



your **Connexus Connection**

For Connexus Energy Members

Winter 2020 Edition



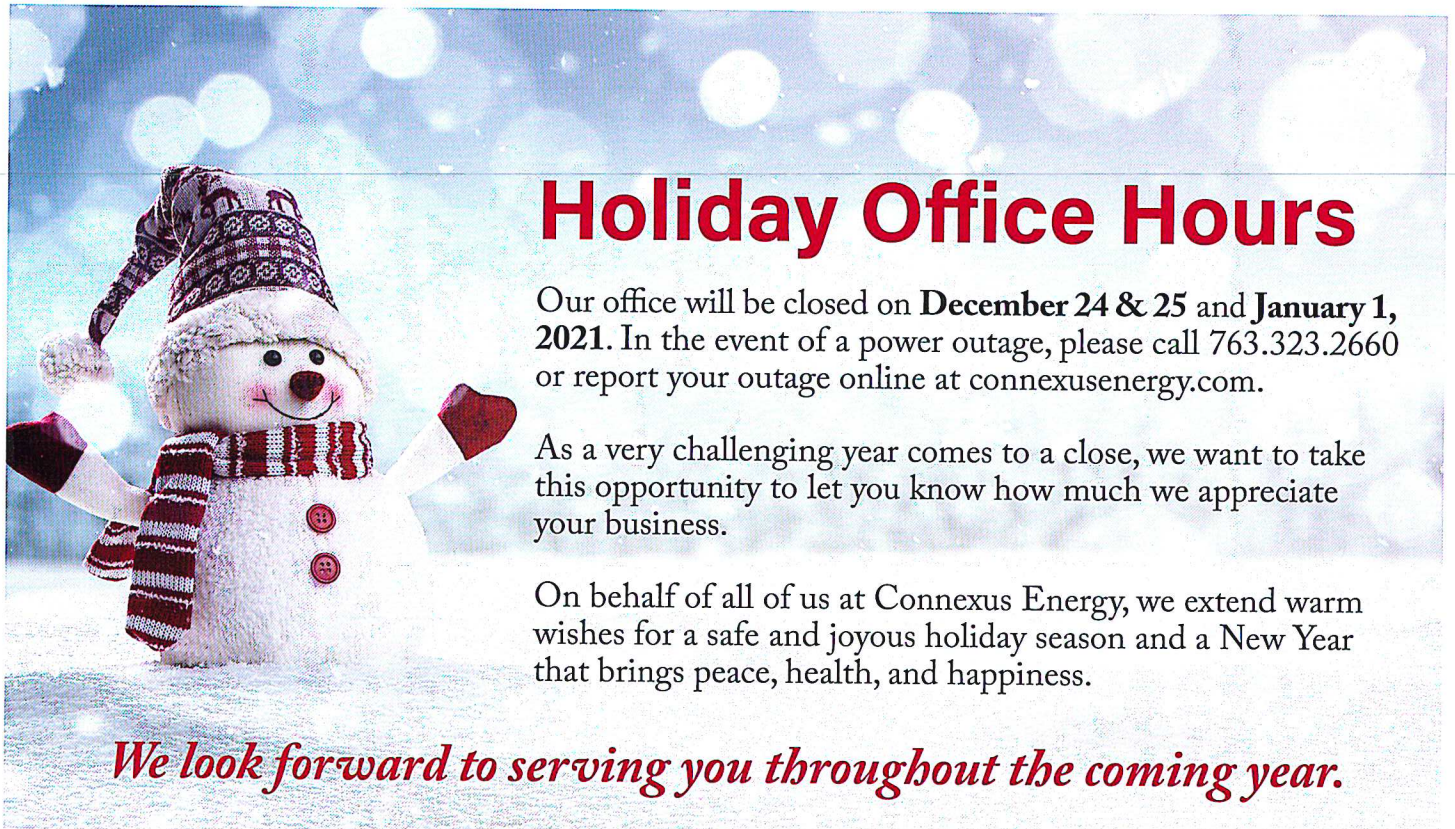
Keeping your
electricity
affordable

**PEAK-TIME REBATE
SUCCESS STORIES**

Employees share energy-saving tips

Easy holiday recipes





Holiday Office Hours

Our office will be closed on **December 24 & 25** and **January 1, 2021**. In the event of a power outage, please call 763.323.2660 or report your outage online at connexusenergy.com.

As a very challenging year comes to a close, we want to take this opportunity to let you know how much we appreciate your business.

On behalf of all of us at Connexus Energy, we extend warm wishes for a safe and joyous holiday season and a New Year that brings peace, health, and happiness.

We look forward to serving you throughout the coming year.

CONTACT US

Phone

Member Services: 763.323.2650
Report an Outage: 763.323.2660

Online

Website: connexusenergy.com
Email: info@connexusenergy.com
Facebook: [facebook.com/connexusenergy](https://www.facebook.com/connexusenergy)
Twitter: [@connexusnews](https://twitter.com/connexusnews)

Address

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)
Gordon Westerlind, Secretary/Treasurer
(Big Lake)
Peter Wojciechowski, Assistant
Secretary/Treasurer (Ham Lake)
Michael Cady (Blaine)
Kenneth Fiereck (Clear Lake)
Donald Holl (Forest Lake)
Shelly Peterson (Nowthen)

Important dates

January 29, 5:00 p.m.

Deadline for director candidate applications

Late March/Early April

Annual Meeting voting packets mailed to members

April 22, 4:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting



Front Cover: The Faris family from Big Lake are big savers on our Peak-Time Rebate program.

CEO Sparks

Greg Ridderbusch, President & CEO

Affordable every step of the way

Every step takes us in the right direction – keeping your electricity affordable. For the past three years, there's been no rate increase for our members and it looks like that trend of rate stability will continue into 2021. Connexus Energy's electric rates remain two to four percent below that of Xcel Energy. How are we keeping your electric rates affordable while at the same time improving our service and reliability? It's a step-by-step process, tackled by our Board and employees on multilevels.

Our message seeking power supply cost savings is being heard. Great River Energy (GRE) proposed, and it was decided, to shut down a North Dakota coal plant which is higher cost than other options. Starting in 2023, Connexus expects to see cost savings exceeding \$10 million annually. That's a big step towards securing affordable electricity for you.

Another step is focusing on peak management systems. What does that mean? It means that on days when the price of power is highest, we have programs and systems in place to offset some of those costs. Our unique solar plus battery storage renewable stations in Ramsey and Athens Township helped us offset over \$5 million in costs from GRE this year.

This past summer we continued with our Peak-Time Rebate (PTR) program for members. It's a unique program, new to Minnesota, and members are noticing the savings. We're sharing some of their stories in this newsletter. PTR and our Wi-Fi PowerNap® programs are two examples of how we are putting control of energy savings in our members' hands. And, we've made it easy for members to track their energy usage online.

Even with all the challenges of working through a pandemic, our employees continue to step up and contribute their cost-saving ideas. Their implemented ideas will save us over \$1.8 million in 2020. Those savings directly reduce costs for our members. Every step of the way, we're working to make sure we can provide you with affordable electricity.



Peak-Time Rebate **Success Stories**

Our Peak-Time Rebate (PTR) meant substantial savings this past summer for members who joined the program. For an increasing number of energy-conscious households, the program where we pay you to save energy on hot days could easily stand for **Pretty Tremendous Returns**. We talked to several of our top PTR savers and asked them to share with us what they're doing to achieve these savings.

Rob C - Coon Rapids **Saved \$161.82**

He's number one. Out of the thousands of members already on the PTR program, Rob saved the most. "With each PTR event, we challenged ourselves to see if we could save even more money the next time. Honestly, it's kind of a rush when you get that notification after the event that lets you know how much you've saved."



Rob's PTR tips: "I set reminders on my phone when the event was happening. We unplugged everything that we didn't need to be using; Keurig coffee machine, air purifier, TVs, and other electronics. Because the events happen on hot days, we went outside and enjoyed the weather instead of watching TV. We do have a pool with a variable speed pump on a timer. That helps so the pump isn't running all the time."



Paul F - Big Lake **Saved \$147.23**

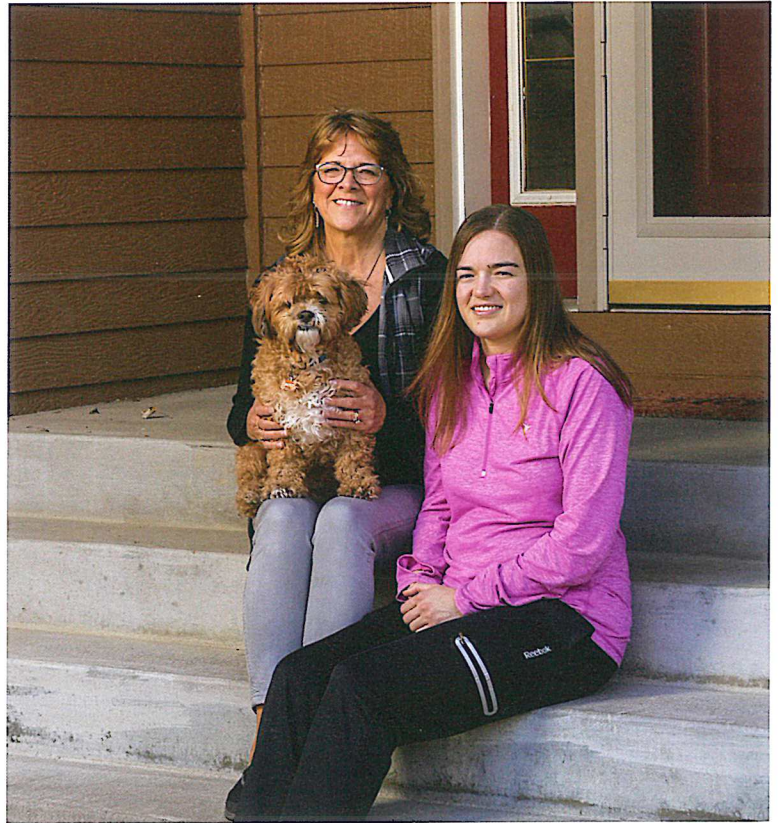
The first thing Paul and Stephanie did when their family moved into their new home last year was to change all the lights to LED and install a smart thermostat. "It's important to conserve what we can, and that's why we signed up for PTR," says Paul. "Admittedly, when a PTR event is on, I spend a lot of time lecturing the kids about not going in and out of the house and shutting the door. Every little bit helps."

Paul's PTR tips: "We do the same thing for a PTR event as we would do if we were going to grandmas for the weekend, says Paul. We make sure all the stuff that's wasting energy is turned off. The kids are notorious for not shutting off their PlayStation. I have it on a switch where I can shut the whole thing off. I also pre-cool the house in the morning and early afternoon and then shut everything off about 10 minutes before the start of PTR."

Deb L - Ham Lake
Saved \$135.31

Deb considers her family to be big energy users. "That's especially true now that my daughter and I are working mainly from home," says Deb. "The PTR program was easy to follow and the savings were noticeable. And, for every event, it's your choice if you want to participate."

Deb's PTR tips: "I'm on the Wi-Fi PowerNap program and it automatically pre-cooled the house prior to a PTR event. I have most of our TVs on a power strip so I can easily shut them all off. Even if your TV is not turned on, it's still using some electricity."



Darren F - Zimmerman
Saved \$136.57

For Darren, the PTR program makes good sense. "There's no penalty if you don't reduce your usage, and if you do, it's free money. So why wouldn't I do it? There only seems to be a positive benefit."

Darren's PTR tips: "We do have devices that are always on, whether it be computers or TVs. Using a "Kill A Watt" tool helps identify what items in the household consume the most energy. These are the first things I shut off when a PTR event is called. We use the PTR event as a time to unplug and read a book and disconnect from our devices in a very device-centric world."



**REDUCE ELECTRIC USE,
EARN A REBATE.**



**WANT TO KNOW
MORE ABOUT PTR?**

With PTR, you are in control. During the summer months (June, July, and August), we send you an email or text to let you know when reducing your electric usage is most important. The more you do, the more you will save.

To find out how PTR works and to enroll in the program, visit us at **connexusenergy.com**.

From us **to you**

Connexus employees share their favorite energy-saving tips



When working from home, it is easy to turn lights on in the morning and then forget they are on. Remember to turn off your lights when they aren't needed by setting a reminder on your phone or calendar or by using smart home technology.

Angela P. Member Billing & Operations

I keep my curtains closed in the winter to add another insulating barrier between the windows and the inside of my home.

Erica S. Engineering

If you use natural gas to heat your home, turn up the thermostat when you are cold instead of running a space heater. Even a small space heater uses a lot of electricity.

Christine G. Employee Services

Wash your clothes on cold cycle. Unless you have a specific reason for doing so, washing your clothes at a high temperature isn't necessary these days, as most laundry detergents are designed to work at cooler water temperatures.

Tom D. Technology

During the summer, keep your shades or curtains closed so that the sun doesn't heat your house and cause your air conditioner to work harder.

Mary R. Member Billing & Operations

Turn off the air exchanger in the summer.

Angie K. Member Services

Set a certain day during the week to do all your laundry at once. Once the dryer gets heated up, it dries all the consecutive loads much faster.

Yelena M. Member Services

Close the heat vents, shades, and doors in the rooms in the house that aren't used regularly (guest rooms, basement). There's no reason to heat unused spaces.

Matt C. Engineering

Don't keep opening the oven door while baking. If the oven door is opened, the temperature inside can drop 10 or more degrees.

Kim V. Executive Services

Clean your dryer lint trap to save energy and keep your home safe.

Dave S. Member Services



Connexus Gift Certificates

Looking to brighten someone's holidays? A gift of electricity will be warmly received by family and friends who may be struggling to pay their bills.

Connexus Energy gift certificates are available in any amount.

Mail us a check for the amount you wish to be applied to the recipient's account. Also include their name and address. We will credit the recipient's electric account and send you a gift certificate to give to them.

Mail to:

Connexus Energy

Attn: Cashier

14601 Ramsey Blvd., Ramsey MN 55303

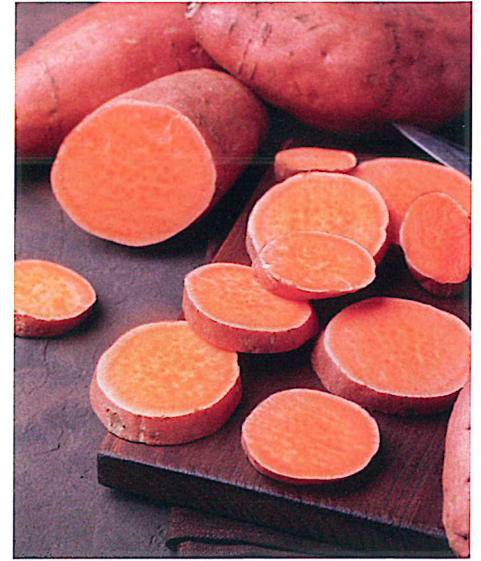
Co-op Cuisine

SCALLOPED YUMMY YAMS

½ cup packed brown sugar
6 tbsp. butter at room temperature
6 tbsp. all-purpose flour
2/3 cup finely chopped pecans
6 medium yams (about 3 lbs.), peeled and cut into ½-inch thick rounds
1 ½ cups heavy cream, heated

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In bowl, work together brown sugar, butter, and flour until well combined, then work in pecans. Set aside. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add yams and cook until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold running water. Arrange yams, overlapping in vertical rows in a lightly buttered 9x13 baking dish. Pour cream over yams. Bake 20 minutes. Add crumble pecan mixture over yams and continue baking until yams are tender and topping is browned, 20-30 minutes longer.

Everyone will ask for this recipe.



HOT BUTTERED CIDER

½ cup butter, softened
½ cup packed brown sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
8 cups apple cider
8 apple wedges for garnish

In small bowl, cream butter with sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg; set aside. In large saucepan, heat apple cider to boiling. In large mugs, place 1 table-spoon butter mixture (or to taste). Add 1 cup apple cider. Garnish with apple wedges. Makes 8 cups.

A perfect warm-up on a cold day after outdoor activities.

PEANUT BUTTER & PUMPKIN DOGGIE TREATS

2 ½ cups whole wheat flour
2 eggs
½ cup canned pumpkin
2 tablespoons peanut butter
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Whisk together the flour, eggs, pumpkin, peanut butter, salt, and cinnamon in a bowl. Add water as needed to help make the dough workable, but the dough should be dry and stiff. Roll the dough into a ½ inch thick roll. Cut into ½ inch pieces. Bake until hard, about 40 minutes.

Bake extras and give as a gift to those on your list who have four-legged friends.





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Ramsey, MN 55303

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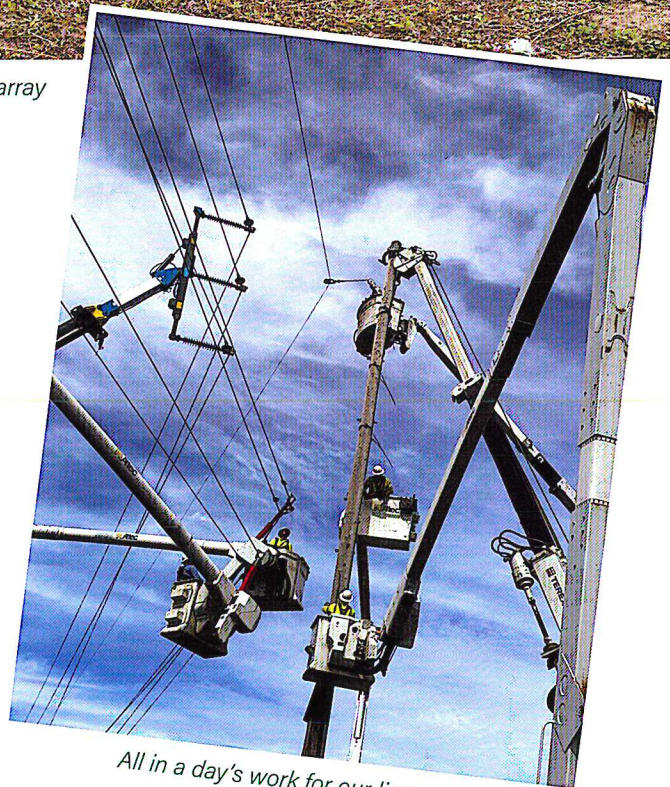
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1301 81ST AVE NE
FRIDLEY MN 55432-2188

Oh Snap!



A groundbreaking event was held this fall for Sunflower I. Our newest solar array located near Princeton will produce 5,400 MWh of annual energy, which is equivalent to the usage of 530 homes.



All in a day's work for our lineworkers.



What better place to learn about Minnesota's history than outdoors at the Connexus-sponsored Heritage Labs at Wargo Nature Center.

