

# your Connexus Connection

For Connexus® Energy Members

Summer 2022 Edition

## A new look for electric



\*Powered by  
solar energy  
from Connexus

**STORM RESPONSE AND  
READINESS**

August is Cash Back Month  
The Renewable Energy Club



# The benefit you only get from your electric co-op, Connexus Energy.

Cash Back is based on your annual purchases of electricity and will be directly applied to your August statement if you are eligible.

## CONTACT US

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*Connexus Energy is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.*

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*Cover photo: Connexus CEO Greg Ridderbusch and powersports pioneer Derek Guetter with a OneWheel, CAKE electric motorcycle, and a Polestar 2 EV provided by Pritchard Electric Motors.*



# Reliable Affordable Safe



## Get the new Connexus app for your phone

iOS and Android now available



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



# CEO sparks

Greg Ridderbusch, President & CEO

## Reliable electric service through stormy weather and industry changes

Years of preparations and drills paid off this spring when a series of major storms rolled across Minnesota one early May Monday, bringing down trees and power lines in communities served by Connexus Energy. Instantly notified of the first outages by our digital meters, the team and systems acted immediately to safely restore power. Three storms in four days ended up causing a substation outage as well as more than a hundred minor outages, impacting 19,000 of Connexus' more than 141,000 members. Service to all members was promptly restored.



A safe storm response is an all-hands-on-deck moment, and we are thankful for our line crews and operations staff sometimes working multiple 16-hour days, including some through the entire night. In addition, we are thankful to several neighboring utilities that were able to assist, reminding us that in times of need we are a community that helps one another. With a grid designed in a series of loops and more than two-thirds underground, increasingly protected from trees and vehicle crashes, Connexus provides service reliability in the top three percent of all utilities nationwide.

Whether it's in response to storms or successfully navigating modernization and changes in how power is generated, Connexus Energy is prepared to continue to provide reliable electric service for our members. You can play a role as well by signing up for Connexus Energy's most flexible program, Peak-Time Rebate, the program that alerts you about peak usage days in the summer, and then pays you to conserve energy during peak hours.

It's not just how we reliably provide and deliver power that's modernizing though, we're also proud to be helping members learn about the new look of electric — lightweight motorbikes, medium- and full-size pickups, as well as several new lawnmower models, all providing a superior experience by using electric motors. Coming to the Anoka County Fair at the end of July, we encourage you to take a look at the Big Air Tour's Electric Activation show featuring some of these vehicles.

We're also pleased to be making progress in negotiating new contracts with our wholesale electricity supplier that will enable power cost savings and increased flexibility for localized control of our membership's power supply future. As true today as it was when we were founded in 1937, we're working for you — For the Members — adapting to changing technologies and market conditions while providing reliable and affordable electric service.

Thank you for being a member-owner,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Ridderbusch'. The signature is stylized and fluid, written in a cursive-like style.

### Learn More

*Check [connexusenergy.com](http://connexusenergy.com) for information about an online town hall event on power supply.*

# A new look for electric

Powersports pioneer Derek Guetter (see cover photo) grew up with gas engines — he and his brother toured the world backflipping ATVs and producing motor-sports events and DVDs. He had already heard about early electric motorbikes and was curious about their performance when Connexus approached him about whether they could fit in his acclaimed show, the ATV Big Air Tour.

“No question — they rip,” said Guetter after trying several models of lightweight electric motorcycles.

Across America, there’s a new look for electric vehicles emerging — Ford F-150 Lightnings, Rivian pick-ups, and Chevy Silverados, as well as nearly a dozen new electric motorcycle brands including CAKE, Sur-Ron, Talia, and others. “It’s all about an improved customer experience,” said Matt Mukomela, of Polaris Inc., when introducing the new electric Ranger ATV to a group of energy leaders from around the state at the University of Minnesota.



*Three-time X Games gold medalist Brett Turcotte on a CAKE electric motorcycle from Pritchard Electric Motors.*



*Even lawnmowers are getting a new look — and benefit from being able to be fueled by the electricity from the battery of an electric pickup.*

Connexus members Shaun and Rick Olson agree and are glad they waited until now to buy an electric car — the vehicles have much larger ranges than earlier models. Shaun, who works at Invictus Brewing, loves that the company offers workplace charging as a benefit. She’s also encouraged by the convenience of a rapidly growing number of stores and clinics providing charging stations so she can always be “topping off” the battery, even though the car has a range of more than 400 miles per charge.

“As employers large and small are competing for the best workers and offering existing staff new perks, we’re seeing a steadily growing interest in our rebates for workplace EV chargers” said Connexus Energy’s Paul Hanson, who advises members on electric vehicle chargers for business or home. “Whether it’s gas for your car, or propane for home heating, it’s just hard to know what the price of these fuels is going to be. One thing is certain though, and particularly in Connexus service territory — electricity costs are stable and affordable.”





*Ridderbusch and Brian Burandt, VP of Power Supply, with a Rivian light-duty pickup.*

A recent study 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.

Connexus Energy and other electric cooperatives across the country are always looking for ways to brighten their communities and help their member-owners save energy and money. “Beneficial Electrification” is one of those ways — a term that encompasses vehicle electrification as well as a broad set of other uses.

“Locally produced renewable energy is the ideal way to power electric vehicles, appliances, heat pumps, and other beneficial electrification measures,” says Connexus CEO Greg Ridderbusch. “Keeping energy dollars in our own community is another way of creating more economic benefits.”

To a rocking soundtrack, Derek Guetter and his team can appreciate the appeal of local power. As their athletes send electric bikes soaring into the air, the announcer tells the crowd the vehicles are powered by some of the “millions of megawatts of raw power from the sun,” harvested right here in Connexus service territory.



In 2022, Connexus Energy became a member of the Beneficial Electrification League, a non-profit organization bringing together numerous co-ops and other organizations across the country to help consumers save money on their energy bills and improve the economy while achieving environmental goals.

The Beneficial Electrification League highlights four conditions that, if satisfied, ensures that electrification activities will be beneficial to consumers. They must:

- » Save consumers money over the life of the appliance or product
- » Improve product quality or the consumer’s quality of life
- » Benefit the environment
- » Foster a more robust and resilient grid

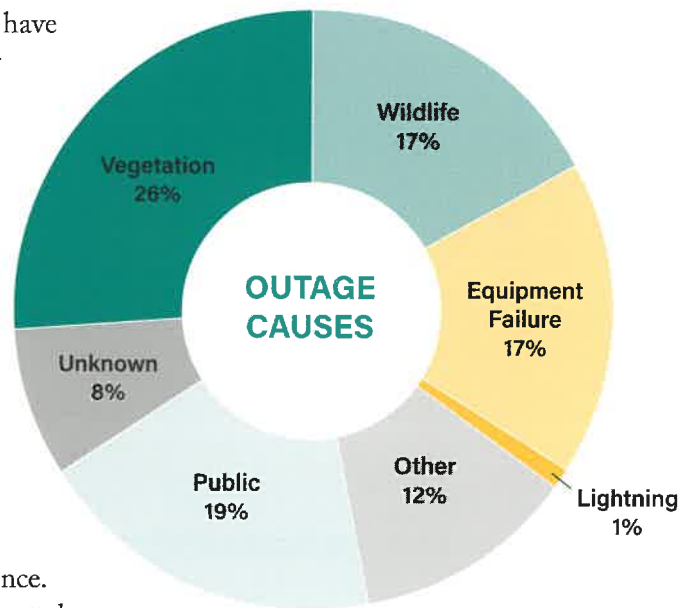
Long-time Connexus Energy members may remember the co-op’s several resources and brochures over the years highlighting a wide variety of electric home appliances.

# Connexus Energy ready for summer 2022

Similar to the last several years, the summer of 2022 is predicted to have above-average temperatures driving increased usage of air conditioning during the hottest summer days. This year, we have been hearing questions about the grid and its ongoing reliability from members at home.

For Connexus Energy, this year is not much different than last year or previous years regarding the number and variety of risks managed by our expert staff to provide reliable electric service. The organization that operates the regional grid, MISO, and local experts successfully manage and respond to changing factors on the bulk grid. Always on our “radar” are wildlife, car crashes, and vegetation (particularly blown down by storms) which account for nearly two-thirds of all unplanned electric service interruptions on the Connexus grid. Happily, Connexus members on average experience an unplanned, temporary power outage just once every 3.6 years.

Know that in a power-out situation, we’re always grateful for your patience. Our field teams and office staff are working hard to restore your power and that often involves behind-the-scenes work you can’t directly see. As a nonprofit electric cooperative, that’s been serving this community since 1937 — more than 85 years — our priorities are always to provide affordable, reliable, resilient, and safe services to members.



## What you can do to help grid reliability

- » Take action to manage your use on the hottest days. Sign up for Connexus Energy’s Peak-Time Rebate program and install a Wi-Fi thermostat to help manage and reduce electricity use throughout the summer months.
- » Support our initiatives regarding tree trimming near power lines and ensure there’s six feet of space around any green utility boxes on or near your property.
- » Almost 20% of damage to Connexus’ grid is caused by automobile crashes, dig-ins, or other forms of public damage. Drive safe and ensure that you, or any contractors, call 811 before you dig.



See full-size versions of these May 2022 photos on [Connexus Energy’s Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) pages.



# Co-op cuisine

## SUPER CREPES

From the Haines family

2 large eggs

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup milk

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup water

1 cup all-purpose flour

2  $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons granulated sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

3 tablespoons salted butter melted



Equipment:

Induction cooktop, bowl, immersion blender, spatula

Instructions

1. Combine all of the ingredients in bowl and thoroughly combine with 10-20 seconds of an immersion blender. Let the batter rest for 10 minutes.
2. Heat a nonstick pan over medium heat. Add a little butter to the pan and swirl it to coat the bottom before cooking your first crepe.
3. Pour about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of batter into the hot pan, tilting and swirling the pan while pouring, to cover the bottom of the pan in a thin, even layer of crepe batter. Let it cook for about 30 seconds until lightly browned around the edges and the top has lost its glossy wet sheen, then carefully flip with a spatula and cook on the other side for about 10 seconds. Remove to a plate and repeat with remaining batter.
4. Serve with your favorite crepe fillings. We do ours with bananas and peanut butter on the inside (though sometimes strawberries and mixed fruit) then powdered sugar, whip cream, and sprinkles after it's rolled up.



*Connexus member AJ Haines of Andover is a photographer, videographer, and BMX athlete performing with the Big Air Tour.*



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Sign up today at [connexusenergy.com](http://connexusenergy.com).

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# Oh snap



CEO Greg Ridderbush and CFO Yan Paul Martinez join other Connexus staff in the co-op's annual roadside cleanup. Connexus has been donating trash bags to Anoka County roadside cleanup work for 20 years.



A large group of Connexus Energy field and office staff helped with several landscaping projects including spreading mulch, planting flowers, and tree trimming at Volunteers of America's Bar None ShelterPlus facility.



Serving seniors in Anoka County, Impact Services received a \$1500 Your Community Your Choice grant. Visit Connexus' website today and nominate a nonprofit serving your community — a new grant is awarded each month.



In coordination with Connexus hosting a meeting of the Minnesota Solar Energy Industries Association, grazer Arlo Christofaro-Hark brought a flock of lambs and ewes to the co-op's headquarters solar project.