MAY 2021 | Vol. 44, No. 05

ENERGYLINES

SELECTING SAFE SOFTWARE

WHERE BAD CODE EXISTS, A SCORECARD CAN HELP {PAGE 3}

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DISASTER RECOVERY

Robust plans can save time, money and lives. PAGE 5

TECHNOLOGY

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SCIENTIST'S WORK UNDERPINNED ENERGY-EFFICIENT LED LIGHT BULBS

Isamu Akasaki was fascinated with crystal material – specifically those colored blue. In Japan, he began his research with lasers and was part of the team that developed Blue-ray technology, according to the Wall Street Journal. Akasaki then gravitated toward the crystals used in light-emitting diodes. He and another scientist, Hiroshi Amano, developed a blue LED, a difficult color to reproduce, earning them a Nobel Prize. His research paved the way for the LEDs used in energy-efficient light bulbs. Akasaki died of pneumonia at age 92 in April.

INDUSTRY NEWS

CFC announces Andrew Don as new chief executive

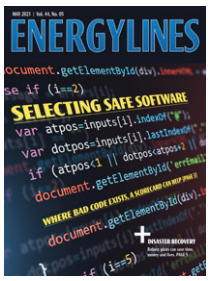
Directors of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp. (CFC) have promoted Chief Financial Officer J. Andrew Don to be its next CEO.

Don will start his new role on May 3, replacing longtime CEO Sheldon Petersen, who announced in July that he planned to retire this year.

"Clearly, Andrew's deep knowledge of the financial services industry, well-established relationships with the investor community and rating agencies, and fundamental understanding of the rural electric cooperative business model will ensure CFC maintains its strong position and can weather the most challenging future market conditions, ensuring our members have the capital they need to be successful," said CFC Board President Alan Wattles.

ON THE COVER

Selecting software vendors through the use of a scorecard is helping Hoosier Energy protect its network while providing valuable solutions for its workforce and member cooperatives.



$2 trillion

INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The infrastructure plan announced by President Biden would affect electric co-ops through investments to develop energy technologies.

Plan backs broadband, EV tax credits

President Joe Biden has announced a $2 trillion infrastructure and jobs plan that would affect electric cooperatives by increasing investment in broadband and electric vehicles.

A key provision would make not-for-profit electric co-ops eligible for the first time for direct-pay investment tax credits and production tax credits for clean energy generation and storage projects.

"For far too long, electric cooperatives have not had comparable incentives to develop energy technologies," said Louis Finkel, NRECA's senior vice president for government relations. "This has held back innovation."

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association will work with lawmakers to help craft the details that are most important to co-ops CEO Jim Matheson said.

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Strategic Priorities

Eight ways Hoosier Energy works to succeed

These are the strategic priorities that the Hoosier Energy workforce strives to achieve every day.

- EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES
- MEMBER FOCUS
- RISK MANAGEMENT
- GOVERNANCE
- COMPETITIVE RATES
- COST MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE
- SUPPLY PORTFOLIO
- OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

©Motortrend.com

RIVIAN DRIVEN: Companies like Rivian Automotive are building all-electric delivery vans for e-commerce giants like Amazon.

The electric vehicles that deliver

RURAL COMMUNITY LOGISTICS COULD BENEFIT FROM EV GROWTH

Rain or shine, FedEx, UPS, Amazon and USPS vans zip around town delivering packages to businesses and residences. These vehicle fleets rack up thousands of miles each year. That is why it makes financial sense to electrify them and reduce lifetime operational costs.

Until recently, advancements in delivery van technology has largely gone unnoticed in the automotive industry. As the pandemic turbo-charged e-commerce, putting a spotlight on package delivery, things are changing and one company is leading the way.

Earlier this year, Rivian Automotive raised $2.65 billion at a $27.6 billion valuation, according to the Wall Street Journal. Driving growth in Rivian is its all-electric delivery vehicle.

Amazon has invested in the company and ordered 100,000 vans. The retail giant is moving fast in the all-electric delivery category, so is FedEx. With their plans to be carbon neutral worldwide by 2040, FedEx has set aside $2 billion to make it happen. Like Amazon, their transition from fossil fuel-powered vehicles is driven by an electrified fleet.

The growth and application of electric vehicles (EVs) in rural Indiana is under review by the Emerging Energy Resources team at Hoosier Energy. They are currently looking at several Direct Current (DC) fast charging and vehicle-to-grid pilot programs to better understand the technology and implications for service providers and consumers alike.

Development of a DC fast charging network is important because this is how consumers and industry can quickly charge an EV. These systems bypass the need to convert alternating current into direct current, allowing energy to be sent directly into a battery. This takes charge times down to an hour or less to reach 80 percent charge, based on battery size and ambient temperature.

From vans to school buses, the growing EV segment focused on rural community logistics might be a contender to deliver DC fast charging solutions. EL

The ways software and networks are coded matter

A scorecard can help

As organizations utilize more digital services, they can be exposed to cyber attacks if vendors used are not properly vetted. Bad actors are sneaky, sometimes persistent, and can move around networks undetected – SolarWinds can attest to that.

If a digital service connects to a company's network, bad actors can use that as a back door into the entire system. That is why it is important to vet service providers to be sure they have a strong supply chain process in place — including the companies they do business with.

Last year, Hoosier Energy's Communications Coordinator Eric Neely and Video Producer Chris Johnson set out to find a solution to manage the department's digital content, including

> **"Through this process, we were able to find a system that is more than a win-win, it is a secure-win."**
>
> **ERIC NEELY,** Communications Coordinator, Design and Digital Media

branding and image assets. Knowing they wanted to use cloud-based software, known as Software as a Service (SaaS), they found vendors whose software runs through any web browser.

"We wanted the system selected to not only help us work smarter and faster as a team, but also be one that does not pose a security risk for the company," said Neely.

To find out what requirements are needed for new software, Neely reached out to Hoosier Energy's Manager of Cybersecurity and Network Richie Field. He learned there is a cybersecurity scorecard that helps pinpoint secure platforms.

"This helps identify the probability of an issue and its impact so the level of risk can be determined," said Field.

This is a tool that helps the co-op select vendors who are doing their due diligence when they build their systems. Based on the responses given, it can be determined which vendors take a serious look at security when they build their network.

The scorecard is part of a two-pronged approach in place at Hoosier Energy. Contract language is one aspect vendors are reviewed on. This ensures the co-op is contacted when a vendor has a breach and establishes how the response will be coordinated.

The second component is an assessment to make sure hardware and software used has been properly vetted. This is how SaaS system vendors will be reviewed and approved to use.

"When I reached out to vendors about completing the scorecard, some said they are no longer interested in our business. That is when I knew the strength this analysis brings," said Neely.

This review, consisting of up to 280 questions, analyzes how the software is built, and also how hardware, firmware and open-source coding is originated and authenticated.

"Through this process, we were able to find a system that is more than a win-win, it is a secure-win," said Neely. EL

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

A GOOD RECOVERY PLAN CAN SAVE TIME, MONEY AND EVEN LIVES

From tornadoes to cyberattacks, the world is not always as safe as we'd like it to be.

Unfortunately, we've seen from places like Texas what can happen when millions of people are cut off from power. More than 100 people lost their lives in the state this winter due to hypothermia, carbon monoxide poisoning, fires and other accidents.

That's one reason why five co-ops have made the move to house their disaster recovery centers at Hoosier Energy headquarters. The service, which is offered at no cost to members, gives consumers the peace of mind of knowing that there is a robust plan and system in place in case disaster strikes.

"Before disaster recovery we would have been down for weeks," said Steve Moore, business manager at Harrison REMC. "Now that we have this set up, we can get things basically back right away."

The threat is real — both from nature and from humans.

Weather-related power outages cost the U.S. economy an estimated $200 billion from 2008 to 2012, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

Here in Indiana, we are all too aware of the danger weather can pose. There have been more than 1,300 tornadoes in the state since 1950, according to the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. In 2019 alone, 32 tornadoes were recorded, many touching down in central and southern portions of the state.

"When we think about disasters we typically think about things like tornadoes or fires but it really covers cyber-attacks too," said Rodney Brewer, the IT Coordinator for Harrison REMC.

Equally alarming to the threat posed by severe weather is the havoc that can be caused by other humans. In fact, worldwide cybercrime costs are expected to hit $6 trillion this year, according to Cybercrime Magazine.

Hoosier Energy is not only aware of these threats, it took action several years ago to help mitigate them.

"We met with co-ops to assess their needs and found that disaster recovery and cybersecurity were key issues we could help with," said Senior Manager of Cybersecurity and Network Richie Field.

"Disaster recovery centers are a form of insurance... that we hope we don't ever have to use."

STEVE MOORE, Business Manager, Harrison REMC

The result is that the G&T made available the ability to help member co-ops with disaster recovery — and did so at no cost.

Today, Hoosier Energy offers intrusion detection system and external vulnerability scans to its members. Also available are digital forensics and incident response (DFIR) from a third party. Members also have access to the KnowBe4 security awareness platform that helps prioritize, triage and manage potentially malicious email messages.

Moore said that, before making the move to what Hoosier Energy offers, Harrison REMC relied on an outside vendor for its disaster recovery center — at a cost of about $700 a month. By utilizing Hoosier Energy instead, his co-op saves more than $8,000 a year.

Harrison REMC has not yet had to take advantage of its new disaster recovery center — and Moore would like it to stay that way.

"Disaster recovery centers are a form of insurance," he said, "that we hope we don't ever have to use."

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MEMBER FOCUS

Public relations professional joins communications team

RETIRED PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER TO SERVE MEMBER COOPERATIVES, G&T

Hoosier Energy's communications team has a new face on the public relations and media front, but he isn't a new face among the media. Curt Durnil served the Indiana State Police for 26 years and retired as its public information officer late last year to join Hoosier Energy.

"I love the fact that this has been such a smooth and comfortable transition from working for the state," Durnil said. "The whole idea of service and being there for others, to be here for the members, just as I was for the general public over a 26-year period, will continue. I want to help the members with whatever they need – we're here for them."

Durnil

In his new position, Durnil will help members with media requests, whether that's from mainstream or industry media. He is available to facilitate or give an interview, as well as help member cooperative personnel prepare for an interview. That could involve creating talking points, rehearsing with mock interviews or writing and editing press releases. He is also available to attend community or other public relations events.

As for news releases, Durnil said that's his specialty. "Whether creating or editing, bouncing ideas off one another or reviewing releases for potential problems, I'm happy to help in any way the member wants."

Durnil is also a bit of a social media guru, with more than 8,000 followers on his public Facebook page.

If a member wants an event shared to that page, he said he's happy to oblige.

A lifelong Bloomington resident, Durnil played basketball in high school and college – at Bethel University in Tennessee – and then graduated from Indiana University. His plan was to teach and coach basketball, but a short stint in the classroom helped him realize teaching wasn't for him. So, he decided to follow in his father's and brother's footsteps and pursue law enforcement. "You can imagine what my sweet mom must have gone through having her husband and two sons serving at the same time," he said.

At Hoosier Energy, Durnil is excited to continue as he did at ISP – serving the needs of others. He explained, "For the members, I want to be their go-to person when it comes to all things media and public relations, meaning that if they have a question about anything, they know that they can text me, call me, email me, and know that I'm going to be getting back with them as soon as possible." EL

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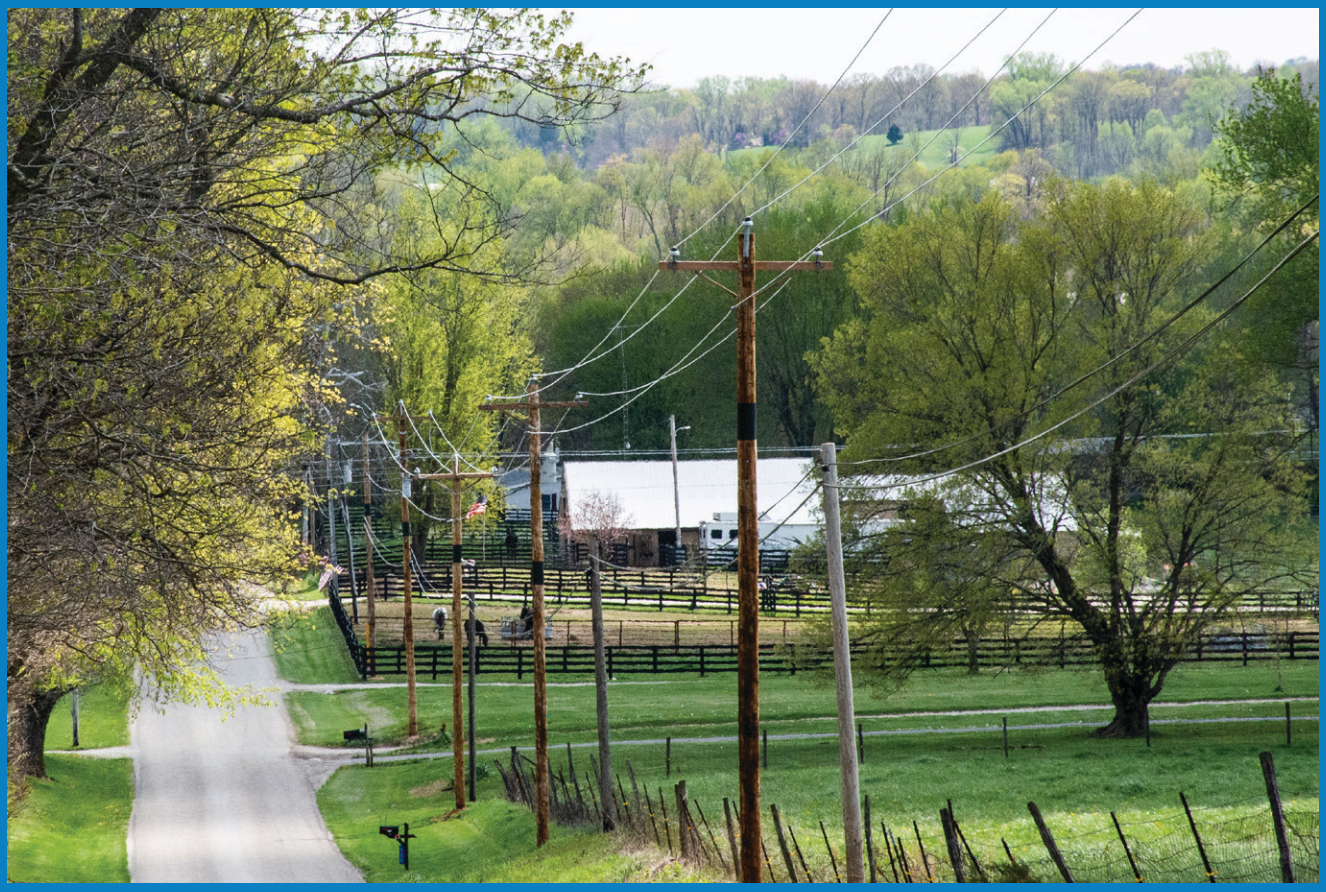

Spring sprouts in Southern Indiana

Along a beautiful rural road lined with power lines in Lawrence County, spring sprouts as the landscape turns a vibrant green. This time of year shows how co-ops have continued their vegetation management programs to keep trees away from powerlines – helping improve grid reliability.