



GREAT RIVER ENERGY periodically surveys member-consumers served by our 28 member-owner cooperatives to measure opinions on important energy issues, identify member expectations and better understand member views. Detailed below are some key findings of the 2019 research.

Optimism remains strong, but down from 2016

- **66%** believe Minnesota is headed in the right direction, down from 85% in 2016
- **Access to affordable health care** is the most important issue currently facing the state (27% of respondents), followed by **controlling taxes and spending** (19%). **Developing reliable and affordable sources of energy** ranked last among eight issues included (3%).

Climate change is a concern, though not Minnesota’s highest environmental priority

- **42%** say climate change is a very serious issue facing our country; another 48% say it’s a concern.
- Improving water quality was identified as the top environmental priority (25% of respondents), followed by encouraging more renewable energy (22%). 9% stated climate change and reducing carbon emissions as their top priority.

Reliability is the most valued attribute of electricity

On a scale of 1 to 10, respondents rated five attributes of electric service:

Reliable: 8.77 ▪ Safe: 8.48 ▪ Affordable: 8.29 ▪ Energy efficient: 7.95 ▪ Clean: 7.65

Members are concerned about future energy prices

	SOME CONCERN	VERY CONCERNED
2019	64%	19%
2016	22%	5%
2014	43%	12%
2012	57%	22%
2010	76%	23%

33% of respondents said their electric bills have increased.

Cooperative members support renewables

- **89%** of respondents said moving toward more renewable sources of energy has been a good idea.
- When asked which energy source they most wanted to encourage, members’ top three were: Solar (**36%**) ▪ Natural gas (**18%**) ▪ Wind (**14%**)

Cooperative members support at least 50% carbon-free electricity by 2050

CARBON-FREE GOAL	SUPPORT
Less than 50%	22%
50%	45%
67%	9%
75%	9%
90%	7%
100%	3%
No Answer	5%

- 76% support adding transmission for the development of wind power
- 58% support classifying coal plants as carbon-free sources if carbon capture technology becomes economical

Members trust cooperatives first on their most important energy issues

SOURCE	ENSURE RELIABILITY	KEEP ENERGY AFFORDABLE	TRANSITION TO CARBON-FREE QUICKLY
Electric cooperatives	55%	48%	47%
Environmental groups	16%	19%	29%
Advocacy groups	15%	16%	14%
Major employers	8%	7%	6%
Local elected officials	5%	10%	3%

METHODOLOGY: The study contains the results of a survey administered to 800 randomly selected adult residents of the Great River Energy service area in Minnesota. Professional interviewers conducted the survey via landline and cell phone calls from Sept. 4-23, 2019. The average interview was 21 minutes. The completed sample was aligned to the demographics of the GRE service area, and results are projectable to a margin of error of +3.5% at a 95% confidence. Rapp Strategies, Inc. designed the survey and prepared the analysis, and the Morris Leatherman Company conducted the interviews, managed the sample and tabulated the data.

GREAT RIVER ENERGY: Great River Energy is a not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by its 28 member cooperatives. They generate and transmit electricity for those members, located in the outer-ring suburbs of the Twin Cities up to the Arrowhead region of Minnesota and down to the farmland region in the southwestern portion of the state. A member-controlled entity, Great River Energy is governed by a democratically elected board of directors who are electric cooperative members themselves. Board members establish rates and develop policies in the best interest of Great River Energy and its members. Their member cooperatives serve more than 685,000 member-consumers — or approximately 1.7 million people. Great River Energy owns and operates 11 power plants and purchase additional power from several wind farms and other generating facilities. With about 800 employees, Great River Energy owns and operates nearly 4,800 miles of transmission line and owns or partly owns more than 100 transmission substations. Learn more at greatriverenergy.com.