

your
Connexus Connection

For Connexus Energy Members

Fall 2022 Edition

A rising sun
for stewardship in
our communities

Fishing the Mississippi



NEW POWER AGREEMENTS
Planning for Your Electric Vehicle
Iron Shoe Farm

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*Connexus Energy is an equal opportunity/
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*Cover photo: Fishing along the Mississippi
River near Anoka. Provided courtesy of
Upstream. ©Mike Madison*



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CEO sparks

Connexus announces approval of new customer agreements with Great River Energy

Connexus Energy Members,

The Boards of Directors of Connexus Energy, Great River Energy (GRE), and GRE member cooperatives have voted to adopt new wholesale power and transmission services agreements between Connexus and GRE. The innovative and forward-looking agreements enable Connexus Energy to maintain our affordability and reliability, while opening options to self-supply resources to serve our members' growth, including cost-competitive renewables.

For our Members, Connexus has been working hard to have more flexibility to meet the needs of the more than 330,000 people living in the eight suburban and rural counties we serve. On behalf of our elected board of directors, staff, and members, we thank Great River Energy's membership, board, and staff for working with us to create a new working model, which enables Connexus' flexibility and innovation—a great example of cooperatives working together for members.

Under the power supply and transmission services agreements, effective January 1, 2023, Connexus will transition to being a GRE customer. Connexus has a strong ethic of serving our members and the Connexus board sees this transition to a customer as being on the path to creating new programs and services.

In the coming years, Connexus envisions using its flexibility to provide new options for members to save energy, while also benefiting from modern all-electric transportation, home appliances, and heating and cooling building innovations.

In 1937, our founders sought to modernize life with the early grid and first electric devices. Looking forward, we are strengthening and modernizing our power supply — working For the Members — to adapt to changing technologies like electric vehicles and battery storage, as well as variable market conditions, while providing affordable and reliable electric service.

Thank you for being a member-owner of our cooperative.

Respectfully,

Fran Bator

Chair, Connexus Energy Board of Directors

Greg Ridderbusch

President & CEO



A rising sun for stewardship in our communities



Caring for prosperous growth and the places we share

Each year thousands of sandhill cranes—among Minnesota’s largest birds—roost across Connexus Energy’s service territory, ranging from Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge, to the University of Minnesota’s Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, to the many farm fields and wooded backlots. In White Bear Township, Andy Goldman-Gray and his family count the arrival and departure of a family of cranes to the neighborhood—as well as the affordable and reliable electric service from their cooperative—as a sign of the balance they value.

For Connexus Energy, working for members and communities to provide world-class reliability, safely, at an affordable rate from increasingly sustainable sources, is not only the job, but also a motivating challenge for all staff.

Earlier this year, Goldman-Gray and a group of Minnesotans of varied backgrounds from across the state started a new initiative called Upstream, that highlights Minnesota’s natural places and the people who care for them. The storytelling campaign is sharing how Minnesotans balance development and jobs, along with connecting through the value of stewardship and caring for our natural place. “Upstream is an initiative dedicated to celebrating and amplifying the ways Minnesotans from all backgrounds care for our place, while inspiring new actions to be even better stewards of our state,” says Goldman-Gray.



A Minnesota Upstream member pairs trash pickup with each fishing trip along the Rum and Mississippi Rivers.

Counting more than two dozen partnering organizations that include Connexus Energy, Ecolab, CentraCare, General Mills, and the Minnesota Twins, Upstream shares stories that inspire people to act in ways, both large and small, to be better stewards of Minnesota’s unique and beautiful natural places.

“Reliable and economically predictable energy plays a central role in benefiting both systems and creating a great place to live, work, and play.”

“Anoka County has vibrant ecosystems—not just in our kettle lakes, wetlands, and streams, but in our manufacturing, entrepreneurship, investing, and job training,” says Greg Frahm-Gilles, Anoka County’s new director of economic development.



Connexus employees pick up trash along Ramsey Boulevard.

“Reliable and economically predictable energy plays a central role in benefiting both systems and creating a great place to live, work, and play,” he continued.

In addition to powering communities from increasingly sustainable sources and requiring local solar projects to use pollinator-friendly ground cover, Connexus employees volunteer for roadside cleanup and the Connexus Energy Foundation has been a long-time supporter of Anoka County’s Wargo Nature Center.

“Depending on where you are—in your kitchen or the banks of a quiet eddy of the Rum River—it’s easy to forget the advanced engineering, millions of feet of electric wire and lines of code, and decades of experience and commitment that go into the power that helps make our communities great places to live and work,” says Connexus CEO Greg Ridderbusch.

This easy-to-forget combination of experience, sophistication, and dedication underlies Connexus Energy’s commitment to provide affordable, reliable, and increasingly sustainable electric service.

“An ideal way to power some of our increasingly electric homes and communities is locally produced renewable energy,” says Upstream’s Goldman-Gray. “Keeping our dollars close to home and harvesting more of our abundant sunshine is another way we can care for the places we love while being stewards of a prosperous community.”

Goldman-Gray sat down with Connexus CEO Greg Ridderbusch. Find the video recording online at connexusenergy.com/upstream.



Using electricity and "going Upstream"

What’s one more way you can play a role and modernize your home to efficiently use electricity?

- » Get a home electric assessment. Expert advice on weatherization can help you prioritize your home investments and reduce your energy costs.
- » Sign up for Peak-Time Rebate, Connexus Energy’s program that pays you to save.
- » Switch to a heat pump water heater. 120-volt plug-in options are now available.
- » Make the switch to a high-performance and easy-to-clean induction cooktop.

New federal rebates and tax incentives are available for several of these home upgrades, as well as rooftop solar, battery storage, and select electric vehicles. Find links to the latest resources and information at connexusenergy.com.

Services to help you plan for an electric vehicle

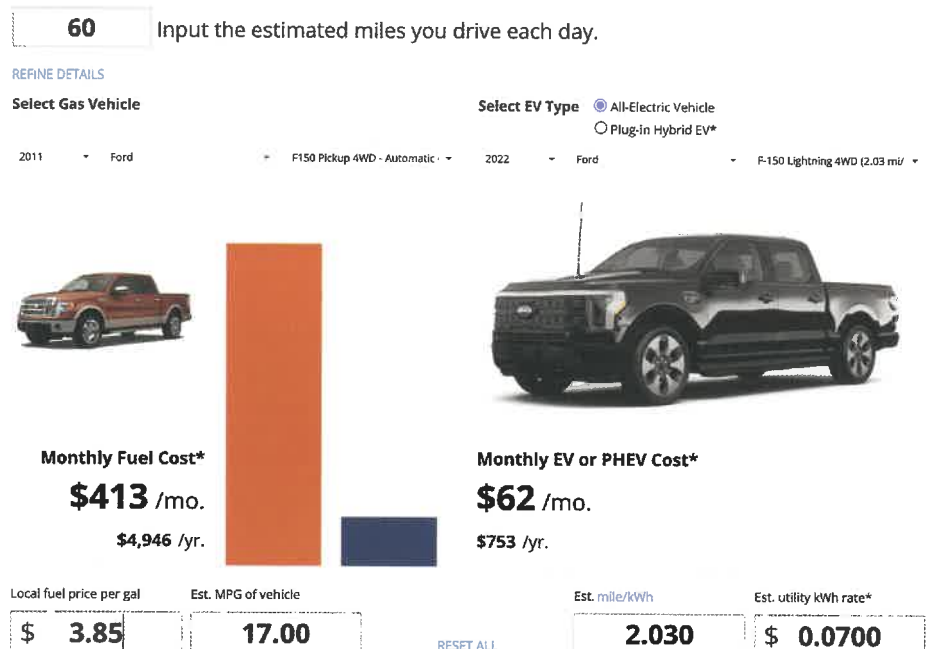
Curious about EVs? Check Connexus Energy's website

Gas prices have come down now, but the months-long price spike got a lot of people thinking, "Will my next vehicle be electric?" New tools are available on Connexus Energy's website for curious as well as active shoppers.

A study earlier this year found that when financing and operating costs of six different, competitively priced EVs—including the Ford F-150 Lightning and Nissan LEAF—are compared to their gas equivalents, EV credits and rebates, combined with overall lower operational costs, made the EV cheaper on a monthly basis over the financing term in most states.

"Many Connexus members have shared with us that their next vehicle will be electric," says Justin Partee, who leads electric vehicle rates and service programs for the cooperative. "I can't tell you what gas prices will be next year, but I can tell you that with Connexus, electricity costs are stable and affordable."

Calculate your estimated monthly savings potential.



"Many Connexus members have shared with us that their next vehicle will be electric."

Justin Partee
Connexus Energy

Questions about grid stability and electric vehicles?

Though power grids in some states have been in the news, electric vehicles are not part of the problem, and, in fact, may be part of the solution. As of July 1, the state with the most electric vehicles—more than 680,000—the EVs accounted for less than 1 percent of electricity demand. And, experts have shown that even if the state has 5 million EVs by 2030, the vehicles will account for less than 1 percent of peak demand.

Interestingly, electric utilities nationwide are in the earliest stages of finding ways to work with EV owners in order to use a portion of the energy stored in EV batteries to help reduce strain on the grid during times of peak demand. While these innovations mature to market readiness, Connexus members are served well by the cooperative and, on average, experience an unplanned, temporary power outage just once every 3.6 years.

Co-op cuisine

SMOKED HUNGARIAN MANGALITSA COPPA STEAKS

From Carla Mertz, Iron Shoe Farm

4 Mangalitsa coppa steaks (or shoulder steak)

Note: do not trim fat, this is the beauty of the Mangalitsa. Fat is good!

½ cup maple sugar (we use Dudley's out of Big Lake)

1 tbsp Hungarian paprika

1 tbsp salt

1 tbsp pepper

1 tbsp chili powder

1 tbsp local honey

Equipment:

Cutting board/platter, smoker or grill

Notes:

If grilling, cook at 350° until internal temp reads 145°

Instructions:

1. Rub the maple sugar, paprika, salt, pepper, chili powder, and honey into the steaks and let set for a minimum of one hour.
2. Set smoker to 350° to get the smoke rolling. We use applewood or hickory pellets.
3. Reduce heat to 250° and smoke the Mangalita coppa steaks for approximately 1 hour until internal temp reaches 145°.
4. Let the steaks stand for five minutes to continue cooking.

Perfect sides: Arugula summer salad with microgreens, sweet potatoes with cinnamon and honey

Carla Mertz founded Princeton-area Iron Shoe Farm in 2013. In addition to edible flowers and microgreens, specialty beef, chicken, and duck, Carla raises pasture-raised heritage hogs—a cross of Mangalita and Red Wattle varieties. The result of this cross is a well-marbled, crimson cut that self-bastes while cooking. In February, Mpls/St Paul magazine recognized Carla as one of five "Food Industry Innovators with Vision and Action." Learn more at IronShoeFarm.com.



Flower photo courtesy Lisa Patrin, Empty Nester's Kitchen.

Go for 100%

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Oh snap



4-H of Anoka County recognized the Connexus Energy Foundation with its "Friend of 4-H" award during a ceremony at the Anoka County Fair.



With many new faces, including several new to the sport, Connexus Energy's trap team secured third place for the 2022 season.



Putting a friendly face on electric technology, Connexus Energy member A+ Outdoor Services is working with the cooperative to evaluate an autonomous and all-electric mower for use at headquarters.



CEO Greg Ridderbush and CFO Yan Paul Martinez joined leaders from Pan-O-Gold and Ideal Energy to tour a newly installed rooftop solar array at Pan-O-Gold's new distribution warehouse in East Bethel.