



SAN MIGUEL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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Community Benefits Plan (CBP)

Frequently Asked Questions

San Miguel Electric Cooperative is committed to keeping employees, members and community stakeholders informed throughout the development of its Community Benefits Plan (CBP). Below are answers to common questions about the CBP and the USDA Empowering Rural America (New ERA) Program.

What is the Empowering Rural America (New ERA) Program?

The Empowering Rural America (New ERA) Program is a federal initiative administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help rural electric cooperatives invest in reliable, affordable and sustainable energy systems. The program supports projects that strengthen rural infrastructure, support long-term energy affordability and create economic opportunities in rural communities.

What is a Community Benefits Plan (CBP)?

A Community Benefits Plan (CBP) is a required component of the USDA New ERA program. The CBP outlines how the Cooperative will engage stakeholders and support programs that create meaningful, long-term benefits for employees, members and surrounding communities.

Why is San Miguel Electric Cooperative developing a CBP?

As part of its participation in the USDA New ERA program, San Miguel Electric Cooperative is developing a CBP to identify opportunities that support workforce development, community engagement, economic opportunity and long-term community investment.

Who helped develop the CBP?

The CBP is being developed with input from Cooperative leadership, employees, community stakeholders, local partners and other impacted groups. Stakeholder engagement is an important part of the process and helps ensure the plan reflects local priorities and community needs.

Who may benefit from CBP programs or initiatives?

CBP-related efforts may benefit Cooperative employees and their families, Cooperative members, local communities, workforce development programs, skilled trades training initiatives, rural populations and community partners.

What types of programs or investments may be included in the CBP?

Potential focus areas may include workforce development, apprenticeship opportunities, employee education and training, community engagement initiatives, energy affordability programs, economic development partnerships and support for rural and underserved communities.

Will the CBP affect electric reliability?

San Miguel Electric Cooperative remains committed to maintaining reliable and affordable electric service. The CBP is intended to complement the Cooperative's broader operational and infrastructure goals while creating additional community benefits connected to New ERA-supported investments.

How can employees and community members provide input?

San Miguel Electric Cooperative welcomes feedback throughout the CBP development process. Employees, stakeholders and community members may have opportunities to participate through surveys, meetings, outreach events or direct engagement with the Cooperative.

When will CBP programs begin?

Implementation timelines will depend on USDA approvals, project development schedules, partnership coordination and funding processes. Some initiatives may begin shortly after project approvals, while others may be implemented over time.

Will the CBP create workforce or training opportunities?

One goal of the CBP is to support workforce development and strengthen opportunities for current and future workers in the energy sector and related industries. This may include training partnerships, apprenticeships, employee development opportunities and collaboration with educational institutions.

Does the CBP change the Cooperative's mission?

No. San Miguel Electric Cooperative's core mission remains: providing reliable and affordable electric service to its members. The CBP is an additional effort tied to the New ERA program that supports community-focused investments and long-term rural economic opportunity.

Where can I learn more about the CBP?

Additional information, updates and engagement opportunities will be shared by San Miguel Electric Cooperative as the Community Benefits Plan development process continues.

For additional information regarding the Community Benefits Plan, please contact San Miguel Electric Cooperative or visit www.smeci.net/index-cbp for future CBP updates posted by the Cooperative.