

# your **Connexus Connection**

For Connexus Energy Members

Issued July 2023



Our service area  
is a great place to  
live and work





# Cash Back

## credits are coming in August

Cash Back is calculated based on member electricity purchases during the year. Expect to see credits reflected in your August bill. It pays to be a member of our co-op!

### CONTACT US

#### Phone

Services/Outage: 763.323.2650

#### Online

Website: [connexusenergy.com](http://connexusenergy.com)

Email: [info@connexusenergy.com](mailto:info@connexusenergy.com)

#### Address

14601 Ramsey Blvd.  
Ramsey, MN 55303

#### Connect with Connexus



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fran Bator, Chair (East Bethel)  
Mark Ethen, Vice Chair (Blaine)  
Shelly Peterson, Secretary/Treasurer (Nowthen)  
Michael Cady, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer (Blaine)  
Rick Braastad (Ham Lake)  
Kenneth Fiereck (Clear Lake)  
Mike Thews (Coon Rapids)  
Gordon Westerlind (Big Lake)

### Electrical safety education



Connexus Energy provides solar safety training with Jack Volz to local fire departments.



Our Hazard Hamlet program for elementary students helps reduce electrical accidents, prevent injuries, and save lives.



Connexus Energy is offsetting 100% of the energy used for printing this newsletter with renewable energy credits.



# CEO sparks

## Some things change, but important things to members do not

This past winter – one of the snowiest on record – energy policy was actively debated at the Minnesota legislature culminating with the Governor signing a bill requiring 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040. Greening the grid is not new for Connexus Energy. During the last several years, Connexus installed grid-scale solar and storage, supported electric vehicles, and changed our wholesale power supply contracts with the objective of maintaining our excellent reliability and affordable rates. After all, it “does not take a rocket scientist” to know members care deeply about rates and reliability. Many also care deeply about greening the grid.

In service to you, at Connexus, we’re doing our part to practice responsible stewardship for our great outdoors as well as strengthen the economic vitality of our communities. It’s the green for your wallet – low and affordable electric rates paired with Cash Back later this summer – and leadership that attracts and grows investment to our region.

Recently, I was pleased to join USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, along with other elected officials and cooperative utility leaders, in Washington D.C. The Secretary announced the largest federal investment in electric cooperatives since 1936. It was encouraging to meet leaders taking action to benefit communities served by electric cooperatives. And separately, for the first time in our history, Connexus bid some of our electric capacity back into the regional market. Whereas last summer the upper Midwest experienced a shortfall of electric resources, the good news this summer is a surplus – a welcome and cost-saving change.

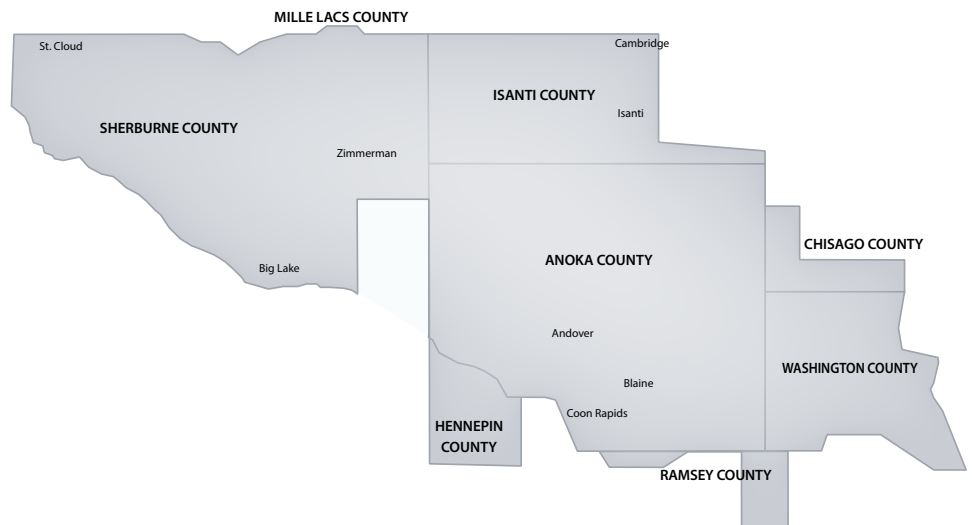
Ever vigilant, our work continues to both fortify and add flexibility to the electric grid. We applaud our members’ decisions to join our 100% Renewable Energy Club and those who invest in solar panels on their own rooftops. Managed responsibly and economically, electricity from Connexus is already 38% carbon-free.

Providing electric service reliability in the top 5% of all utilities nationwide, Connexus wants the only flickering lights you see to be the early morning sun through the trees or the occasional visits of the Northern Lights.

Thank you for being a member-owner sharing the North Metro as a great place to live and work.



**Greg Ridderbusch**  
President & CEO



# This is a great area **to work**

*The Connexus Energy service territory includes approximately 11,000 commercial and industrial members.*

## Businesses investing in themselves

We work with businesses of all sizes that want to reduce their energy bill and enhance their operations. In 2022 alone, we gave \$1.2 million in rebates to our business members who installed more efficient systems and equipment. If an upgrade will save a business energy, we offer customized rebates to help offset project expenses.

Upgrading to LED lighting, new variable frequency drives, or installing higher efficiency HVAC systems are just a few examples of rebate opportunities from Connexus. We can help connect interested businesses with contractors to conduct whole building energy efficiency studies that take a holistic approach to their building's electric consumption and provide rebates based on the realized energy savings.

Contact our key account representatives to find ways to positively impact your company's bottom line at [businessaccounts@connexusenergy.com](mailto:businessaccounts@connexusenergy.com).

## Powered by 100% renewable energy

Aggressive Hydraulics designs and manufactures custom hydraulic cylinders. The company was founded by seven professionals in 2002 and grew to 90 employees in a 100,000-square foot facility in Cedar that is powered by 100% renewable energy.

Our Renewable Energy Program helps businesses like Aggressive Hydraulics meet their sustainability goals and gain a competitive edge in the supply chain. These businesses choose to be greener at a price they can afford.

We also want to recognize the following members for choosing to be powered by 100% renewable energy:

- » Heraeus Medevio
- » HOYA Optical Labs of America
- » Lorenz Bus Service
- » NAU Country Insurance Company, a QBE Insurance Company
- » Northern Technologies International Corporation
- » Northstar Canoes
- » Prairie Organic Spirits Distillery



***\$1.2 million in rebates to***



Photo courtesy of Agressive Hydraulics

## Economic development collaboration

Connexus is leading a collaborative effort to bring data centers, advanced manufacturing businesses, and other technology companies to an area called the Minnesota Technology Corridor. We partnered with two counties, five cities, and multiple utilities because the entire region will benefit from this economic development. The corridor runs along I-35E/35W from Forest Lake to Lino Lakes.

The corridor has resources desired by high-tech companies, with 600+ acres of shovel-ready land available for development; abundant access to fiber, water, and power; and close proximity to Minneapolis and St. Paul. The communities also offer fast speed to market. The corridor will create new job opportunities and lead to new housing so that future employees can live, work, and play there.

An Amazon distribution center in the city of Centerville is the first project in the Minnesota Technology Corridor and expected to be completed this year. The 140,000-square foot facility will employ up to 600 people. The site will have charging stations to power 250+ electric Amazon delivery vehicles.

For development questions within the corridor or elsewhere in our service area, contact Christine Costello, community and economic development representative, at 763.323.2636 or [Christine.Costello@connexusenergy.com](mailto:Christine.Costello@connexusenergy.com). You can also visit [mntechnocorridor.com](http://mntechnocorridor.com).



**our business members**



# This is a great area **to live**

*Our service territory, stretching from St. Cloud to Cambridge, down to Stillwater and Maple Grove, offers so much to our members.*

## National bird research near your backyard

Argonne National Laboratory installed acoustic monitors (microphones) at our Ramsey Renewable Station to monitor the frequency of bird visits to one of our solar plus battery storage projects. In just one year, Argonne detected 47,000 separate instances of bird calls and songs from 23 different species at the site. Millions of stems of low-growing native and pollinator-friendly plants make up the ground cover for the project. Visiting birds included Indigo Bunting, Eastern Bluebird, and Sandhill Crane. See the full list and hear sample recordings on our website at [connexusenergy.com/birds](https://connexusenergy.com/birds).



*Photo courtesy of Argonne National Laboratory*



*Photo courtesy of Anoka County Parks*

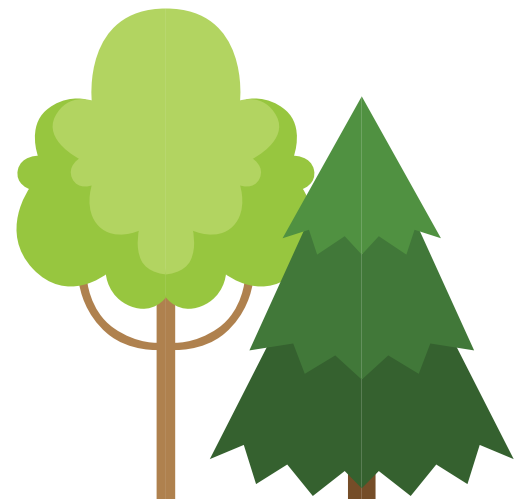
## Outdoor recreation opportunities

Connexus Energy partnered with Anoka County Parks to offer members \$5 off admission to Minnesota's largest outdoor water park, Bunker Beach Water Park in Coon Rapids. Find the coupon in your bill for June, which can be accessed through our website or on our Connexus app. You can also explore the trails, playgrounds, and nature programs within the 11,500-acre Anoka County Parks System.

## Neighborhoods ranging from city life to seclusion

For members who enjoy the dining options, social gatherings, shorter commutes, and general buzz of the city, we have options. And for our members who prefer space to grow their own food, dense tree cover, more privacy, and looking up at a clear night's sky, we have options.

Members can sign up for money saving incentives through our agricultural, business, Wi-Fi thermostat, variable speed pool pump, off-peak programs, and dual fuel rebate programs. For members moving into new developments, we are working with interested builders to pre-wire homes for 240v electric vehicle (EV) charging, smart home technology, and energy efficient choices.



## Community events in all seasons

Connexus is your community partner, and we proudly support events that you enjoy. The hometown festivals include Anoka's Halloween Grande Day Parade, Illuminate Isanti, Ramsey Happy Days 5K and Youth Fun Run, Andover Family Fun Fest, Big Lake's Music in the Park, East Bethel Booster Days, Nowthen Heritage Festival, Princeton's 4th of July Fireworks, and Night to Unite. We also sponsor numerous Chamber of Commerce events in our communities.



## New fast charging for electric vehicles

A ChargePoint DC fast charging station is now available next to the community solar garden at our headquarters in Ramsey. This 62.5kW station is a nice option for charging your battery quickly. It has CCS and CHAdeMO connectors. Our three Level 2 ChargePoint charging stations are next to the DC fast charger.

## Co-op cuisine

### FRESH GARDEN SALSA

*From Big River Farms in Marine on St Croix*

- 1 large tomato, diced
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1-2 hot peppers, de-seeded and minced
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1 small bunch cilantro, chopped fine
- 1-2 tsp. sea salt

Combine all ingredients and mix thoroughly.

*Connexus member Big River Farms gives beginning farmers access to farmland, farm resources, and education about sustainable agriculture. Farming education is happening this summer in a few rows of our headquarters solar garden! Big River Farms, through a Mortenson Family Foundation grant, will cultivate salsa crops.*





## Support for our excellent schools and the class of 2023

To support the post-secondary education of Connexus members' children, 63 scholarships were awarded at 23 high schools. The Connexus Energy Foundation<sup>SM</sup> awarded \$59,000 in high school scholarships. Our Board of Directors attended award ceremonies in their districts to personally congratulate these students.



*Centennial High School*



*Andover High School*



*Princeton High School*

## Learning experiences for college students

Eight interns are spending their break from their college studies to work alongside and learn from Connexus employees. Connexus interns are paid, assigned specific responsibilities, and leave with real work experience for completing their education and entering the workforce.

### **This year's interns are working in:**

- » Distribution Engineering
- » Distribution Design
- » Geographic Information System (GIS)
- » Power Supply & Business Development
- » Member Services
- » Business Applications & Data Services
- » Technology Services

Our interns are learning about the different ways electricity is produced through offsite tours. They are also working together on a cross-departmental research project.

