I would like to say how much we appreciated the co-op workers that came out and tried to get our power back up after the ice, rain, and snow storm this winter. They were terrific!

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Positive Response

I think they are in a very challenging period in time. I believe that the energy efficiency dollar that we spend for "Efficiency Vermont" should be looked at very carefully. However, I support energy efficiency 100% and the renewable level of efficiency we gain from them is at this time not adequate. The technology still needs work.

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Negative Responses

I would like for them to think about the social justice cost of where they get their energy. I think they could do a lot more with conservation. That is not their primary focus.

The more I conserve energy, the more you increase the rate. Everyone who doesn't conserve should pay more.

They have to get my bill down. They need to offer more efficient ways to get the bill down. Be more creative.

They need to come up with a way to help the people save who already save. There is no great savings for me when I do buy the new light bulbs. Their suggestions to me to unplug my coffeemaker because it had a clock and to get rid of my freezer. That's only going to save me a few pennies. I need ways to figure out how to save dollars.

Additional Comments
Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits
(continued)

Energy Efficiency/Energy Audits - Neutral Responses

I think going forward it is renewable energy. I think people have to be more energy efficient. The days of coal are coming to a close. Nuclear, I have mixed feelings. We have to be better stewards of the planet. That includes wind power.

I wish they would help their customers save more and help us to be more energy efficient.

The website for bill pay does not reflect a technology company on the cutting edge. I am more concerned about lower bills than renewable energy. I had an Efficiency Vermont audit performed with contractor work follow-up. It had nothing to do with Vermont Electric Co-op though. It would be nice to have VEC help customers on a small scale power generation. Given the number of outages, and the length of outages when they occur, I could not imagine having VEC and not owning a generator. I like that I can call and get an estimate of when the power will come back on. It would be nice for VEC to offer customers some device to indicate when the power comes back on after an outage so we can turn off our generators.

I think they are in a very challenging period in time. I believe that the energy efficiency dollar that we spend for "Efficiency Vermont" should be looked at very carefully. However, I support energy efficiency 100% and the renewable level of efficiency we gain from them is at this time not adequate. The technology still needs work.

Additional Services – Negative Responses

I want to make sure they don't put a Smart Meter on my house.

Additional Services – Neutral Responses

Need more help to people for weatherization.

Push LED lighting, perhaps through "whole house/business" customer's "one-time" buy at near co-op cost, with the customer's cost being paid over X months added onto his bill. The customer's cost could, for X months, be within Y dollars of his present (before LEDs) bill. Once past the payback period, the customer could see a lower bill while the co-op could see a smaller load. Train volunteer members to help evaluate/recommend use of LED lighting in homes of volunteer's co-op district. Such a program could produce beneficial results if it were actively pushed across the co-op's customer set. Consider a "fixture modernization" program, to make better use of LED lighting. Some old fixtures fail to make good use of LED lights.

The website for bill pay does not reflect a technology company on the cutting edge. I am more concerned about lower bills than renewable energy. I had an Efficiency Vermont audit performed with contractor work follow-up. It had nothing to do with Vermont Electric Co-op though. It would be nice to have VEC help customers on a small scale power generation. Given the number of outages, and the length of outages when they occur, I could not imagine having VEC and not owning a generator. I like that I can call and get an estimate of when the power will come back on. It would be nice for VEC to offer customers some device to indicate when the power comes back on after an outage so we can turn off our generators.

Additional Comments (continued)

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Negative Responses

E-mail is a great tool. Why wait for a weekly, monthly, quarterly paper for important issues? E-MAIL NOW.

The website for bill pay does not reflect a technology company on the cutting edge. I am more concerned about lower bills than renewable energy. I had an Efficiency Vermont audit performed with contractor work follow-up. It had nothing to do with Vermont Electric Co-op though. It would be nice to have VEC help customers on a small scale power generation. Given the number of outages, and the length of outages when they occur, I could not imagine having VEC and not owning a generator. I like that I can call and get an estimate of when the power will come back on. It would be nice for VEC to offer customers some device to indicate when the power comes back on after an outage so we can turn off our generators.

Newsletter/Information/Social Media – Neutral Responses

I would like to know what percent of power comes from Quebec or the different power sources.

Make their bill much easier to understand. It is very important to let people know what they are doing. The newsletter does that, but I think they could put more in the newsletter about them, rather than the light bulbs. I would like to know more of what is going on.

Perhaps I am just not enrolled, but I would be interested in receiving electronic updates from VEC. I do not even open snail mail anymore, so I never see the physical bill and announcements from VEC. I much prefer electronic communications these days.

They have gotten dramatically better over the years and we really appreciate the current CEO and the job they are doing. Unfortunately the rates keep going up. I'd like to know what their plans are for the future to stabilize the rates.

Renewable Energy

Don't get into wind power bologna. They don't produce enough power to pay for themselves.

I am disappointed that nuclear power is no longer viable in Vermont. I am disappointed that we are going to rely on hydro-Quebec. Eventually we will be relying on out of the country energy supply.

I am seeing a lot of difficulty in my area with people struggling. When they do renewable energy, if it would create more jobs, I would feel more like paying more since there would be more people working.

I don't like the wind tower.

I don't like windmills. I don't want to pay more for renewables if you are using windmills. I know you guys are promoting windmills, so I feel these questions are manipulative. I don't want to answer any more questions.

I feel like they lag behind Green Mountain Power for support of individual use for solar, as well as renewable energy sources. When there are outages, the period of the outage is quite long for me as a customer.

Additional Comments Renewable Energy (continued)

First off, I love you folks, but ratings on power and outages; I have to take points off. I have a place in Smugglers and every time I visit, all my clocks are blinking due to a power outage. It is SO aggravating. Also, there have been times, out of the blue, that I will be sitting there and the lights just go out. Sometimes in nice weather. But definitely in bad weather. Comment on paying more for electricity, is a negative on my part. Using solar (sun), wind, hydro water, and natural gas has been around since the creation of the earth. It is 2014 and everyone thinks this is the latest and greatest. It is great and has been proven and done for years, but due to political oil groups entertaining Congress, the whole country cannot move in a positive direction. Europe has been doing natural energy for years. So this topic could go on forever. One more item, at Smuggs in an outside closet, we have two electric meters. Why don't you folks make it just one? This was done years ago in 1960 or so, and in 2014 it still exists. Just fix it please, and NO I should not be charged. It's your idea and equipment. If it was mine I would have fixed it 20 years ago. Plus, I think that my place does not even have enough juice, as I wanted to put in a tankless water heater and could not. So equipment and power wise, I have to rate you low in taking care of it. On the same note, I have a big green ugly box that sits in front of our unit/house. Why? The cables run underground, which is great. But why a big ugly junction box in front of a house? This should be moved or eliminated. I understand your moving the mass electrical / poles / coral across the street. While you're at it, take out this ugly green box in front of the house that gives off God knows how many volts and fix the situation. Plus when it rains hard, the green ugly box sits in water, and when the cesspool over flows in the front of Smuggs, the water gathers around and hugs this box. Other than that, I commend you on all your work and taking care of things in the cold of winter. I know it's a tough job and you make it look easy. Thanks for listening.

Get rid of the windmills.

I feel they ride on this cooperative's coat tail to charge us more and they are the highest in the state for electrical charges. They are the only company that charges for all the materials in a new service. The only co-op that would waste our tax dollars on fighting against renewable sources after we just paid for their solar field. As a business owner, I have actually had customers cry and wish they could be a part of a different electrical company.

I heard that Green Mountain Electric is offering solar panels to rent to their customers to help lower their electric cost. They use the solar power to help with some of the customer's bill and then use the rest elsewhere. Sounds like a good idea.

I just want them to increase their renewable energy.

I think by lowering our rates, you can pursue alternative energy.

I think going forward it is renewable energy. I think people have to be more energy efficient. The days of coal are coming to a close. Nuclear, I have mixed feelings. We have to be better stewards of the planet. That includes wind power.

I think it's a shame we're shutting down Vermont Yankee, the nuclear power plant.

I think they are in a very challenging period in time. I believe that the energy efficiency dollar that we spend for "Efficiency Vermont" should be looked at very carefully. However, I support energy efficiency 100% and the renewable level of efficiency we gain from them is at this time not adequate. The technology still needs work.

**Additional Comments
Renewable Energy
(continued)**

I think they should do more into the hydro power.

I think they should try all they can to get nuclear power and solar power.

I think we need more renewable energy.

I would like them to be more open to their customers having solar panels at their homes.

I would like to see more solar.

I would like to see wind and solar power, and hydro, and anything renewable.

I would like Vermont Electric to help low income or fixed income people hook up to solar. I have property enough and would be willing to have them set up for my home and others on this property. We could have been off of fossil fuels at least 5 years ago.

I would support the "renewables" if they could make it available/affordable to those who make less than \$75,000 a year.

I'm trying to find a list of suppliers in the area for solar service. Could Vermont Electric provide me with a list?

It seems like I have heard of quite a few negative feedbacks of getting the solar panels. I have solar on my property. The people are not paying enough money on their bills to support the grid. They have been very supportive to the people that have the solar. I find it annoying that I am getting negative feedback from that.

It would be nice to get renewable energy and have the rates go down, if possible.

Keep rates as low as possible while pursuing renewable power generation.

No more large wind projects.

Please promote solar PV.

There ought to be a senior citizen discount. I would like to see VEC involved in a rent-to-own individual solar panel system for its customers, or perhaps a community wide system of solar panels for towns and cities served. I would even be willing to pay more for several years with the expectation that my monthly outlay would decrease once my solar system was paid off.

They could reduce rates. Stop this buying "wind" stuff that is costing us more money.

Vermont Co-op made some bad decisions, did not have good service and had a bad reputation for a long time but in the past 10 years or so the co-op learned from its mistakes and has put itself on a good track and I am happy to be a member. I am especially pleased by Dave Hallquist and his vision and openness to ideas for a better cooperative and his common sense answers to problems and complaints. I especially like that the cooperative is feeling its way into greener energy. All the cooperative employees have always been great to deal with even in the dark days! Keep up the good work.

Additional Comments
Renewable Energy
(continued)

We are currently under contract with Sun Common to have three solar panels installed. As a longtime customer of the co-op, it would be nice if you waived any fees associated with hooking up. The use of solar will benefit all of us. Also, I would like to say how much we appreciated the co-op workers that came out and tried to get our power back up after the ice, rain, and snow storm this winter. They were terrific!

We have solar collectors and the current bill does not easily tell us how much we generate or how much our neighbor gets from our group metering system. The bill needs to be redone to reflect the new way that people are generating electricity.

We need more renewable energy.

We've had issues with our solar system. Getting reimbursed for the energy we produce beyond our needs is a top issue and they should pursue that with other energies as well.

Other Comments

Concerned.

For the next survey, I suggest two changes. First, at each page indicate how much of the survey remains. Second, many of these questions should have a "does not apply" or "I don't know" response. The question about electronic device use seems irrelevant to the other questions unless you're planning to offer Internet access to your customers, in which case it should be stated that you are collecting the information for that purpose.

I don't like windmills. I don't want to pay more for renewables if you are using windmills. I know you guys are promoting windmills, so I feel these questions are manipulative. I don't want to answer any more questions.

I would like for them to think about the social justice cost of where they get their energy. I think they could do a lot more with conservation. That is not their primary focus.

No, but I have some about this survey. It is poorly designed. Some results will be meaningless. What conclusion can you reach from an average bill if you don't know how many participants in your sample are seasonal users? You should have asked about that. How can I answer the question about how long I have been an VEC customer unless I remember or research the date you added Citizens customers? "Former Citizens Customer" should have been an option for that question. What does it mean to support a rate increase that is the result of state regulation? How well informed are VEC customers likely to be about the rates of other electric utilities?

Overall, they have been a great supplier. They have improved over the years. It would be good to have another source of power, instead of relying on Canada.

The consumer has no option as to where the electricity comes from, or who they can use as a supplier. So we are basically trapped.

Build more dams with fish areas to go around the dam.

Additional Comments
Other Comments
(continued)

Continue to accept power into the grid.

I am sure they are working to keep their rates low. They need to keep in mind retired people and their limited income. It would be nice if they could provide a refrigerator magnet with just their telephone number and/or logo.

I think they should provide everybody with a generator, or provide a rebate if a person buys a generator. Keep their right-of-ways clear.

It is a second home; we are not there much.

Long survey.

On the bill there is Capital Allocations \$34. How can I benefit from this?

We are only seasonal users of Vermont Electric. We use it for our camp, so many of the questions were hard to answer.

We are summer 'users' only and over and above the basic charge, we use electricity only from April through October.

Appendix C: Questionnaire

**2014 Vermont Electric Cooperative
RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION AND CO-OP COMMITMENT SURVEY**

Final 5/28/14

INTRODUCTION:

May I please speak with the head of household who has or shares responsibility for reviewing and paying the electric utility bills? Hello, my name is _____ and I am with NRECA Market Research Services. We are conducting a confidential survey for **Vermont Electric Cooperative** on the service they provide you. Let me assure you, we are not selling anything. Our survey will take about 10 minutes. May I continue now?

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

1. How long have you received your electric service from Vermont Electric Cooperative? (*tenure1*)
- 1 Less than 1 year 3 3 to 5 years 5 10 to 14 years 7 20 years or more
2 1 to 2 years 4 6 to 9 years 6 15 to 19 years 8 Don't Know/Refused
2. Now, please consider all your experiences to date with Vermont Electric. Using a 10-point scale on which "1" means "very dissatisfied" and "10" means "very satisfied," how satisfied are you with Vermont Electric Cooperative? (*satis*)
- Very dissatisfied | 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Satisfied

Satisfaction and Performance Ratings

3. Now, again on a 5-point scale where 1 means "very poor" and 5 means "excellent," how would you rate Vermont Electric Co-op's performance on the following? (**Randomize after b.**)
- | On ... | Very Poor | | | | Excellent | DK |
|---|-----------|---|---|---|-----------|----|
| a. The overall customer service they provide (<i>cust_svc</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| b. Delivering good value for the money (<i>value</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| c. Resolving any issues or problems (<i>resolve</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| d. Having professional employees | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| e. Demonstrating concern for customers' best interests | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| f. Communicating with you and keeping you informed (<i>communic</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| g. Operating with concern for the environment (<i>environ</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| h. Supporting the local community (<i>community</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| i. The speed and efficiency of responding to customers (<i>respond2</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| j. The courtesy, understanding and helpfulness of employees to your inquiries or problems (<i>courtesy</i>) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Contact

4. In the past year, did you contact VERMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE for any reason?
1 Yes 2 No (**Skip to Q.8**)
5. What was the REASON for the most recent call or visit you made?
___Reason (**specify**) ___Don't Know/Refused
6. How many TIMES did you contact the co-op concerning this issue/reason?
1 2 3-4 5-6 7-9 10+ ___Don't Know/Refused
7. Based on your contact with Vermont Electric, was your experience much better, somewhat better, about what you expected, somewhat worse, or much worse than you expected? (*cntceval*)
- 1 Much worse 4 Somewhat worse 3 As expected 2 Somewhat better 1 Much better

Electric Service Performance

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

On ...	Very Poor					Excellent	DK
a. Keeping blinks and momentary outages to a minimum (<i>limit_blink</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
b. Keeping the number of longer outages to a minimum (<i>limit_outg</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
c. The reliability of service and frequency of interruptions (<i>elec_svc</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
d. The restoration of power after an outage (<i>restore2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
e. Keeping you informed on the status of outages (<i>outinfo2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
f. Providing consistent voltage without surges or brownouts (<i>pwr_qd2</i>)	1	2	3	4	5	6	

Rates and Fees

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

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

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

1 Higher 2 Lower 3 About the same 4 Not aware

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

15. Would you support an electric rate increase if it were caused by Vermont state requirements to increase the amount of renewables in our portfolio of electric generation sources?
1 Yes 2 No 3 Don't know
16. If electricity from renewable energy sources were not available at the same rates you are paying now, how much more would you be willing to pay, if anything, to get this renewable power? Would you pay ... **[Stop when respondent agrees]** (greenpay)
1 \$20 more per month 3 \$10 more per month 5 \$3 more, or 7 Don't Know/Refused
2 \$15 more per month 4 \$5 more per month 6 Nothing more per month

Cooperative Commitment

17. Do you view yourself as a member-owner or as a customer of your electric co-op, or both? (mem_id2)
1 Member/owner 2 Customer 3 Both 4 Don't Know / Refused

Communications

18. How often do you read the quarterly newsletter called "Co-op Life"?
1 always 2 usually 3 sometimes 4 rarely 5 never/don't receive it
19. How often would you like to receive email communications from VEC?
1 weekly 2 every-other-week 3 monthly 4 quarterly 5 less often than 4 times/year
20. What types of devices do you use to connect to the internet? (READ LIST – select all that apply)
1 Personal computer or laptop
2 Cell phone or smartphone
3 Tablet, Netbook, iPad, or e-book readers
4 Do not access the internet
21. Do you participate in an online social media group such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, or YouTube?
Yes No (**Skip to Q22**)
22. Which ones? _____
23. (If Q21 = Facebook, ask:) Were you aware that Vermont Electric Cooperative is on Facebook? 1 Yes 2 No

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

24. Into which category does your age fall? (ageresp) 1 Under 25 3 35 to 44 5 55 to 64
2 25 to 34 4 45 to 54 6 65 or older
25. How many people live in your household including yourself? (hh_num) 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more
26. What is your current employment status? (employmt) 5 Student
1 Work full-time 3 At home full-time family care giver 6 Not employed, not looking
2 Work part-time 4 Retired 7 Not employed but looking
27. What is your average monthly electric bill? (bill3) 1 \$50 or less 3 \$101 - \$150 5 \$201 to \$250
2 \$51 - \$100 4 \$151 - \$200 6 \$251 to \$300
7 Over \$300
28. Pre-coded geographic areas from co-op database/member files: _____ [DO NOT ASK]

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

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

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