



THE OUTLET

Monthly Publication of Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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YOUTH TOUR 2020

This summer... go on a POWER TRIP! Apply for the 2020 Washington D.C. Youth Tour!

MLEC is now accepting applications for the 2020 Youth Tour! Current sophomores or juniors in high school, whose parent or guardian is an MLEC member are eligible to apply. This year's Youth Tour is June 20-25.

The Youth Tour program continues to foster the grassroots spirit of the rural electric cooperative by demonstrating how our government works and what the electric cooperative business model is all about.

Meet student leaders from nearly every state in the country. The tour includes visits with congressional representatives. You'll get the chance to visit some of the most famous museums in the world, and experience monuments dedicated to our country's leaders and heroes. You'll be a part of a group that has more than 50,000 alumni in every walk of life, including U.S. Senators and CEOs. You'll make memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.

Applications can be found on our website, www.mlecmn.net/youth-tour, or by emailing Erin Beck at ebeck@mlecmn.com. Applications must be received by March 10, 2020.



SAVE THE DATE!

All MLEC members are invited to the 2020 Annual Meeting.

WHEN:

Thursday, April 23rd

WHERE:

40 Club Convention Center
460 2nd St NW
Aitkin, MN 56431

SCHEDULE:

Registration - 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Meal Served - 5:00 p.m.

Business Meeting - 5:45 p.m.

Bring a non-perishable food item or cash donation for the food shelf & get a free LED light bulb.



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

Barbara Welty - District 1
320/692-4800
bwelty@mlecmmn.com
Secretary/Treasurer

Bill Bernard - District 2
218/678-3911
bbernard@mlecmmn.com

Harold Harms - District 3
218/232-2935
hharms@mlecmmn.com
President

Aileen DeMenge - District 4
218/768-4900
ademenge@mlecmmn.com
Vice President

Don Appel - District 5
218/927-4134
dappel@mlecmmn.com
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Bruce Robinson - District 6
218/851-4760
brobinson@mlecmmn.com

Michael Reem - District 7
218/839-5697
mreem@mlecmmn.com

Sarah Cron - CEO
218/927-8224
scron@mlecmmn.com

Find minutes from
MLEC Board meetings at:
<http://www.mlecmmn.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

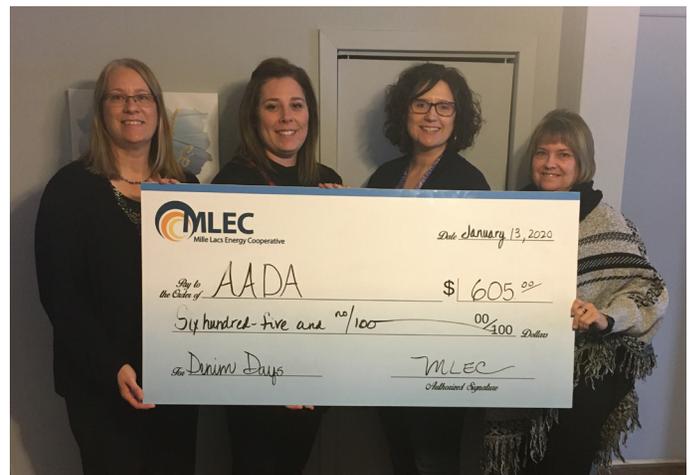
DENIM DAYS DONATIONS

Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative employees raised \$605 through Denim Days, where employees donate quarterly to wear jeans on Fridays. This quarter, the money was donated to Aitkin AADA now known as HOPE (Healing Opportunity Provided Equally).

HOPE works to end violence and provide safety through direct services, education and advocacy to all people experiencing domestic violence. For more information about HOPE visit www.aitkinhope.org.

Photo includes: MLEC employees Kelly Buttler and Ann Espeseth along with Megan Cummings (HOPE Executive Director) and Darla Blegan (HOPE Legal Advocate).

Thank you for the important work that you do!



GROWING OUR FIBER NETWORK

Dear Member:

Last month, I indicated that MLEC will need to change the name of our XStream Fiber Internet due to a lawsuit by a national internet service provider. Their claim was that the name XStream was too close to their national brand. As a result, your MLEC staff came up with a name that we hope cannot be confused with another brand. We are happy to introduce the re-brand of our 1 Gigabit high-speed fiber service as...MLEC fiber!



The logo features a stylized 'M' composed of three horizontal bars in blue, orange, and white, followed by the text 'MLEC fiber' in a sans-serif font. 'MLEC' is in white and 'fiber' is in blue.

In late January, Governor Walz announced that MLEC was awarded a Minnesota State Broadband grant for a Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Internet project. The grant is for \$1.25 million, bringing the total amount of 2020 state and federal grant dollars available to MLEC to \$3.2 million!!

Typically, grants require the receiving entity to invest some portion of the award in the form of a match. In 2020, MLEC will invest an additional \$1.8 million, bringing the total to \$5 million that MLEC will be investing in critical infrastructure for our community and service area.

As a reminder, the Federal grant we received in September will focus on the East Lake area. This new project (Phase 3) will connect our previous fiber project areas (Phase 1 & 2) and stretch from South of Aitkin to North of Farm Island Lake. This is exciting to us, because it connects patches of our existing fiber service territory, strengthens our fiber network, and gives us more opportunities for solid and methodical growth.

The newest project will pass 500 homes and businesses and will provide up to 1 Gigabit symmetrical Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Internet service. FTTH is the fastest and most reliable Internet available. We are excited to, once again, partner with Consolidated Telecommunications Company (CTC) on the construction of this project to expand our MLEC Fiber Internet network.

“This is exciting to us, because it connects patches of our existing fiber service territory, strengthens our fiber network, and gives us more opportunities for solid and methodical growth.”

At the end of the day, the name of our brand does not matter. What matters is that we are providing a critical infrastructure to rural areas of our community. Not to the masses, but to those that do not have another alternative. Because of our efforts to apply for these grants, another 700 rural homes and businesses will have the opportunity to have access to 1 Gigabit fiber Internet service.



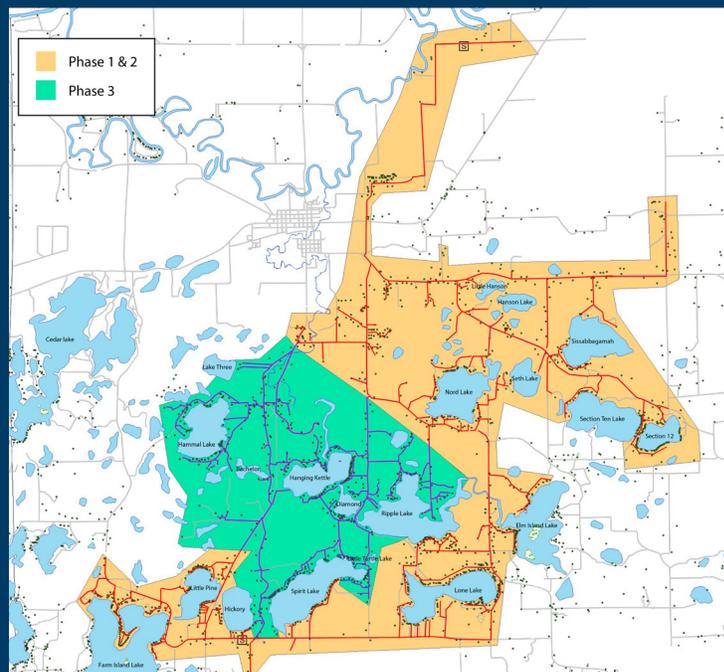
Sarah Cron
CEO

As we continue to work on expanding our fiber network, and applying for future grant opportunities, please watch our website, Facebook, and the Outlet for updated information. For more information on MLEC Fiber Internet call our office at 218-429-0433 or visit our website at www.mlecmmn.net/fiber.

Until next month,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sm'.



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, P.O. Box 230 Aitkin,
MN 56431

OR E-MAIL:

kkokesh@mlecmn.com



Thank you to Darla Medeck-Johnson of Perham for sharing this month's recipe.

BREAKFAST ENCHILADAS

12 oz. ham, finely chopped	1 Tbsp flour
2 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese	1/4 tsp salt
1/2 cup green pepper, chopped	4 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup green onion, chopped	2 cups milk
8 - 7 inch flour tortillas	1/4 tsp garlic powder

Mix ham, 2 cups shredded cheese, onion, and green pepper. Roll 1/3 cup mixture in each tortilla shell. Place seam side down in an 11x17 baking dish. Combine eggs, milk, flour, salt, and garlic powder. Pour over enchiladas and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Cover the pan with tin foil and cook at 350 degrees for 40 minutes. Uncover and bake another 10-15 minutes. Sprinkle the top with the remaining shredded cheese and bake until it is melted. Serve with salsa and sour cream. Enjoy!

NEW YEAR, NEW REBATES

With rebates on everything from appliances to air source heat pumps, it's easy to make your home more cost-effective and energy efficient! Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative continually works to provide rebates that not only save energy, but also save our members money. It is important to note that limited funds are available, and rebates are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. A dated copy of the sales receipt is required within 90 days of purchase.

We provide rebates on the following:

- \$25 - Energy Star® Dehumidifier
- \$25 - Energy Star® Dryers
- \$50 - Energy Star® Refrigerator and/or Freezer
- \$25 - Recycling or Haul Away of Refrigerator or Freezer
- \$25 - Smart Thermostat
- \$30 - LED Yard Light
- \$50 - HVAC Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM)
- \$500 - Ductless Air Source Heat Pump
- \$400 per ton - Ground Source Heat Pump
- \$100 per kW - Off Peak Heating
- \$100 - Peak Shave Water Heating
- \$400 - Off Peak Water Heater
- \$500 - Off Peak Electric Vehicle & ChargeWise
- \$500 - Heat Pump Water Heater
- \$25 - AC Tune Up
- \$100 - Installing Cycled Air Controls

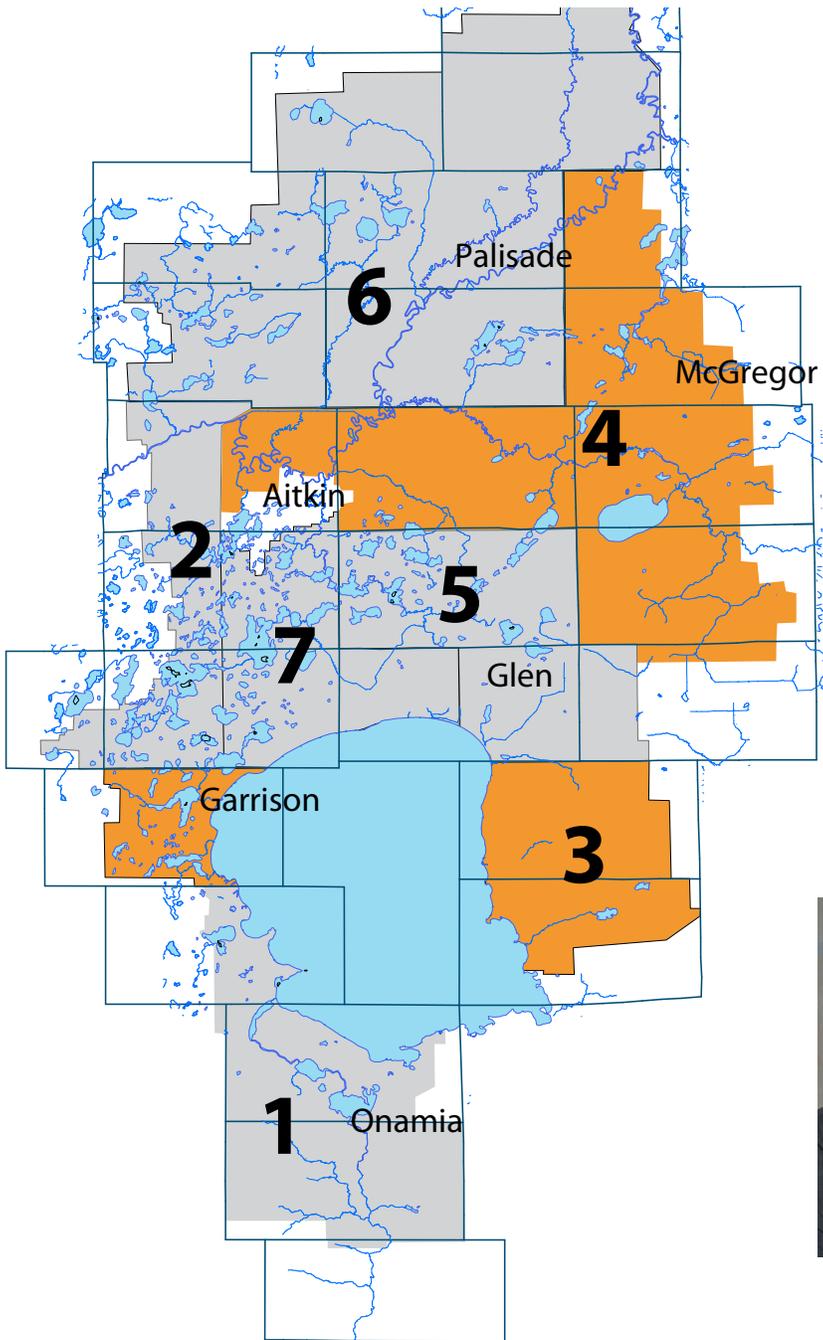
Central Air Conditioning & Ducted Air Source Heat Pumps

Must have a registered contractor install

- \$50 - SEER 14.5 up to 16 Central A/C
- \$480 - SEER 14.5 Air Source Heat Pump Installation
- \$580 - SEER 15 Air Source Heat Pump Installation
- \$630 - SEER 16 Air Source Heat Pump Installation

Contact our Energy Services Team at 218-429-0432 or 888-433-4279 for details or go to www.mlecmn.net to get more information and rebate forms.





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

Then contact a licensed electrician
 to locate your secondary wires.

MN Electrical Inspectors
 Aitkin County &
 South East Crow Wing County
 Mike Wenzel 218/270-2265

Northern Crow Wing County
 Bradley Rasmussen 218/543-1023

Mille Lacs County
 Tim Emery 320-692-4104

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 under *Quick Links*.



Visit our website -
www.mlecmm.net
 E-mail us - mlec@mlecmm.net



Harold Harms
 District 3



Aileen DeMenge
 District 4

Get involved. Have your say.
Make a difference.

BOARD ELECTIONS

**Candidate filing for MLEC director positions from
 Districts Three and Four is open until February 23rd!**

District Three includes members whose electric account numbers start with 52, 54, 55, 58, or 59. The present director is Harold Harms of McGrath.

District Four includes members whose electric account numbers start with 17, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 42, or 43. The present director is Aileen DeMenge of McGregor.

If you are an MLEC member receiving electricity in one of the districts listed above and are interested in filing for a director position, **call Erin Beck at 927-8245 or 800-450-2191 or, email ebeck@mlecmm.com** for director election filing forms and a complete information packet. All filings must be received at the Cooperative by **February 23, 2020**.

You can find additional district and annual meeting information on the MLEC website www.mlecmm.net.

BROADBAND INTERNET GRANT

It was announced by Governor Walz that Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative (MLEC) was awarded a Minnesota State Broadband grant for a Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Internet project. The project area will connect our previous fiber project areas and stretch from South of Aitkin to North of Farm Island Lake.

The project will pass 500 homes and businesses and will provide up to 1 Gbps symmetrical Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Internet service. FTTH is the fastest and most reliable Internet available. We are excited to, once again, partner with Consolidated Telecommunications Company (CTC) on the construction of this project and expand our MLEC Fiber Internet network.

Total grants received for 2020 amount to \$3.2 million, including the Community Connect Grant that was awarded to MLEC in September! It is going to be an exciting project year and we are looking forward to providing more members with the best Internet service available. Those in the new project areas will be contacted by mail in the coming weeks.



Our fiber Internet service has a brand new name! XStream is now known as MLEC Fiber. Mille Lacs Energy Co-op will continue to provide and expand our same great fiber Internet service under our new name. Please continue to read the Outlet, Facebook, and our website for more information and updates on our upcoming fiber projects.

For more information on MLEC Fiber Internet call our office at 218-429-0433 or visit our website at www.mlecmn.net/fiber.

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30
Mbps



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Viasat

SYSTEM-WIDE METER UPGRADE

MLEC is in the process of making a substantial investment in infrastructure, building one of the most technologically advanced power control systems. MLEC plans to implement AMI and install an MDMS throughout 2020. The new meters will improve reliability and give you more tools and opportunities to manage and save energy.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

(218) 927-2191 • (800) 450-2191 • www.mlecmn.net

 **MILLE LACS ENERGY COOPERATIVE**

36559 US Highway 169, Aitkin, MN 56431 • (218) 927-2191 / (800) 450-2191 • www.mlecmn.net

Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.