



# THE OUTLET

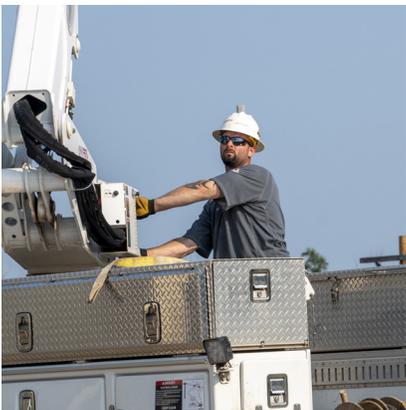
Monthly Publication of Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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## ANNUAL SAFETY TRAINING

MLEC pole top rescue training was held on July 15<sup>th</sup>. Training is facilitated through the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA). Each year, our lineworkers, right-of-way workers, and other staff that may assist in storm situations review what to do in case of an emergency that involves a fellow crew member. At this time, lineworkers re-certify their climbing skills and practice different emergency scenarios. If a lineworker was to have an emergency while climbing a pole, the training would ensure another lineworker would be able to rescue them, lower the individual safely to the ground, and begin first aid. Using different rigging combinations lets the lineworkers practice for a variety of situations. MLEC always puts safety first, and by performing safety trainings, the cooperative is assuring that our employees are properly trained to handle any situation.



# EV CHARGING OPTIONS

The ability to charge an electric vehicle (EV) at home is one of the major benefits to making the switch from traditional cars fueled by gasoline.

Every EV comes with a Level 1 charging cord that plugs into a regular household outlet. If you drive less than 30 miles per day on average, Level 1 charging will meet your needs. If you exceed 30 miles per day, or prefer a faster charge, you will want to invest in a Level 2 charging station.

To alleviate the up-front cost associated with this equipment, Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative currently offers members a rebate of up to \$800 on EV chargers, when purchased through our online store. After buying your EV and deciding to invest in a Level 2 charger, you need to pick which model of charger is right for you. To help with this decision, we have vetted and chosen three Minnesota-made ZEF Energy chargers.

## Follow these steps to purchase an EV charger:

- Visit [energywisemnstore.com](http://energywisemnstore.com)
- Create an account if you are new to the store. If not, simply sign in.
- Click on "Shop," then Electric Vehicle Chargers
- Peruse the three available options:
  - **ZEFNET 40:** Charges your EV five times faster than the cordset that came with it. This is a hardwired car charger that works indoors and outdoors with all EVs.
  - **ZEFNET 50:** Charges your EV up to seven times faster than the cordset that came with it. This charger is also hardwired and works indoors and outdoors with all models of EVs.
  - **ZEFNET 60:** The fastest EV charging station is high-quality and packed with features. It's built and tested to automaker standards to ensure a reliable charge every time. Its NEMA 4 outdoor-rated enclosure means it can be installed anywhere.
- Add your choice of EV charger to your cart. Please note the installation cost, which can vary from \$500 to \$1,000, is not included.



You will be required to provide additional information and a cooperative representative will contact you to answer any questions you may have, as well as ensure you meet the eligibility requirements for the rebate. The charger will arrive at your home within eight to thirteen weeks of purchase and is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Questions or concerns?  
MLEC's Board of Directors  
represent you!

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320/692-4800  
[bwelty@mlecmn.com](mailto:bwelty@mlecmn.com)  
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[cpundt@mlecmn.com](mailto:cpundt@mlecmn.com)

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[hharms@mlecmn.com](mailto:hharms@mlecmn.com)  
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[brobinson@mlecmn.com](mailto:brobinson@mlecmn.com)

**Michael Reem - District 7**  
218/839-5697  
[mreem@mlecmn.com](mailto:mreem@mlecmn.com)

**Sarah Cron - CEO**  
218/927-8224  
[scron@mlecmn.com](mailto:scron@mlecmn.com)

Find minutes from  
MLEC Board meetings at:  
<http://www.mlecmn.net>  
under **My Co-op**

*This newsletter is the voice of  
your tax and interest paying  
RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE,  
an organization which was  
formed to supply you with  
low-cost, dependable  
electricity when other sources  
failed to do so.*

Managing Editor: Kassie Peterson,  
Communications Specialist

**Did you know a  
ZEFNET 40 charger  
can replenish 200  
miles of range  
in an eight-hour  
charging session?**

## Faster isn't always better!

Additionally, since most EVs are driven far less than 200 miles each day and will remain parked overnight, most EV owners do not need to take on the added expense of a faster charger. This approach can save you some money on material and installation - plus it will help your utility keep electric rates low.

ENERGY WISE  MN



# COAL CREEK STATION UPDATE

Dear Member:

We recently learned that our wholesale power provider, Great River Energy (GRE), reached an agreement to sell Coal Creek Station to Rainbow Energy Center, LLC. Like many of you, I have fond memories of touring that well run power plant, meeting their dedicated and innovative staff, seeing the enormous equipment in action, and taking the bumpy ride in Roxie's bus through Falkirk Mine.

The plant was scheduled to close in the second half of 2022; however, the sale of Coal Creek Station averts the plant's closure. Rainbow Energy Center will continue to operate the 1,151-megawatt (MW) power plant using current plant employees to do so. Rainbow Energy Center also plans to develop carbon capture and storage at Coal Creek Station.

"We are excited for what the future holds for our North Dakota employees and the communities surrounding Coal Creek Station," said GRE's President and CEO David Saggau. In addition to preserving local jobs and enhancing the local rural economy, selling the plant also offers additional benefits for GRE's member-owners compared with shutting it down.

Nexus Line, LLC has reached an agreement to purchase the high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission system that extends between central North Dakota and Minnesota from GRE. Further, GRE will operate and maintain the HVDC system under a 10-year contract.

Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line are affiliates of Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp. of Bismarck, North Dakota. "The successful implementation of carbon capture and storage is central to our plans at Coal Creek Station," said Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp. President Stacy L. Tschider. "As a privately held company, we are uniquely positioned to continue the successful legacy that Great River Energy and its employees have established in North Dakota."

Rainbow Energy Center plans to add incremental generation from renewables to fully utilize the capacity of the HVDC transmission system. Additionally, GRE will enter into a power purchase agreement with Rainbow Energy Center, LLC.

These transactions will help ensure GRE continues to provide its member-owners with reliable and affordable electricity as the cooperative builds its future power supply portfolio.



Sarah Cron  
CEO

"We are building a power supply portfolio that will serve our member-owner cooperatives with clean, affordable and reliable energy for decades," said Saggau. The cooperative will add 900 MW of wind energy by 2023 and remains on track to meet Minnesota's 80% carbon dioxide reduction goal ahead of schedule.

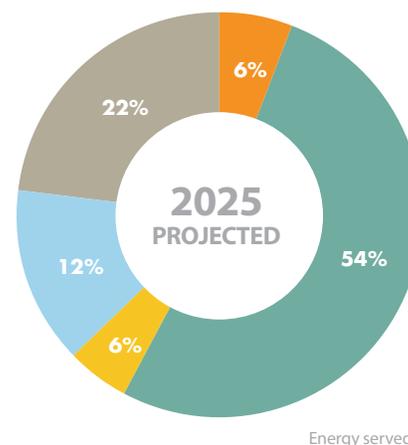
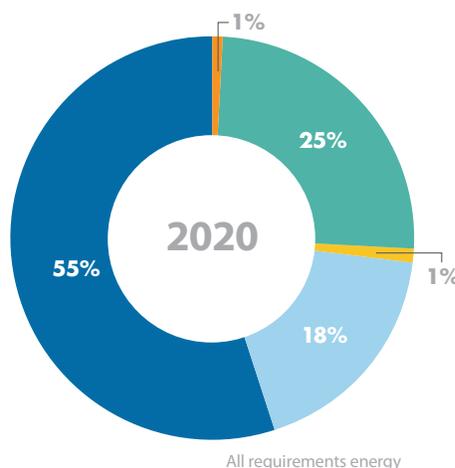
The sale of Coal Creek Station and the HVDC system is expected to close later this year, after required approvals are obtained. As always, we will keep you up to date as information becomes available.

Until next month,

## Energy Mix Progression

Over the past several years, Great River Energy (GRE) has begun to transition from an energy mix heavily reliant on coal to one that will be over half renewable energy sources by 2025.

GRE has a fleet of peaking plants ready to produce energy when its members of the larger grid need it. When combined with the Midwest's high availability of wind, natural gas provides stability today and flexibility for a future with new technologies and opportunities.



# LET'S DISH

## SEND US YOUR RECIPES!

We'll credit your account **\$10.00** if it's printed in THE OUTLET

### MAIL TO:

Kassie Peterson  
Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative  
P.O. Box 230  
Aitkin, MN 56431

### OR E-MAIL:

kpeterson@mlecmn.com



## SWEET SUMMER SALAD

### Salad Ingredients:

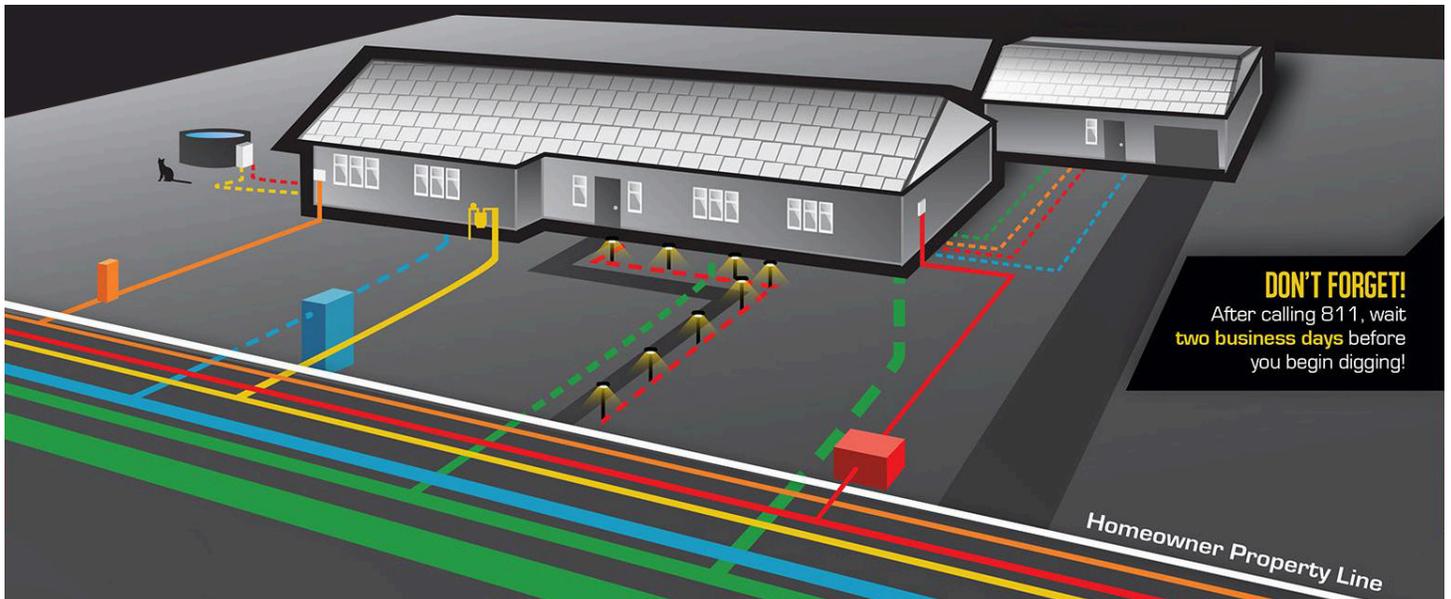
1 1/2 heads Romaine lettuce  
1 cup shredded swiss cheese  
1/2 cup dried cranberries  
1 cup cashews  
1 apple (cubed)  
1 pear (cubed)

### Dressing Ingredients:

1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp Dijon mustard  
1 Tbsp poppy seeds  
1 Tbsp grated onion  
1/3 cup lemon juice

Combine all the salad ingredients in a bowl and set aside. In a blender, mix the dressing ingredients until smooth. While blender is running, slowly add 2/3 cup oil. Toss the salad in the dressing before serving. Enjoy!

Thank you to Rita Glazebrook of Isle for sharing this month's recipe.



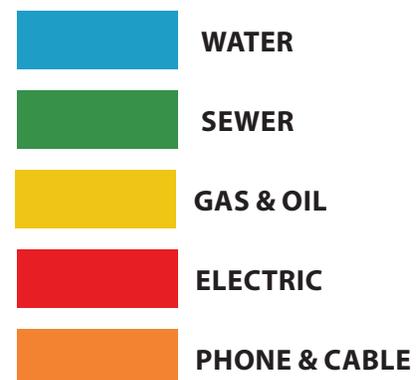
# LOCATE LINES FOR FREE

Water, natural gas, and residential electric lines are usually owned by the utility up to the meter. Some sewer districts own only the mains; others extend their ownership to laterals up to the property line. The customer typically owns everything beyond these points.

Customer-owned lines usually include any that serve outbuildings, hot tubs, security lighting, pools, and natural gas grills.

The free locating service available through Gopher State One Call applies ONLY to facilities owned by utilities. The diagram above shows a variety of utilities, some owned by the utility and some by the homeowner.

*Those utilities marked by dotted lines are typically owned by the homeowner. Private locating services will mark these for a fee.*





## WHETHER TEMPS RISE OR FALL, YOUR ENERGY BILL WILL STAY COOL.

Take advantage of these hot promo rebates when you install a qualifying, energy-saving air source heat pump!

For a **LIMITED** time, if installed in August, you can double your rebates on ducted air source heat pumps when installed by a qualified contractor and put on our dual fuel program. Call MLEC at 218-429-0432 or 888-433-4279!

Air Source Heat Pump	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
SEER 14.5	\$480	\$960
SEER 15	\$580	\$1,160
SEER 16	\$630	\$1,260

Regular office hours are  
Mon-Fri 8:00 to 4:30

927-2191 or  
800-450-2191 (toll free)



48 hours before you dig  
Dial 811 - Gopher State  
One Call or log on to:  
[www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org)

Then contact a licensed electrician  
to locate your secondary wires.

### **MN Electrical Inspectors**

Aitkin County &  
South East Crow Wing County  
Nathan Readle 218-537-8419

Northern Crow Wing County  
Jeff Overmyer 218-252-0919

Mille Lacs County  
Benjamin Husom 320-277-6277

Off-peak and dual fuel system  
consumers should call an  
electrician or heating contractor for  
service or repairs.

Find load control schedule at  
[www.mlecmm.net](http://www.mlecmm.net) under *Quick Links*.



Visit our website -  
[www.mlecmm.net](http://www.mlecmm.net)  
E-mail us - [mlec@mlecmm.net](mailto:mlec@mlecmm.net)

## HOW IS FIBER INTERNET INSTALLED?

Installing a true gigabit fiber network is a BIG job. It is an expensive, complex, and time-consuming process. However, MLEC decided to enter the broadband market in 2016 to meet our members' needs. Broadband is vital to economic development and prosperity in rural areas, and it enhances the quality of life for our members and the communities we serve. With the help of our partner, Consolidated Telecommunications Company (CTC), MLEC was able to embark on its fiber optic journey with 60+ years of experience.

The first steps in starting an MLEC Fiber project are grant writing and engineering. A majority of our fiber projects are grant-funded to keep costs low and consistent for our members. Most grants have specific criteria and only apply to certain areas. This is why we cannot bring MLEC Fiber service to our whole service territory at once. The grant application process can take many months from the initial submission to the award announcements. We cannot guarantee where MLEC Fiber will expand next until the results are announced. After the grant funds are secured, the project moves on to engineering and design. This acts as a roadmap for the project and draws out the path for the fiber optic cable. Once the project area is announced, members can sign up for service and will be added to the list for Fiber-to-the-Home installation.

A home investigation will be scheduled by MLEC staff after you have signed up for MLEC Fiber service. One of our technicians will come to your home and complete a diagram and notes for construction based on information from your meeting.

The next step is construction. All fiber construction is dependent on the weather conditions. The construction season usually starts the end of May and goes until the end of October.

MLEC Fiber utilizes contractors to build the fiber line. This ensures that the work is getting done as quickly as possible. Crews begin with the main line then continue on to individual homes. A fiber service drop will be buried from the main line box near your property to your home.

After the service drop line construction is complete, the splicing company will splice/connect the line at your house box. We also use professional contractors for this to keep the process running smoothly. All splicing work can usually be done outside your home, no need to be present.

The final step in the process is scheduling an appointment for your final install inside the home. You will be contacted via phone by CTC when your MLEC Fiber is ready to be connected!

We understand it is frustrating to wait for your Internet connection. Behind the scenes there are many steps to get the job done right. MLEC is committed to growing and expanding our service to more MLEC members. The value fiber Internet brings is simply unmatched.

We currently have five project areas including south of Aitkin (Phases 1-4) and the East Lake area of McGregor, MN. If you are located in one of these project areas, sign up for MLEC Fiber Internet today! Visit us online or call (218) 429-0433 for more information.

  
Powered by Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative



# PHOTO CALENDAR

See your photo in MLEC's 2022 Calendar! We're asking members to submit photos by October 27, 2021. Winning photos will receive a \$10 credit on their electric bill. Voting will take place after the deadline on the MLEC Facebook page. The 12 photos with the most likes will be featured in the calendar.

**Photos must be emailed to: photos@mlecmn.com by 11:59 p.m. on October 27, 2021.**

*Winning photographers automatically give MLEC permission to use the photos in the calendar, in other publications, member presentations, or electronically online.*



# GIFT CARD TRIVIA!

Correctly answer the question below for your chance to win a gift card from a local business within our service area. The answer can be found within this issue of The Outlet. You must be an MLEC member to participate. Be sure to include your name and service address! Entries must be received by **August 31<sup>st</sup>**.

**MAIL TO:**  
 Kassie Peterson  
 Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative  
 P.O. Box 230  
 Aitkin, MN 56431

**OR E-MAIL:**  
 kpeterson@mlecmn.com

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218-429-0433 or 800-497-5310

**FILL IN THE BLANK**

The free locating service available through \_\_\_\_\_ applies ONLY to \_\_\_\_\_ facilities owned by utilities.

Name:

Address:

*Congrats to Jeanne Varland of Garrison, the June gift card trivia winner!*