

# ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE REPORT

## OCTOBER 2024



PROTECTING OUR PLANET



THRIVING COMMUNITIES



OPERATING WITH INTEGRITY



AGGREGATE



EDUCATE



ADVOCATE

REPORTING ON NOPEC'S ESG PROGRESS FOR JUNE 2022 – JUNE 2024





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## FROM THE CEO

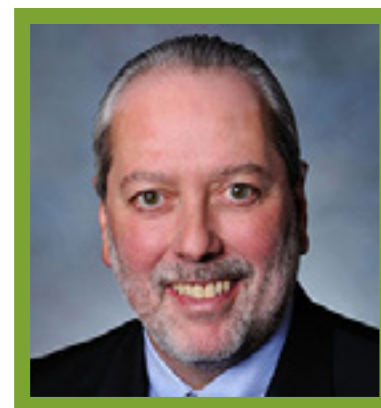
As we unveil NOPEC's latest Environmental, Social, Governance Report, I am honored and excited to share our ongoing commitment to ESG excellence. Our mission to serve our member communities is at the core of NOPEC's operations, and this report reflects our dedication to advancing sustainable practices and creating long-term value.

At NOPEC, our commitment to ESG is not just a strategic priority but a fundamental part of our identity. For nearly a quarter century, we have led in delivering competitive energy solutions while aligning our practices with the highest standards of environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and governance. Our efforts to promote cleaner energy, advocate for customer protection, and support community resilience have positioned us as a leader in governmental energy aggregation. As we grow, we remain dedicated to enhancing our sustainability strategy to encompass all aspects of ESG, ensuring our initiatives exceed community expectations.

Over the past two years, NOPEC faced significant challenges, including market volatility and regulatory scrutiny affecting our electric aggregation program. We made the difficult decision to transition over half a million NOPEC customers to the utilities' standard service to shield them from soaring costs. By temporarily moving customers away from NOPEC's aggregation, we saved individual businesses and residents hundreds of dollars on their electricity bills. This decision, while challenging, reflected our commitment to protecting our communities from unmanageable rate increases and paved the way for growth in our sustainability efforts. Our successful re-certification by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) affirmed that our actions were legal and in our customers' best interests. This situation strengthened our resilience and highlighted opportunities to enhance our advocacy and service delivery.

Looking forward, we will invest in initiatives that promote environmental sustainability, resiliency, and equity, including expanding renewable energy programs and enhancing energy efficiency for our community members. The newly established role of Director of Resiliency and Sustainability is key to this commitment, ensuring that sustainability initiatives are ambitious and effectively integrated into our overall strategy for lasting value. Social responsibility will remain a cornerstone of our strategy as we strengthen community outreach and advocacy efforts. Governance excellence will drive us as we maintain transparency, uphold ethical standards, and ensure effective management.

Our dedication to these priorities is reflected in this report. We remain committed to engaging with our communities, listening to their needs, and delivering on our promises. Together, we can build a more sustainable energy future for all. We look forward to making an even greater impact on our communities and customers.



Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck W. Keiper II".

Chuck Keiper, Executive Director & CEO

## INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR OF RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

In 2023, NOPEC welcomed Deepa Vedavyas as its first Director of Resiliency and Sustainability. Deepa brings a wealth of experience from her previous roles in government, non-profit, education, and philanthropy. Her passion for sustainability and community empowerment has been a driving force throughout her career. At the Mayor's Office of Sustainability in Cleveland, and her time at The Cleveland Foundation, she fostered a deep appreciation for strategic partnerships. These experiences have equipped her with the skills to navigate complex challenges, engage stakeholders, and implement sustainable solutions, making her an invaluable asset to NOPEC. In her role, Deepa focuses on developing strategies to enhance community resilience, engaging with local stakeholders, and creating impactful programs that advocate for policies supporting sustainability. Her role with NOPEC includes fostering peer learning, promoting sustainable solutions tailored to local challenges, and ensuring that community engagement remains at the heart of NOPEC's sustainability and resiliency efforts.



**What has been the most surprising insight that you have gained since starting at NOPEC?** I'm inspired by the trust, dedication, and passion of the NOPEC team towards the communities we serve. NOPEC's commitment to education as a catalyst for change reinforces my belief that fostering a culture of learning can drive lasting positive impacts across our communities.

**What role do you envision for community engagement in advancing NOPEC's sustainability and resiliency efforts?**

Community engagement is vital – it ensures that our initiatives are reflective of the communities we serve. By fostering open dialogue and collaborative partnerships, we can better understand community needs, empowering residents and building trust to ensure our sustainability efforts align with their values and priorities.

**What is your vision for the future of NOPEC's sustainability plan, and how do you anticipate it evolving over the next few years?**

My vision is to create an accessible and relatable framework for sustainability and resiliency across all our communities. In the coming years, we'll create a roadmap to support implementation of our commitments, and empower communities, informed by the current and future energy landscape.

**What are you most excited about as you look forward to the next 12 – 18 months with advancing this important work?**

I am particularly excited about the potential for collaboration with regional partners and innovation in our initiatives. I look forward to engaging with diverse stakeholders on new programs and empowering communities through technical assistance, exploring cutting-edge sustainability technologies, and creating more platforms for knowledge sharing.



# ABOUT THIS REPORT

Welcome to NOPEC's second ESG Report, where we address significant topics relevant to NOPEC and our stakeholders. In this report, we discuss how we have evolved our ESG strategic priorities to meet the current demands of the communities we serve and the progress we have made at NOPEC. This report serves to detail the ESG impacts of NOPEC and our associated organizations, NOPEC Inc. and the NOPEC Foundation from June 2022 – June 2024.

We have increasingly aligned our efforts with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) with a focus on advancing specific goals: Quality Education (SDG 4), Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), Climate Action (SDG 13), Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (SDG 16), and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17). We are also pleased to share how we have operated to achieve our ESG Pillars of Protecting our Planet, Thriving Communities, and Operating with Integrity. As a governmental energy aggregator, we are committed to listening objectively and communicating transparently with our stakeholders through this report and other means.





## DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY: NOPEC'S EFFORTS ARE IN LINE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

NOPEC's efforts are closely aligned with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), focusing on measurable outcomes that address key sustainability challenges such as climate action, clean energy, and equitable access to resources. By increasing our alignment to these efforts, NOPEC is committed to promoting environmental sustainability, resiliency, and equity across all member communities. This alignment ensures that NOPEC's initiatives are not only impactful but also inclusive, reflecting the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

## Affordable & Clean Energy

Advocate for legislation to make it easier and more affordable for Ohioans to live and operate sustainably while providing access to clean energy options.

## Sustainable Cities & Communities

Provide resources, programs, and educational tools to help communities become more resilient and sustainable.

## Peace, Justice, & Strong Institutions

Advocate for Ohio energy consumers by working to prevent unreasonable utility rate increases and unfair regulation while still preserving consumer energy choice.



## Quality Education

Provide educational resources to help residents and small businesses effectively manage their energy usage, conserve energy, and understand their energy choices, while also offering educational opportunities for the decision-makers of tomorrow.



## Reduced Inequalities

Reduce energy cost disparities by offering stable, affordable pricing; easy enrollment; and protection from predatory retail suppliers, thereby ensuring equitable rates and services to all our member communities.



## Climate Action

Meet communities where they are to become more sustainable and reduce their carbon footprint.

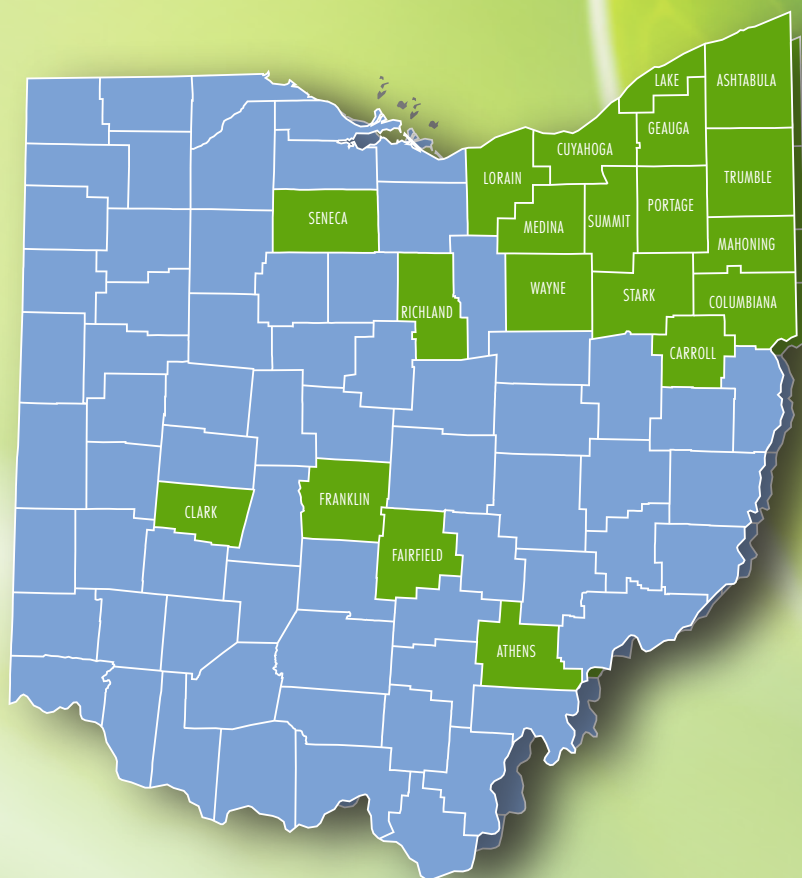


## Partnerships for the Goals

Foster partnerships with local communities, governments, and energy providers to deliver equitable and sustainable energy solutions, while strengthening efforts for enhanced community resilience.



Serving  
**240** Ohio  
Communities  
in **20** Counties



## ESG AT NOPEC

### 2023 STATS

(as of December 31, 2023)

**23**  
EMPLOYEES

**287,000**  
RECS RETIRED

**\$22,570,116**  
REVENUES\*

**\$18,300,922**  
EXPENSES\*

**240** Member  
Communities  
**OVER**  
**887,000**  
Electric and Natural  
Gas Accounts

**210**  
ELECTRIC AGGREGATION  
MEMBER COMMUNITIES

**204**  
NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION  
MEMBER COMMUNITIES

**OVER \$4,500,000**  
IN EFFICIENCY GRANTS  
AWARDED TO COMMUNITIES

**OVER \$27,000,000**  
EARTHERA® CONTRIBUTION BY  
NEXTERA ENERGY RESOURCES

\*unaudited

## ABOUT NOPEC

NOPEC is a public energy aggregator that works to lower energy costs while providing additional benefits, programs, and services for member communities, their residents, and their small businesses. By negotiating competitive electricity and natural gas supply contracts on behalf of its member communities, NOPEC provides affordable prices to its customers. NOPEC is Ohio's largest governmental energy aggregator enabling 240 communities to purchase energy in bulk as a group of residents and small businesses.

## NOPEC'S MISSION

NOPEC exists to serve our member communities and customers by aggregating, educating, and advocating for them.



# NOPEC'S SUSTAINABILITY MISSION

As a non-profit driven council of governments, NOPEC is uniquely positioned to support Ohio communities with attaining their aspirational sustainability and affordability goals. By combining our organizational efforts with the power of numbers, we work together to design and implement customized policies and action plans for deeper energy and carbon savings by engaging households, community leaders, regulators, and businesses.

As Ohio's largest governmental energy aggregator, NOPEC drives collective climate action, empowering communities with innovative, tailored energy solutions while embracing the diverse needs of each community for a sustainable and resilient future. Our strategy is summarized in three complimentary ESG pillars in support of our three key areas of service: Aggregate, Educate, and Advocate. These ESG pillars include Protecting our Planet (environmental), Thriving Communities (social), and Operating with Integrity (governance):



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## PROTECTING OUR PLANET

We provide solutions that can create a positive environmental impact through investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency programs and policies.

These include:

- Renewable Energy
- Energy Efficiency
- Sustainable Programming & Advocacy



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## THRIVING COMMUNITIES

We support our members through economic and community investment and educational outreach programs.

These include:

- Economic & Community Investment
- Education
- Consumer Protection & Advocacy



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## OPERATING WITH INTEGRITY

We are uniquely organized to provide public accountability, accessibility, and transparency. Operating with integrity is an essential part of maintaining and strengthening our many efforts and initiatives.

These include:

- Operational Footprint
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Transparency & Governance

# BENEFITS OF ENERGY AGGREGATION

Competitive prices and price stability

Can be used to promote transition to renewable energy

Local control

Can spur economic development and renewable energy development

Greater transparency and accountability

Expands and elevates consumers' choices

## WHAT IS ENERGY AGGREGATION AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Energy aggregation is when a community negotiates energy supply contracts collectively to secure better rates and terms for electricity and natural gas on behalf of residents and businesses. This approach helps lower energy costs, stabilize rates, and support renewable energy initiatives. Energy aggregation, also known as Community Choice Aggregation, is available in Ohio and only nine other states in the U.S.



### ENERGY AGGREGATOR

Negotiates with energy suppliers on behalf of the aggregation members.



### SUPPLY

Energy from multiple sources is supplied to the energy grid for customers to use.



### DELIVERY

The local utility that maintains the utility lines delivers the energy to homes and businesses.



### CUSTOMER

Receives competitively priced energy and other benefits from the bulk purchasing power of the large group of customers.



## NOPEC'S ENERGY PARTNER: NEXTERA ENERGY

At NOPEC, we are careful to work with partners with the utmost integrity and ethical practices when it comes to financial and risk decisions. As a result, NOPEC consistently uses a rigorous selection process, requiring that prospective energy partners adhere to our industry-leading financial, legal, operational, ethical, and insurance criteria.

NOPEC currently partners with NextEra Energy Services Ohio, LLC (NESO) as the natural gas and electricity supplier for our aggregation. As the largest developer of utility scaled solar power in the world and parent company to NESO, NextEra Energy Inc. is at the forefront of creating a sustainable energy future that is affordable, efficient, and clean for all.

Learn more about our partner NextEra Energy at:

[Energy Sustainability Report](#)

[NextEra Energy Sustainability Website](#)



- Industry leader in Real Zero goal to eliminate all carbon emissions by 2045
- Supports Community Solar legislation
- Global leader in utility-scale renewable generation at 37,000 MW annually
- One of the nation's largest capital infrastructure investors with presence in 49 U.S. States and Canada
- Since 2005, NextEra's energy improvements in CO2 emissions have resulted in an 88% increase in clean generation and a 61% reduction in CO2 emissions (as of 2022).
- In the U.S., NextEra Energy is the third-largest energy company and largest clean energy company.
- Named on Newsweek's list of "America's Most Responsible Companies" in 2024, for the fourth year in a row
- Named on Fortune Magazine's "World's Most Admired Companies" in the electric and gas utilities industry for 2024
- NextEra reports sustainability disclosures through: SASB, TCFD, Edison Electric Institute (EEI), SDGs



## PROTECTING OUR PLANET

As Ohio's largest governmental energy aggregator, NOPEC drives collective climate action, empowering communities with innovative, tailored energy solutions while meeting the diverse needs of each community for a sustainable and resilient future. We are uniquely situated to provide renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions that support consumers' efforts to save money and reduce their contribution to climate change.

We also recognize our unique responsibility as the largest energy aggregator in Ohio to address increased concerns regarding the energy sector's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and climate impacts. With this perspective, we have made significant long-term commitments to address our impact on the planet and the communities we serve.

In 2023,  
NOPEC retired

287,000

RECs for a total of

9.9 million

RECs retired since 2017.

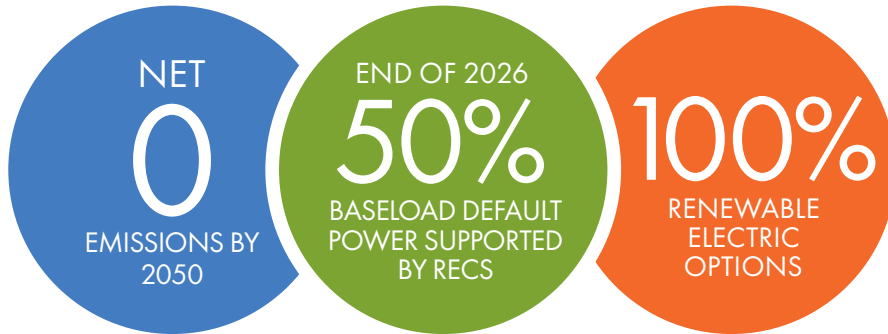






## NET ZERO COMMITMENT

At NOPEC, we are taking immediate and meaningful action to address climate change impacts, and, as an energy aggregator, we take that responsibility seriously. In early 2024, we set new emissions reduction targets that are aligned with global consensus to meet this challenge.



## RENEWABLE ENERGY

Since 2017, NOPEC has been supportive of advancing renewable energy and has gone beyond compliance of the Ohio Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS). Advancing customer choice, we offer electric programs that include renewable energy credits (RECs) equal to 100% of the amount of electricity used by the customers.

Approximately

**11%** of NOPEC's  
overall electric load is  
**100%** renewable  
energy  
via RECs.

## What are RECs and how do they work?

### What are Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)?

When renewable energy is created, it enters the power grid and joins the "pool" of energy sources that provide us with electricity.

Since electricity from all energy sources is delivered through the same power lines, RECs are used to track and account for the electricity created by renewable energy sources.

When you purchase electricity backed by RECs, you are supporting renewable energy and making a positive environmental impact.

Electricity  
Produced from  
Multiple Sources



Retiring of RECs officially declares that clean energy has been produced and used and helps track progress in reducing environmental impact.



## GREEN COMMUNITY CHOICE PROGRAM

Every three years during NOPEC's renewal cycle for electric, communities can elect to have a default aggregation program providing 100% renewable energy via Green-e® Energy Certified Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) through the Green Community Choice Program. All residents and small businesses eligible for the aggregation program will then be automatically enrolled in the 100% Renewable Standard Price Program option for their electricity supply via NOPEC. This means that RECs equal to 100% of the electricity used by all participating customers in the community will be retired. The next available enrollment for the Green Community Choice Program will be in 2026.

### GREEN COMMUNITY CHOICE COMMUNITIES

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS 96,000 RECs

LAKESIDE 127,000 RECs

SOUTH EUCLID 45,000 RECs

SHEFFIELD VILLAGE 15,000 RECs

2023  
RECS RETIRED  
283,000



## CIRCLEVILLE SOLAR PROJECT

An affiliate of NextEra Energy, NOPEC's aggregation supplier, has filed with the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) for a certificate to build a utility scale 70 MW nameplate capacity solar project near Circleville, Ohio. NOPEC is contracted to buy all the renewable energy attributes from the project to increase the local, renewable content of NOPEC's electric supply and to operate an onsite renewable energy educational center for K-12 Ohio students. NOPEC has testified before the OPSB in support of the project. The application is pending before the OPSB.

NOPEC is actively seeking to participate and initiate other such projects, including brownfield redevelopment projects to be used for the benefit of NOPEC customers.

Since 2017  
NextEra has  
reallocated almost **\$100 million**  
to the EarthEra® Trust from NOPEC's  
aggregation revenues to renewable  
energy projects



## EARTHERA TRUST

To support renewable energy development, NextEra takes a portion of the NOPEC aggregation revenues and deposits it into the EarthEra® Renewable Energy Trust (EarthEra® Trust). Supervised by an independent trustee, 100% of the funds in the Trust are used to accelerate adding clean renewable sources to America's energy infrastructure, including in Ohio. EarthEra®'s Trust enables much needed funding into renewable energy projects across the country, which aligns with NOPEC's commitment to be at the forefront of expanding the renewable energy capacity in Ohio.



## INCREASING RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IN OHIO:

Community Solar in Ohio HB 197 would authorize the development of Community Solar developments in the state of Ohio. NOPEC has filed testimony in support of the bill before the House Public Utilities Committee and has been working with the bill's sponsoring organizations to garner support for this bill which would increase renewable energy development in Ohio.



NOPEC has  
awarded  
over **\$53** million  
to communities through  
its granting programs



## NOPEC ENERGIZED COMMUNITY (NEC) GRANTS

The NEC Grant program offers funding for essential energy efficiency and infrastructure projects aimed at lowering energy consumption within NOPEC member communities. Since its creation in 2018, the NEC Grants have enabled the completion of over 2,100 energy efficiency projects. Projects include energy-efficient windows, plug-ins for electric vehicles, insulation, energy-efficient air conditioners, electrical upgrades, and more.

In 2023, NOPEC used its aggregation power to form the LED Easy-Bulb program, providing an easy way for member communities to use their grant funds to purchase LED lightbulbs to distribute to residents to help reduce their energy usage. Over 12,900 LED bulbs were distributed in 2023.

### FEATURED TYPES OF PROJECTS FROM 2018 - 2023

	EV CHARGING	SOLAR	ENERGY EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE/APPLIANCE UPGRADES
PROJECTS	43	19	730
COMMUNITIES	21	9	211

For more information, email [grants@nopecinc.org](mailto:grants@nopecinc.org).

## 2022-2023 NEC GRANT DISBURSEMENTS SDG ALIGNMENT



\$107,884

Water Reclamation Pumps  
Energy Efficient  
Water Pumps



\$3,995,069

Solar Traffic Equipment  
EV Chrging Stations



\$5,928,786

Energy Efficient Roofing  
Energy Efficient Appliances



\$873,280

Tree Planting and Maintenance



## PACE & STEP FINANCING

NOPEC's low-interest rate economic development financing programs are specifically designed to help small businesses, non-profits, and municipalities within our footprint make energy efficient and/or renewable energy updates to their building(s). These programs include our Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing and our Savings Through Efficiency Program (STEP).

Funded by a combination of internal NOPEC resources (\$10 million) and Federal USDA Funding (\$3.5 million), these loan pools are designed to bring much-needed sustainability capital to hard-to-serve areas throughout NOPEC's 20 county footprint.

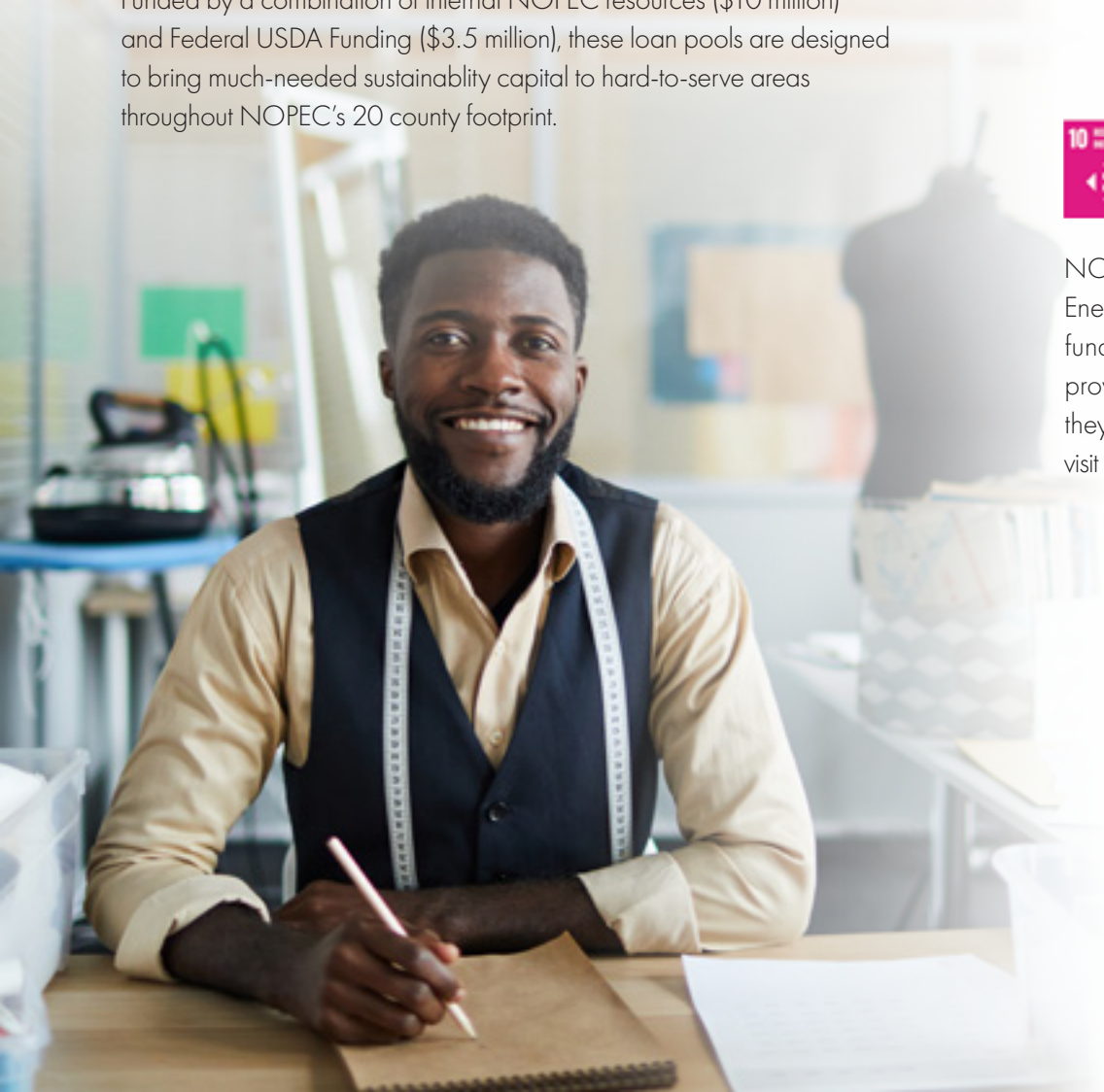
To date, we've financed  
**30** projects  
totaling over  
**\$11** million  
in financing



## SMALL BUSINESS ENERGY AUDIT PROGRAM

NOPEC was awarded federal funding to develop the NOPEC Small Business Energy Audit Program, where small business owners can apply for energy audit funding to cover 60% – 100% of the cost of qualifying energy audits. NOPEC provides preferred Ohio-based energy audit partners to advise owners on where they can make meaningful investments for energy savings. For more information, visit [nopec.org/energyaudit](https://nopec.org/energyaudit) or email [energyaudit@nopec.org](mailto:energyaudit@nopec.org).

To date, we've  
awarded audit funds to  
**9** small businesses  
totaling over  
**\$80,000**





# THRIVING COMMUNITIES

NOPEC member communities are at the heart of all that we do. Through our ESG efforts, we are focusing on how to support our member communities as they grow and thrive, addressing energy insecurity and climate resiliency. We advocate for our consumers and our communities for better energy policies in Ohio to create a brighter and more sustainable future.







## ADVOCATING FOR OUR CUSTOMERS

We believe that advocacy is vital in our quest for energy justice, ensuring everyone has access to affordable and sustainable energy. NOPEC actively engages at the State and Federal levels, diligently working to protect our 900,000 electric and gas customers from unreasonable rate increases and anti-competitive developments. Through these efforts, we have generated substantial savings – amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars – for our community members. Our goals around advocacy include the following:

- Promote equitable policies that benefit all utility consumers in Ohio
- Sustain strong and just deregulated retail energy markets in the state
- Ensure a competitive, diverse, and resilient electric generation system
- Reinstate effective renewable energy standards
- Remove the guarantee of revenue recovery for electric utilities, regardless of weather or economic factors
- Promote renewable energy sources in Ohio

Our commitment to safeguarding consumer choice and protecting Ohioans from rate increases is reflected in some of our biggest wins since 2022.

In 2022,  
NOPEC's advocacy efforts  
helped to secure a record  
**\$306 million**  
refund for **2.1 million**  
Ohio electric  
customers.



## NOPEC & OCC ACHIEVE HISTORIC REFUND:

In partnership with the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), NOPEC negotiated a settlement with FirstEnergy for PUCO cases from 2017 to 2021, leading to a significant refund for Ohio customers. This victory followed a successful appeal to the Ohio Supreme Court in 2019, which found that a charge from the utilities, known as the DMR Rider, was illegal because it didn't require the utilities to spend any money or provide services. Because of this ruling, FirstEnergy had to count the money from this charge when calculating their excessive profits. As a result, residential customers and small businesses will receive refunds over the next several years, reflecting the positive impact of NOPEC intervening on behalf of Ohioans.



## NOPEC IS HELPING SAVE OHIO GAS CONSUMERS ABOUT \$200 MILLION PER YEAR BY NEGOTIATING A REDUCED RATE INCREASE

**MITIGATING NATURAL GAS RATE INCREASES:** On the natural gas side, NOPEC intervened at the PUCO in Columbia Gas' \$275 million rate increase case, and in Enbridge East Ohio Gas' \$275 million rate increase request. Working closely with the Ohio Consumers' Counsel Office and others, NOPEC helped to negotiate a settlement in the Columbia Gas case resulting in about a \$70 million rate increase, about 25% of the requested increase – saving consumers about \$200 million per year. NOPEC is currently working closely with OCC in the Enbridge East Ohio Gas rate case, agreeing with PUCO Staff's position that there should be a decrease, not an increase, in East Ohio gas rates, of over \$200 million per year. The case is still pending.



# SPONSORSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS

Sponsorships and collaboration with other organizations are crucial for fostering engagement and working toward a more sustainable future. By partnering with various organizations, we can pool resources, share knowledge, and leverage each other's strengths to create impactful and innovative solutions. This collaborative approach not only enhances our ability to address complex sustainability challenges but also ensures that our initiatives are inclusive and reflective of the diverse needs of the communities we serve.



## CITY SPONSOR FOR THE NATIONAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IN CLEVELAND

NOPEC was proud to serve as the host city sponsor for the 2024 Climate Leadership Conference in Cleveland, which united leaders in the fight against climate change by sharing best practices for environmental stewardship.



## ENERGY STAR® PARTNER

As an ENERGY STAR® Partner, NOPEC advances energy efficiency and sustainability through initiatives like our online Energy Management Resources, which guides organizations and residents in implementing effective energy policies.



## SUSTAINABILITY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESOURCES (S.T.A.R.) PROGRAM

NOPEC recently piloted the S.T.A.R. program that provides our communities with a road map and the resources necessary to pursue their decarbonization and energy efficiency goals through in-depth carbon inventories of municipal buildings, solar readiness site assessments, and technical sustainability guidance.

Recognized sustainability leader, World Kinect Energy Services was contracted to assist in this important new initiative.



## INDUSTRIAL HEARTLAND SOLAR COALITION

To assist in directing federal funds towards solar initiatives across the Midwest, NOPEC became the only governmental aggregation entity to sign the Industrial Heartland Solar Coalition that was presented to the EPA.



## MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION & ENERGY COALITION OF OHIO

NOPEC participated in the facilitation of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's Summit on Sustainability in addition to the Ohio Energy Conference. At both respective events, NOPEC moderated discussions on community-driven approaches to boost sustainability and resilience in Ohio.



## THE CLEVELAND 2030 DISTRICT

NOPEC is the only government aggregation to obtain membership in the Cleveland 2030 District, which aims to reduce the environmental impact of building construction and operations. Additionally, NOPEC has committed to be the Presenting Sponsor for The Cleveland 2030 District's Education Series that will be held in 2025.



## BUILDING INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

In 2024, NOPEC hosted a State Department Delegation from Japan, in partnership with the Cleveland Council on World Affairs and the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Discussions focused on Ohio's deregulated energy markets, the importance of consumer education, and the shift toward clean and renewable energy sources. By sharing our experiences, we contributed to meaningful international dialogue on sustainable development.



## ICLEI WORLD CONGRESS

Every three years, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability hosts the ICLEI World Congress to showcase how cities, towns and regions across our network are advancing sustainable urban development worldwide. This June, it was held at Sao Paulo, Brazil and NOPEC was represented by Deepa Vedavyas, Director of Resiliency and Sustainability. She joined 96 countries with 1000+ local and regional government representatives and over 100+ mayors to speak on "Equity in action: Shaping climate solutions for all", a platform to link local and regional governments with peers and to build strategic partnerships.



## LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY (ICLEI)

NOPEC actively participates in the NEO Resilient Cities leadership cohort of ICLEI, an international network focused on sustainability and climate action, contributing to regional efforts that promote sustainable energy practices across diverse communities.

## REGIONAL SPONSORSHIPS

NOPEC actively enhances its presence in local communities through strategic regional partnerships. We have partnered with the Lake County Captains, Cleveland Metroparks, Cleveland Monsters hockey team, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Great Lakes Science Center. Select sponsored events include Wild Winter Lights at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and an interactive energy exhibit at the Great Lakes Science Center.



## COMMUNITY EVENT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

NOPEC's member communities are annually awarded sponsorship funds for local events. This program allows our Community Outreach team to bring our Energy Education Station to various communities within our service area.

NOPEC awarded  
**\$600,000** in event sponsorships  
 in 2022 & 2023  
**\$1.6 million+** awarded  
 since 2018

**1,550+**  
 community  
 events supported







## ENERGY EDUCATION

### MAKING EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE

NOPEC provides hands-on learning opportunities and makes energy education accessible for all ages by partnering with local libraries for reading materials and workshops and engaging with residents at community events. We also offer online and in-person resources to help consumers understand their energy choices, conserve energy, and make informed decisions.

### CAREER PATHWAYS

NOPEC supports career pathways in the energy sector by partnering with local institutions to provide students with insights and experiences for future careers. The Director of Resiliency and Sustainability serves in emPOWERment External Advisory Council at The Ohio State University, promoting STEM education training. As a sponsor of the first NEO Youth Climate Summit, NOPEC encourages young leaders to engage in sustainability discussions and explore innovative solutions.

### STEM EDUCATION

NOPEC is committed to advancing STEM education by supporting energy-focused learning opportunities for students. Through a sponsorship with the Ohio Energy Project, NOPEC funds Ohio students' participation in STEM design challenges, teaching them about wind energy and efficient energy use. This initiative, offered at no cost to participating schools in NOPEC member communities, saw over 8,000 students participate during the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 school years combined.



## GREAT LAKES SCIENCE CENTER

NOPEC's Wind Turbine Exhibit continues to attract thousands of families and school groups each year, offering a hands-on experience in renewable energy. The exhibit offers visitors a dynamic way to explore the principles of wind power and engineering through hands-on experimentation.



## CONSUMER PROTECTION

NOPEC's Do Not Knock Program is a key part of our commitment to creating a respectful and safe environment for our community members. This policy restricts for-profit, door-to-door solicitors. By preventing door-to-door sales at addresses on an opt-in NOPEC-maintained registry, we are respecting the privacy and preferences of the customers we serve. We have provided this turn-key program for 23 member communities wherein over 18,000 residents have opted-in.

For more information, email

us at [outreach@nopec.org](mailto:outreach@nopec.org).

To sign up, visit [blocktheknock.com](https://blocktheknock.com)

or call the Customer Care Center  
at 855-667-3201.

**23** member  
communities  
wherin over  
**18,000**  
residents have opted-in



## OPERATING WITH INTEGRITY

Maintaining the trust and support of NOPEC's member communities is core to our success. Our leadership consistently upholds the highest ethical standards to ensure trust and accountability. As a non-profit council of governments, NOPEC provides a level of accessibility and transparency that sets us apart from other energy aggregators.



## STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

COMMUNITY LEADERS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS  
EMPLOYEES  
REGULATORS  
SUPPLY PARTNERS/VENDORS  
COMMUNITIES (RESIDENTS &  
SMALL BUSINESSES)  
BOARD MEMBERS

## TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT (FREQUENCIES VARY)

### MEETINGS

One-On-One  
Council/Trustee/Board  
Issue-Specific  
General Assembly  
Planning/Staff  
Team Building/Holiday Events  
Hearings

### COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Email/Teams  
Social Media  
Website  
Press Releases/Newsletters  
Call Center

### COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Focus Groups  
Community  
Leader Surveys  
Customer Surveys  
Community Events

### REPORTS AND UPDATES

Annual Report  
Employee Survey  
Training & Development  
ESG Report

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We make it a priority to listen to our community leaders, residents, and small businesses from across our service area in regular research and feedback initiatives to understand the unique needs of these stakeholders. These endeavors ensure that we stay abreast of their priorities to better serve our community members, customers, businesses, and employees. Cost-effective, responsibly-sourced energy services and maintaining high ethical and regulatory standards are core to all stakeholder engagement interactions.

Each year, we conduct a brand awareness survey to gauge Ohio residents' awareness of and trust in NOPEC. In our 2024 survey, 638 customers and non-customers participated throughout our footprint. Sixty-five percent of NOPEC customers surveyed said they would recommend NOPEC and 76% scored NOPEC's reputation as "Good" or "Excellent". Customers cited NOPEC's rates, ease of enrollment, advocacy efforts, and community grants as reasons they chose NOPEC as their energy supplier.

In addition to this survey, we engage with community leaders regularly throughout the year including one-on-one and community meetings, task forces, community organizations, and conferences. We also keep community leaders up to date through our Community Connection Newsletter, direct emails, in-person discussions, phone calls, and other communication channels.

NOPEC's  
customers choose

NOPEC

for Ease of Enrollment  
NOPEC Rates  
Community Grants  
Advocacy Efforts

# CUSTOMER PROTECTION ACTION

In August 2022, NOPEC protected our customers by temporarily transitioning over half a million electric customers to a lower-cost standard service offer during a volatile market period, shielding them from significant price hikes experienced with other suppliers.

This action, though beneficial to customers, led to a review of our electric certification by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) and challenges from competitors. After a thorough review and with support from over a hundred community leaders and legislators, PUCO renewed NOPEC's certification confirming compliance with Ohio laws.

In April 2023, after our certification was renewed, NOPEC sent out over 600,000 enrollment letters to eligible customers to relaunch our aggregation program in June 2023. To answer residents' questions and alleviate worries, NOPEC, supported by local officials, organized over 100 public educational meetings across our member communities, leading to positive interactions and gratitude from residents.

**We were delighted to see that nearly 90% of the customers temporarily moved to a lower-cost service in August 2022 chose to return to NOPEC for their energy needs.** This period provided NOPEC with a valuable opportunity to uphold our mission of putting customers above all else. Although the path was challenging, the decision to put customers first was straightforward.

## AVERAGE SAVINGS

Residential customers  
saved over

\$740

Small business owners  
saved close to

\$1,700







90% of Electric Customers  
Returned to  
**NOPEC**



## WASTE AND RECYCLING

2,645  
POUNDS IN 2022

4,431  
POUNDS IN 2023

NOPEC shredded and recycled an amount  
of paper equivalent to:

The solid waste of 22 trash bags kept from landfills

The wood produced by 85 trees being preserved

The water saved equaling 134 full bathtubs

## OPERATIONAL FOOTPRINT

2023 NOPEC OFFICE STATS

36,302.07

TOTAL ELECTRICITY (KWH)

210.68

TOTAL GAS (MCF)



## NOPEC PEOPLE:

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

NOPEC places a high value on diversity and inclusion in our workforce, aiming to create an environment that mirrors our members and communities. Our team embodies a wide range of backgrounds, educational achievements, and thinking styles. Each person contributes to our collective innovation and performance. We continually strive to create a workplace where every employee feels empowered to bring their authentic selves and contribute to the larger mission.

## 2023 EMPLOYEE STATS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023





## EMPLOYER POLICIES

At NOPEC, we are ensuring equal employment opportunities for all. Our hiring practices are designed to align with all relevant equal employment opportunity laws, ensuring that decisions regarding employment, promotions, and terminations are made based on merit as opposed to any characteristic protected by law. We uphold robust benefits to support staff well-being, enabling them to perform at their highest capacity. To ensure our policies are competitive and effective, we conduct a comprehensive wage analysis and update our employee handbook every two years. Most recently, the handbook was reviewed, and updates were made pertaining to paid time off, including parental leave, addition of a remote work policy, and incorporating AI use into our IT policy.

## STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT & CORE VALUES

NOPEC's leadership team and staff follow the EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System) Model for strategic planning, process management, and implementation. A cornerstone of this model is having clear roles and responsibilities, communicating openly and honestly, and hiring employees that fit within the defined core values of the organization. At NOPEC, we value the following core values in our board members and employees: Confident Leader and Thinker, Humble and Flexible, Driven Team Player, Intelligent with Sound Judgment, and Integrity.

## DEVELOPING FUTURE LEADERS

Each year, NOPEC welcomes college interns to support the marketing department and, depending on demand, accounting and business departments. Interns gain hands-on experience in the energy sector, apply practical skills, and build their professional networks.



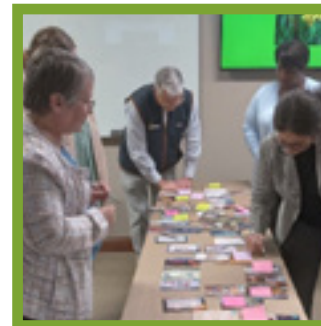
## EMPLOYEE TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

We prioritize the continuous development of our staff through training programs aimed at enhancing job performance and skill progression. We encourage our employees to join professional organizations like Engage! Cleveland, Pace Nation, the Ohio Economic Development Association, and the US Green Building Council. NOPEC-specific training covers important areas such as diversity, public speaking, EOS, information security, leadership, and safety, including active shooter and CPR exercises.

NOPEC employees also work on their communication and collaboration skills through teambuilding initiatives while giving back to local communities. Recent initiatives included a park cleanup day in which 382 lbs. of garlic mustard, an invasive plant, and litter were removed from the Black River Reservation Day's Dam trail and a day of tree planting with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

## CLIMATE FRESH

The NOPEC team participated in a Climate Fresh workshop to deepen our understanding of climate change and identify key next steps for our organization. Through this engaging exercise, we recognized important potential collaborators including local, state, and federal agencies, environmental organizations, and industry leaders. The workshop highlighted areas for expanding collaboration and helped us develop targeted actions, such as promoting renewable energy solutions, coordinating recycling projects, and enhancing community engagement through educational initiatives.



# TRANSPARENCY & GOVERNANCE

NOPEC is a regional council of governments comprised of 240 member communities. NOPEC is comprised of three operational entities: NOPEC, NOPEC, Inc., and the NOPEC Foundation. NOPEC has an 18 member volunteer board of directors.



FOR NEARLY 25 YEARS, NOPEC HAS AGGREGATED THE BUYING POWER OF ITS 240 MEMBER COMMUNITIES TO NEGOTIATE COMPETITIVE UTILITY RATES FOR NATURAL GAS AND ELECTRICITY. AS A NON-PROFIT PUBLIC ENTITY, NOPEC IS FUNDED PRIMARILY THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE PAYMENTS FROM ITS ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS SUPPLIERS.



NOPEC, INC. IS A LEGALLY DISTINCT CORPORATE BODY THAT FUNCTIONS AS AN OPERATIONAL ARM OF NOPEC FOR SEVERAL NOPEC PROGRAMS BENEFITING OUR MEMBER COMMUNITIES AND THEIR RESIDENTS. IN ADDITION TO MANAGING THE DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES, NOPEC, INC. MAY ACT AS A RETAIL ENERGY SUPPLIER IF NOPEC IS UNABLE TO SECURE A SUITABLE SUPPLIER FOR THE AGGREGATION.



THE NOPEC FOUNDATION IS AN OHIO NON-PROFIT CORPORATION AND PRIVATE FOUNDATION OF WHICH NOPEC INC. IS THE SOLE MEMBER. THE NOPEC FOUNDATION PROVIDES GRANTS FOR COMMUNITY AND NON-PROFIT PROJECTS TO BETTER NOPEC COMMUNITIES AND THEIR RESIDENTS.

The boards of directors of the three NOPEC organizations described above are completely independent of each other, with no overlapping directors.





## NOPEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NOPEC is governed by a General Assembly made up of one representative from each member community. The General Assembly meets once per year to vote on new aggregation members and NOPEC's annual operating budget and to elect the NOPEC Board of Directors.

The NOPEC Board of Directors meets seven times per year. Each Board Member participates in one or more organizational committees, which provide oversight for NOPEC's operations. The public is welcome to participate in or attend any of the Board of Directors' or committee meetings.

## OVERSIGHT & SAFEGUARDS CODE OF CONDUCT

Each year, NOPEC employees and Board Members sign Ethics and Fraud Policies. The Ethics Policy manages potential conflicts of interest, gift exchanges, and requires an annual declaration of external interests. The Fraud Reporting Policy outlines how to report suspicions of fraud.

## REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

NOPEC promotes a strong compliance culture aligned with its core values. The organization maintains a positive relationship with state regulators, especially at the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). NOPEC manages all compliance responsibilities including PUCO reporting tasks like Quarterly Market Monitoring Reports, overseeing the renewal of Competitive Retail Electric Supplier (CRES) and Competitive Retail Natural Gas (CRNG) certificates, and adapting to regulatory changes as needed.

## AUDITING/REPORTING

NOPEC is audited biennially by the Ohio Auditor of State, with financial statements publicly available. In 2021 and 2023, NOPEC received the Auditor of the State Award for excellence in accounting and clean audit reports, the third such award NOPEC has received. NOPEC, Inc. and NOPEC Foundation, Inc. are audited by an independent outside public accounting firm every two years.

Annual reports are available online at [nopec.org/annualreport](https://nopec.org/annualreport).

The NOPEC board is exploring the idea of establishing a sustainability committee to foster its commitment to environmental stewardship. Board members are interested in creating a group that identifies sustainable practices and initiatives within the organization.

## CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTOR COMMITTEES

Bylaws & Governance  
Finance & Audit  
Human Resources  
Governmental Affairs  
Marketing  
Strategic Planning



## FUTURE OUTLOOK

In evaluation of how best to support our communities, we are developing a fourth critical pillar to emphasize our commitment to supporting Ohio communities' transition to a low carbon future: Technical Assistance. This pillar aims to improve the efficacy of existing programs and to develop innovative solutions for emerging community needs. We aim to empower our members with the tools, knowledge, and resources to maximize their impact. Through this fourth pillar, we are dedicated to building stronger, more resilient communities by bridging gaps in technical expertise.



# FUTURE INITIATIVES



## AGGREGATE

- Developing a pathway to Net Zero by 2050. In 2025, we plan to develop a sustainability & resiliency plan outlining how we hope to achieve our 2050 target.
- Achieving 50% renewable mix in our Standard Program Product by the end of 2026
- Developing strategies to increase Green Community Choice Participants



## EDUCATE

- Continuing Sustainable Technical Assistance Resources (STAR) Program
- Developing pathways for NOPEC communities to achieve their goals, including PCFO guidelines

Additional activities under consideration:

- Municipal Decarbonization Program
- ICLEI – Rural and Urban cities cohort
- USGBC Education Series
- NOPEC Fleet Power: Fleet Electrification Program for NOPEC Communities



## ADVOCATE

- Renewable Natural Gas Plant Location Study
- Industrial Heartland Solar Coalition
- MORPC Sustainability Summit
- Ohio Energy Conference
- 2024 update of Value of Ohio Electric Deregulation White Paper
- Striving to reach our purchase of RECs from OH solar projects
- Residential PACE Lending Program



## LEAD APPLICANT FOR THE EPA COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANT

NOPEC is partnering with community nonprofits and applied for EPA Environmental & Climate Justice Community Change Grants to support the southeast Cleveland neighborhood. As Lead Applicant, NOPEC has been tasked with coordinating the grant application, managing communication with the EPA, overseeing fund allocation, and leading the project's implementation.

The overarching goal of the project is to transform houses of worship into "Resilience Hubs" that can provide critical services during extreme weather, all powered by solar energy. If funded, this initiative will benefit thousands of residents facing energy poverty and enhance neighborhood resilience.

NOPEC is Ohio's largest governmental energy aggregator. It represents 240 communities and over 900,000 individual accounts. Since its inception in 2001, NOPEC has leveraged the power of purchasing electricity and natural gas in bulk to secure lower rates for its community members. NOPEC has saved customers hundreds of millions of dollars in total. In addition to cost savings, NOPEC has invested in the communities it serves by awarding over \$53 million in community energy-efficiency grants, heavily advocating for consumer-friendly energy policies, and offering educational opportunities for Ohio students and residents. To learn more about NOPEC's mission and impact, please visit [nopec.org](https://nopec.org).

