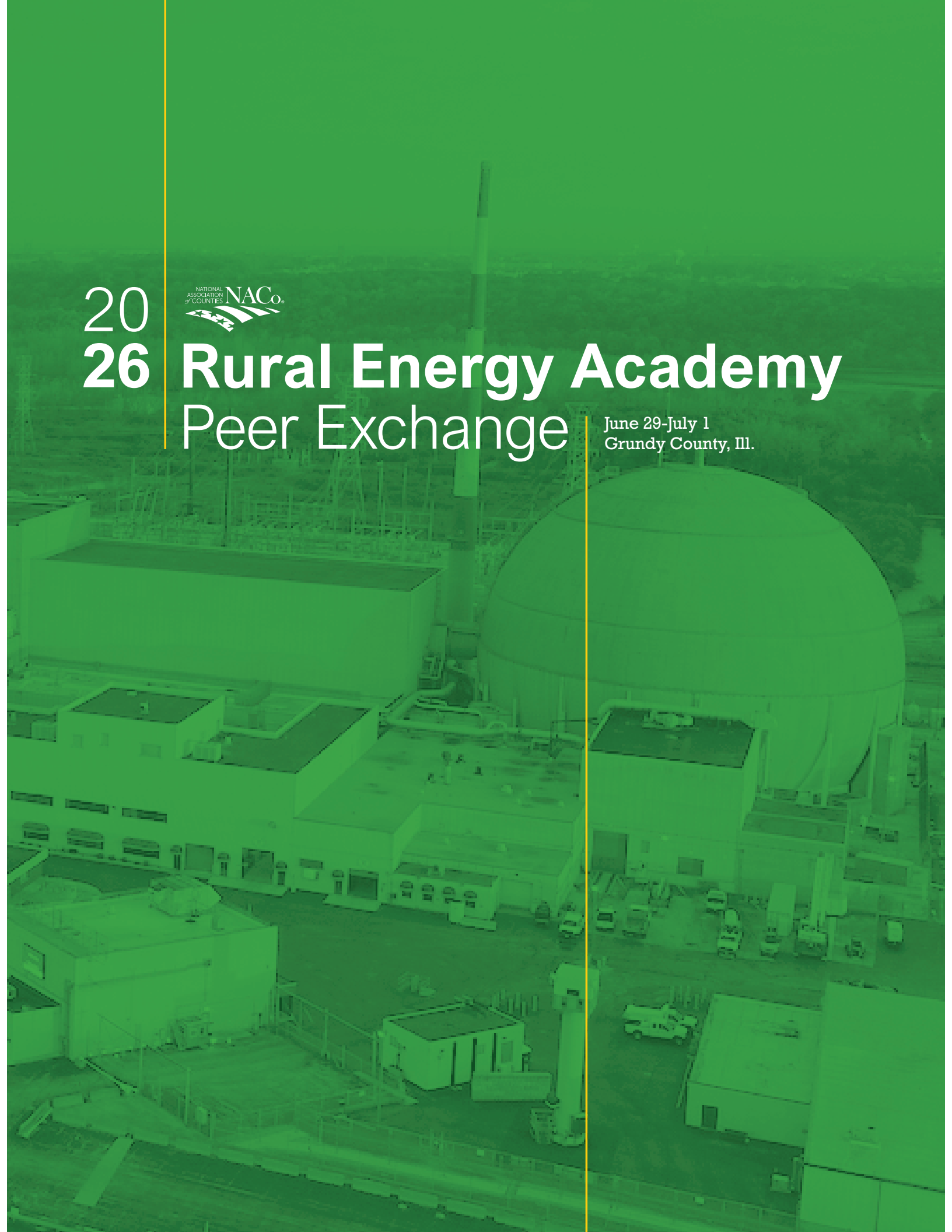




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Rural Energy Academy Peer Exchange

June 29-July 1
Grundy County, Ill.

Monday, June 29

Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) | 10000 West O'Hare Avenue, Chicago, IL 60666

Chicago Midway International Airport (MDW) | 5700 South Cicero Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638

All participants will share a private shuttle bus to the event hotel unless alternate plans have been coordinated ahead of time. If your flight is delayed or if you have any travel difficulties, please call NACo Program Manager Blake Gardiner (219-743-4603) or NACo Program Associate Carleigh Haris (908-210-6481).

3:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. First Shuttle from ORD (1.75-hour travel)

After retrieving your luggage, meet NACo staff at terminal 2, door E on the lower level. Loading will begin at 2:45 p.m., with prompt departure at 3:00 p.m.

4:45 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Second Shuttle from MDW (1-hour travel)

After retrieving your luggage, meet NACo staff at the lower-level baggage claim at door 6. Loading will begin at 4:30 p.m., with prompt departure at 4:45 p.m.

Holiday Inn & Suites | 1471 Rock Creek Boulevard, Joliet, IL 60431

6:15 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Meet in Hotel Lobby and Depart for Reception Dinner (30-minute travel)

Participants should meet in the hotel lobby no later than 6:15 p.m. to depart for dinner. The shuttle will leave promptly at 6:30 p.m.

Keg Grove Brewing Company | 222 Wauponsee Street, Morris, IL 60450

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Reception Dinner at Keg Grove Brewing Company

Participants will gather for a welcome dinner to kick off the peer exchange. This will offer an opportunity to connect with fellow county leaders, Rural Energy Academy staff and Grundy County hosts before the full day of programming on Tuesday.

- **Hon. Chris Brown**, Mayor, City of Morris
- **Shelby Butz**, PhD, Associate Program Director, Environment and Land Use, NACo
- **Hon. Drew Muffler**, County Board Chairman, Grundy County
- **Nancy Norton**, President & CEO, Grundy County Economic Development Council

8:30 p.m. – 9:15 p.m.

Depart for Holiday Inn & Suites (30-minute travel)

Participants should be ready to leave no later than 8:30 p.m. to depart for the hotel. The shuttle will leave promptly at 8:45 p.m.

Tuesday, June 30

Holiday Inn & Suites | 1471 Rock Creek Boulevard, Joliet, IL 60431

7:45 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. **Depart for Emergency Operations Center** (30-minute travel)

Participants will travel by shuttle bus from the hotel to attend programming at the Grundy County Emergency Operations Center. The shuttle will leave promptly at 7:45 a.m.

Grundy County Emergency Operations Center | 1320 Union Street, Morris, IL 60450

8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. **Breakfast and Morning Kickoff**

Participants will network with peers over breakfast and hear a brief agenda overview to set the stage for the day.

- **Brad Clark**, Consultant, Mana Group Consulting
- **Charlotte Mitchell Duyshart**, Associate Legislative Director, Environment, Energy and Land Use, NACo
- **Blake Gardiner**, Program Manager, Clean Energy, NACo

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Science: An Argonne National Laboratory Brief**

Participants will hear from experts from the Argonne National Laboratory Collaborative Center for Energy Storage Science. The presentation will discuss a technical overview of BESS, the science behind it, the various types and integration with grid. The session will conclude with an open Q&A.

- **Jianlin Li**, PhD, Director of Energy Storage and Conversion, Argonne National Laboratory

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. **Break**

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Emergency Operations Center: Overview

Participants will learn about the Emergency Operations Center, its history and how coordination works with developers, the state and the federal government. The session will conclude with an open Q&A.

- **Alec Macdonald**, Director of Development, Grundy County
- **Joe Schroeder**, Director, Grundy County Emergency Management Agency
- **James Sheldon**, Deputy Director, Grundy County Emergency Management Agency

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Case Study: Applying Understanding of BESS Technology and Coordination into County Practices

Participants will explore real-world applications of BESS planning and preparation as it relates to energy priorities and transferability to different use cases.

- **Charlie Nichols**, Director of Planning and Development, Linn County, Iowa
- **Upasana Roy**, Land Use and Energy Planner, Great Plains Institute

12:00 p.m. – 12:15 p.m. Depart to City Hall (15-minute travel)

Participants will travel by shuttle bus to City Hall. The shuttle will leave promptly at 12:00 p.m.

Morris City Hall | 700 North Division Street, Morris, IL 60450

12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Lunch on Your Own

Participants should return to City Hall no later than 1:45 p.m. for afternoon programming.

1:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Reconvene and Afternoon Overview

Participants will gather at City Hall following lunch. REA staff will provide a brief overview of the afternoon sessions before programming resumes.

2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Workshop: Ordinance

Participants will apply insights from the morning's presentations to their own county contexts with a focus on ordinance development, siting and coordination considerations. In small groups, participants will discuss how BESS technology intersects with their county's existing regulatory frameworks before sharing key themes with the full group.

- **Brad Clark**, Consultant, Mana Group Consulting
- **Adrienne Dorsey**, Consultant, Mana Group Consulting
- **Upasana Roy**, Land Use and Energy Planner, Great Plains Institute

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Navigating Economic and Community Considerations

Participants will hear from subject-matter experts to learn how counties can maximize economic development partnerships, workforce development and community benefits needed for success. Following the panel, participants will gather in small breakout groups and apply these frameworks to their own counties' contexts and share key takeaways with the full group.

- **Brad Clark**, Consultant, Mana Group Consulting
- **Adrienne Dorsey**, Consultant, Mana Group Consulting
- **Andrea Hogan**, Vice President of Development, Grundy Economic Development Council
- **Nancy Norton**, President & CEO, Grundy Economic Development Council
- **Mark Pavlis**, Secretary-Treasurer, Laborers' Local 75 (LiUNA)

4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Daily Recap and Preview

Participants will reflect on the day's key themes and preview Wednesday's program focusing on nuclear energy.

- **Blake Gardiner**, Program Manager, Clean Energy, NACo

5:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Depart for Dinner (10-minute travel)

Participants will travel by shuttle bus to dinner at 5:15 p.m.

Morris Country Club | 2615 US Route 6 East, Morris, IL 60450

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Dinner at Morris Country Club

Participants will have the opportunity to continue the day's conversations in a relaxed setting with fellow participants, Rural Energy Academy staff and Grundy County hosts.

7:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Depart for Holiday Inn & Suites (30-minute travel)

Participants should be ready to leave no later than 7:15 p.m. to depart for the hotel. The shuttle will leave promptly at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 1

Holiday Inn & Suites | 1471 Rock Creek Boulevard, Joliet, IL 60431

7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. **Depart for Morris City Hall** (30-minute travel)

Participants will travel by shuttle bus from the hotel to enjoy breakfast and programming at the Morris City Hall. The shuttle will leave promptly at 7:30 a.m. An overview of the day ahead will be provided in transit to the Morris City Hall.

Please check out of your room before leaving. You may store your luggage in the hotel “Juliet” ballroom meeting space as this is where the closing session will take place.

Morris City Hall | 700 North Division Street, Morris, IL 60450

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. **Breakfast and Networking**

Participants will have time to network with peers and review informational materials.

8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. **Nuclear Energy and State Policy: A Legislative Perspective**

Participants will hear from Illinois State Senator Sue Rezin on her leadership advancing state legislation to preserve and expand nuclear energy in Illinois. The session will offer county leaders a firsthand look at the policy landscape shaping nuclear energy’s future and the role counties can play in supporting and attracting nuclear energy to their communities.

- **Hon. Sue Rezin**, Deputy Minority Leader, Illinois Senate

8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. **Break**

8:45 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. **Nuclear Energy Explained: An Argonne National Laboratory Brief**

Experts from Argonne National Laboratory will provide county leaders with a foundational overview of nuclear energy technology including traditional reactor technology to the emerging world of small modular reactors, micro-reactors and other leading nuclear technology. The session will conclude with an open Q&A.

- **Taek Kyum Kim**, PhD, Department Manager, Nuclear Systems Analysis, Argonne National Laboratory

9:30 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. **Depart for Dresden Generating Station** (20-minute travel)

Participants will travel by shuttle bus to Dresden Generating Station.

Dresden Generating Station | 6500 North Dresden Road, Morris, IL 60450

9:50 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Group Photo**

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Dresden Generating Station Facility Tour and Lunch**

Participants will tour the nation's first privately financed nuclear power plant with plant owner and operator, Constellation Energy. The tour will offer a firsthand look at how this 1,800 MW facility powers the region through a briefing, walking tour and working lunch with Constellation Energy Staff.

- **Sharon Johnson**, Manager, Local Government Affairs, Constellation Energy

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Depart for Holiday Inn & Suites (30-minute travel)

Participants will travel by shuttle bus to the event hotel.

Holiday Inn & Suites | 1471 Rock Creek Boulevard, Joliet, IL 60431

1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Closing Session

Participants will reflect on the peer exchange content, strategies and considerations for energy planning through a closing discussion and wrap-up facilitated by the Rural Energy Academy team.

- **Shelby Butz**, PhD, Associate Program Director, Environment and Land Use, NACo
- **Adrienne Dorsey**, Consultant, Mana Group Consulting
- **Blake Gardiner**, Program Manager, Clean Energy, NACo

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2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Depart for Chicago Midway International Airport (1-hour travel)

After retrieving your luggage, begin loading the shuttle bus at 2:30 p.m. with prompt departure at 2:45 p.m.

3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Depart for Chicago O'Hare International Airport (1.75-hour travel)

After retrieving your luggage, begin loading the shuttle bus at 3:00 p.m. with prompt departure at 3:15 p.m.

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June 2026

@NACoCounties



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