

# your Connexus Connection

For Connexus Energy Members

Winter 2023 Edition

A group of four people (three men and one woman) are seated around a conference table in a meeting room. They are looking at a large wall-mounted screen that displays several line graphs and charts, likely representing energy usage or reliability data. The room has large windows with blinds in the background.

## A focus on reliability

How electricity gets to you  
Our dedicated employees  
Take control of your energy usage





## Check out Connexus Energy's new mission statement

Our mission statement communicates our purpose and what we hope to accomplish. Connexus employees participated in a writing contest, and the Board of Directors chose a powerful and inspiring winning statement. Here is our refreshed mission statement:

**POWERING OUR MEMBERS**  
and communities toward a  
**smarter energy future**  
with a passionate focus on  
*affordability, innovation, safety, and grid reliability.*

### CONTACT US

Services/Outage: 763.323.2650  
connexusenergy.com

 facebook.com/connexusenergy  
 @connexusnews

14601 Ramsey Blvd.  
Ramsey, MN 55303

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

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fran Bator, Chair (East Bethel)  
Mark Ethen, Vice Chair (Blaine)  
Shelly Peterson, Secretary/Treasurer  
(Nowthen)  
Michael Cady, Assistant  
Secretary/Treasurer (Blaine)  
Richard Braastad (Ham Lake)  
Kenneth Fiereck (Clear Lake)  
Donald Holl (Forest Lake)  
Gordon Westerlind (Big Lake)



# Reliable



# Affordable



# Safe

## Watch for your 2023 Annual Meeting voting packet

Hold on to your annual meeting mailing, which arrives in early April. The election passcode inside your mailing is required to vote online for directors.

You are eligible for prizes if you vote!

Information for how to attend the annual meeting on April 20 in-person or virtually will be included.



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



# CEO sparks

## Battling inflation, while staying affordable, reliable, and innovative

New challenges are impacting us all—the global pandemic, price increases on essentials like food and gas, and supply chain shortages affecting everything from vehicles, to transformers, to wire. Accountable for your electricity, we are managing the economic and operational impacts of these challenges.

You, your family, your community, and your cooperative are resilient. Connexus has successfully navigated our economy with no general rate increase over the last five years. All the while maintaining our grid making smart and necessary investments for electric reliability in the top 5% of the nation's utilities.\* The remarkable inflation is a force for which we have moderated the impact on Connexus members. Our continued commitment to affordability has enabled the Connexus Energy Board of Directors to adopt a 2023 budget with one of the lowest general rate increases among Minnesota's electric utilities: 2.9% for members, which includes a \$1 basic service charge increase.

A key contributor has been the successful completion of a two-year renegotiation of our legacy power supply arrangements. Information on this change is available on our home page. New customer contracts between Connexus and Great River Energy (GRE):

- Create savings
- Unleash technology and business flexibility
- Enable us to arrange future power supply for growth
- Innovate to help members to save energy while also benefiting from modern all-electric transportation, home appliances, and heating and cooling building innovations

Looking ahead, your board of directors and staff will continue to act in the membership's interest, being relentless in our service to you.

Thank you for being a member-owner,



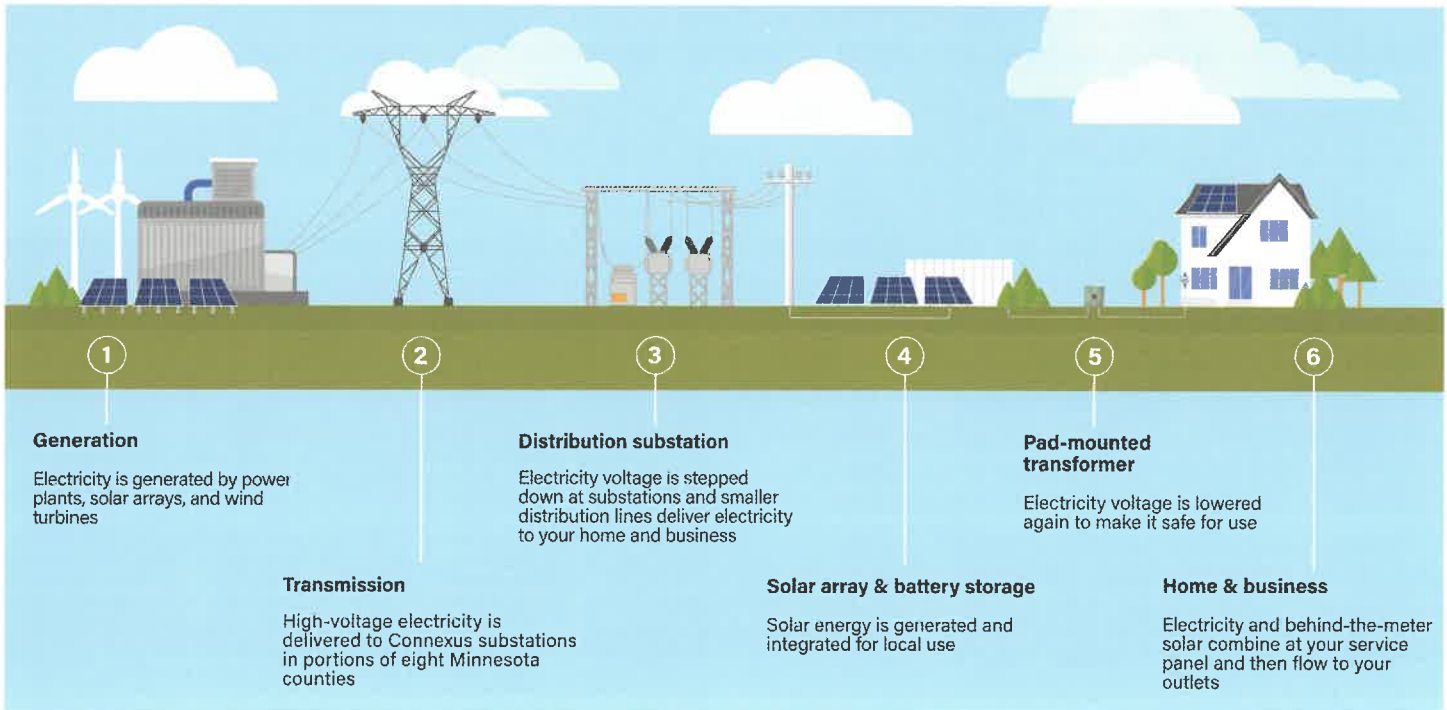
**Greg Ridderbusch**  
President & CEO



**For the Members**

Est. 1937

# How we get electricity **to you**



## Connexus Energy is focused on reliability

It's difficult to imagine your life without electricity. You use it to open your garage door, heat and cool your home, refrigerate and cook your food, charge your phone, and even power your car. Fortunately, **Connexus members only experience an unplanned outage once every 3.6 years on average.**

## A resilient grid design

The grid is the system we use to move electricity from where it is produced to where it is used in your home or business. You see much of our equipment each day.

Look at the graphic above for a simple breakdown of how electricity is generated, carried by interconnected wires and equipment, and safely delivered to your outlets and switches. **We prioritize reliability** when planning how to modernize and restore aging portions of our distribution grid because we know how much your life depends on it.

## KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING

Customize how and when you receive alerts and updates. Pick the information that you want to receive by logging into your online account at [connexusenergy.com](http://connexusenergy.com). Choose from:

- Billing reminders & payment confirmations
- Customized daily consumption thresholds
- Weekly usage summary
- Program enrollment
- Power outage updates



## Our employees make us strong

Maintaining Connexus Energy's industry-leading distribution system reliability is a daily focus for employees. Educated and experienced employees build and manage our distribution system so that you can work from home, prepare dinner, and relax while watching a favorite program.

Seven core values drive how our 200+ employees operate and make decisions, both individually and as a cohesive team. Those core values are safety always, service driven, collaborative, empowered, innovative, integrity, and respect all.



*Connexus employees discussing power supply issues.*

“Last May, we experienced unprecedented storm-driven outages, the most in your cooperative’s 85-year history. Thanks to our resilient grid design and the dedication of our experienced team, we were able to manage the system and promptly restore power,” explained Connexus CEO Greg Ridderbusch. During unplanned outages like this, power is always restored to all members as safely and efficiently as possible.

We have a variety of careers at Connexus. Our divisions and some of their roles include:

- **Electric Operations** – Linework, field support, warehouse & fleet services, engineering, design, geospatial services, and system operations
- **Power Supply & Business Development** – Data analytics, commercial account support, marketing, and communications
- **Technology** – Cyber security, hardware, software, and network support
- **Members** – Member services support, metering, and economic development
- **Employee Services** – Human resources, safety, and facility services
- **Finance** – Accounting, financial planning, and billing & collections

## WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A LINEMAN

Linemen construct and maintain our overhead and underground electrical distribution lines in a safe, reliable, and timely manner. They work hard and are committed to keeping your power on.

You (or someone you know) could be a lineman if you enjoy:

- Climbing poles to elevated heights
- Operating bucket trucks & power tools
- Working outdoors in all weather elements
- Working as a team



**Join us! Visit [conneuseenergy.com/careers](https://conneuseenergy.com/careers) to view our current openings, benefits, and company culture.**

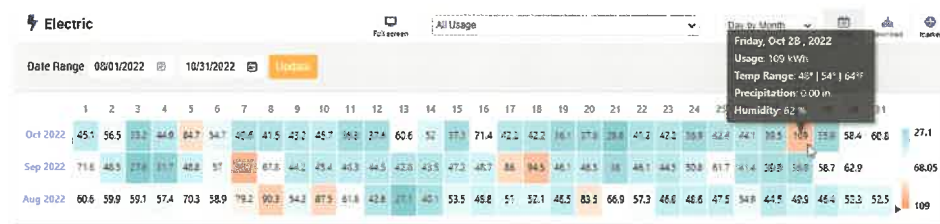


# Take control of **your energy usage**

## Monitor your energy usage

Connexus is dedicated to helping you save energy and money. Our cold winters often lead to increased electricity use. We created **two ways for you to access helpful tools** to monitor your usage – the Connexus Energy app for iOS/Android and online when you sign into your account at [connexusenergy.com](http://connexusenergy.com).

You can view your consumption in increments as small as 15-minutes, by day, or by year. You can use this information to potentially change your energy consumption behavior. Add additional data like the temperature, precipitation, or humidity to consider how they affected your usage. The example below shows three months of daily usage.



Blue shades = lowest usage; red shades = highest usage.

## Get personalized recommendations from our technicians

Set up an energy assessment with a Connexus technician to learn how your household uses energy. The cost is \$40, and income qualified members are eligible for a free assessment.

### Our technicians can:

- Assess load sources and offer recommendations on how to lower usage
- Give you a packet with energy saving tips
- Provide an energy saving kit with 8 LED lightbulbs

Request an energy assessment at [connexusenergy.com/assessment](http://connexusenergy.com/assessment).



## If you cannot pay your winter bill, we want to help

Contact a representative at 763.323.2650 if you cannot pay your Connexus bill. Our goal is to not disconnect your electricity. **We work really hard with you** to share the energy assistance resources that you may qualify for and to set up a modified payment plan that you can more comfortably pay. Visit [connexusenergy.com/cwr](http://connexusenergy.com/cwr) for resources by county.



## THESE POWER USERS GREATLY RAISE YOUR WINTER BILLS

- Indoor space heaters – running a 1,000-watt space heater for 12 hours a day will add about \$40 to your monthly bill
- Outdoor heat cable/tape
- Electric blankets
- On-demand hot water heaters

## 5 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR ENERGY USE

- Lower your thermostat setting while away or asleep – program this or remotely turn the temperature back up before returning if you have a Wi-Fi thermostat
- Rotate ceiling fans clockwise to help distribute your heat
- Unplug appliances and tools you are not using – they continue to use electricity in standby mode
- Open window shades with direct sunlight to help warm your room and close those that do not face the sun to add some insulation
- Do not heat empty rooms – close vents or doors

# Co-op cuisine

## SWEET MAPLE ROASTED CARROTS

*From the Dudley Family in Big Lake*

16 oz. peeled whole carrots  
2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil  
2 tbsp. maple syrup (Dudley's Maple Syrup is a great choice)  
Salt and pepper, to taste  
Leaves from 4 sprigs fresh thyme  
1/4 c. chopped parsley

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°.
2. Place the carrots into a baking dish or large rimmed sheet pan. Drizzle with olive oil and maple syrup. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with thyme leaves.
3. Toss well to coat evenly.
4. Roast in the oven until fork tender for 20-30 minutes, depending on thickness of the carrots.
5. Add more salt and pepper to taste, if desired, and garnish with fresh parsley. Enjoy warm.

*Dudley's Syrup Company began tapping trees and making syrup in 2011. They sell their maple syrup, maple sugar, and birch syrup at farmers' markets in Princeton, Elk River, Otsego, and Big Lake. The University of Minnesota recognized the Dudley family as Sherburne County's 2022 Farm Family of the Year.*



## Plow it safe

As part of our ongoing commitment to electrical safety, we're reminding you to pause and look for electrical equipment and power lines before plowing snow. Note the locations of electrical cabinets, poles, and guy wires before the snow gets too deep. Take special care when plowing near power equipment.

- Immediately call us at 763.323.2660 if your equipment strikes a transformer, cabinet, power pole, street light, overhead line, or guy wire.





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Ramsey, MN 55303

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# Oh snap



CEO Greg Ridderbusch and Director of Engineering & System Operations Jared Newton heard from Dr. Mahmoud Kabalan of the University of St. Thomas Center for Microgrid Research and Dr. Don Weinkauf, dean of the School of Engineering.



Over 50 employees, family, and friends signed up for our 10<sup>th</sup> annual Feed My Starving Children packing event in Coon Rapids. They helped pack 33,900 meals.



About 30 Connexus employees, family, and friends helped with our Anoka Halloween Grande Day Parade float, passing out over 400 pounds of candy!



Employees enjoyed an outdoor lunch followed by team yard game competitions at this year's picnic. Each team had coordinating bandanas or leis.