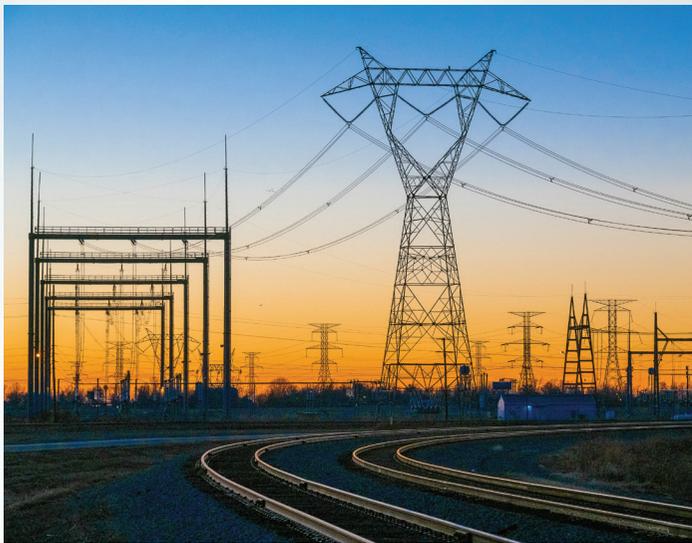


**ASSOCIATED ELECTRIC**

*Member-owned,  
member-focused*

# Reliable, affordable, responsible electricity



**Above:** Associated and the six transmission cooperatives built and maintain one of the largest co-op grids in the nation, ensuring reliability.  
**Below:** This concrete tank allows fly ash to be recycled and water reused at the Thomas Hill Energy Center.



## Matching responsible generation with the need for reliable, affordable power

by Mark Viguet | [info@ruralmissouri.coop](mailto:info@ruralmissouri.coop)

**F**rom the White House, a proposed plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 and create a carbon-free power sector by 2035 means power generators like Associated Electric Cooperative must intensify efforts to maintain reliability and affordability with responsibly generated electricity.

Associated is owned by and provides wholesale power to six regional transmission cooperatives who provide that power to 51 local electric distribution cooperative systems in Missouri, southeast Iowa and northeast Oklahoma that serve 2.1 million member-consumers. Their priorities are clear.

“Our mission mirrors the priorities of the member-owners served by our system, who want reliable, low-cost electricity,” said David Tudor, Associated’s CEO and general manager. “We have successfully navigated many changes in presidential administrations, policies and regulations over many years and will continue to do the right things, for the right reasons, at the right times.”

### Renewable leadership

A cornerstone of any plan to reduce carbon includes increasing renewable power sources like wind, which are variable, not reliable — only available when the wind is blowing or, in the case of solar power, when the sun is shining. Today, no battery technology exists that duplicates the reliability of traditional generation like nuclear, coal or natural gas plants.

Associated has been a renewable power leader for Missouri, bringing the first utility-scale wind farms to the state in 2007 by contracting to buy all the power produced by the wind farms. Since then, Associated has increased its total to eight wind farms. The two most recent wind



photos courtesy Associated Electric Cooperative

Associated added about 470 megawatts of wind energy in 2020, taking its contracted wind energy resources to more than 1,240 megawatts of nameplate capacity. This led to new wind production records in 2020.

farms were added in 2020. Hydropower is another Associated renewable resource, purchased through a long-term contract with the federal government.

### Reliability concerns

“Associated’s renewable resources have been carefully located and integrated into our owner’s transmission systems so they can be supported with reliable coal and natural gas plant resources,” Tudor said. “You can find no greater example of the value of those 24/7 power sources — coal and natural gas — than the February winter storm, where cooperatives avoided rolling blackouts as utilities all around our system put customers in the dark.”

### Affordability a key member priority

Rural America needs affordable power supply for their homes, farms and businesses. That much is plain from triennial survey results from members where they say it’s one of their top priorities — and concerns. Associated ranks among the lower cost wholesale power suppliers in the country and that is by design, not accident.

“When we make decisions, cost is near the top of the list: does this make good economic sense for our members?” Tudor explained. “By keeping that goal prominent, we’ve delivered power that is affordable while also generating responsible power with a balanced resource mix.”

### Implementing a realistic plan will take time and money

Associated is working hard to preserve member benefits in a changing industry with increasing challenges. The cooperative has been educating state and federal legislators about the realities of an overly aggressive White House plan and the choices power generation companies face.

“Technology that doesn’t exist today must be developed to store renewable energy effectively and affordably, while high-voltage transmission networks need upgrades to handle the changing generation mix reliably,” Tudor said. “Both of those key elements will take time and money, and lots of both. We are working to make sure our legislators understand this.”

*For more information about Associated Electric and its responsible generation efforts, visit [www.aeci.org](http://www.aeci.org).*

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— **David Tudor, CEO of Associated Electric Cooperative**