

News Release



Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas

Mel Coleman of North Arkansas Electric elected as NRECA president

Little Rock, Ark. — Feb. 23, 2015 — Mel Coleman, CEO of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative of Salem, was elected as the president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) board of directors during the organization's 2015 Annual Meeting. NRECA is the largest trade association based in Washington, D.C.

"I am humbled and honored to hold this office and represent the interests of electric cooperative members across the nation," Coleman said. "The cooperative movement is alive and stronger than ever thanks to the thousands of dedicated employees and millions of loyal members across the United States."

Coleman, who began his career at North Arkansas Electric in 1988, said that although technology has evolved, the mission of the electric cooperatives remains the same as it was in the 1930s and 1940s. "Electric cooperatives are focused on providing reliable, affordable electric service to members with locally elected board members providing leadership to the nation's more than 900 electric cooperatives," he said.

During his two-year term Coleman said he plans to address strategic areas that are impacting the locally owned electric cooperatives, while providing additional strength in expanding international electrification efforts.

"Our international efforts are comparable to the beginning of America's electric cooperatives about 75 years ago," Coleman said. "The cooperatives provided electricity to those that otherwise would not be served. The result is a higher quality of life for present and future generations. We are very fortunate in our nation. The international electrification efforts serve to better lives of those in need in 26 countries around the globe and share our success."

Coleman and his wife, Debbie, have two sons and four grandchildren. He has served in numerous national, state and local leadership roles during his career.

North Arkansas Electric Cooperative, was incorporated in 1939 and serves more than 30,000 members in Baxter, Fulton, Izard, Lawrence, Marion, Sharp and Stone counties. Based in Salem, the cooperative also has district offices in Ash Flat and Mountain Home.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association is the national service organization that represents the nation's more than 900 private, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million people in 47 states

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to approximately 500,000 homes, farms and businesses in Arkansas and surrounding states.

For additional information, contact:

Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, 501.570.2296 or rob.roedel@aecc.com
www.aecc.com

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