



THE OUTLET

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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BROADBAND INTERNET GRANT

MLEC awarded Community Connect Grant for fiber Internet project.

Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative (MLEC) was recently awarded a Community Connect Grant from the USDA, Rural Utilities Service, for a Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Internet project. The project will encompass a substantial portion of Rice River Township and Spaulding Township in rural Aitkin County, Minnesota.

The area also includes land and facilities owned and operated by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe in the East Lake Community.

The project will pass 235 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 XStream Fiber Internet network.

Broadband Internet access is not a luxury. In rural America, it allows for searching and applying for jobs; completing schoolwork; telecommuting; telehealth; and the potential to bring businesses to the area. Much like bringing electricity to every home and farm in rural America, bringing broadband

Internet access to rural America will reduce the economic disparity of our regions. This grant will be a boost to economic development and will aid in the advancement of telehealth and educational needs of the area residents.



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

RED FLAGS RULE

As many as nine million Americans have their identities stolen each year. As a result of that startling statistic, the Federal Trade Commission has developed a regulation called the “Red Flags Rule.” The Red Flags Rule requires businesses to develop a program to detect, prevent, and minimize the damage that could result from identity theft.

The data privacy of our members is important to us, and as a MLEC member, you may be asked to provide additional information and identification when you make inquiries on your account, such as verifying the last four digits of your social security number.

A member may complete an Authorized Contact Agreement form to allow us to give account information to anyone other than the member. This permits an Authorized Contact to make inquiries on the account to which they

are authorized. The Authorized Contact must provide their name, date of birth, and the last four digits of their social security number in order to receive account information. While these practices may seem intrusive, please understand that these procedures are in place to protect your member data and prevent the occurrence of identity theft.



VOICE YOUR OPINION

Help protect the tax status of electric cooperatives!



The RURAL Act would allow co-ops throughout the nation to once again accept government grants for disaster relief or broadband service without risking their tax-exempt status.

Currently, co-ops face the loss of that status if they accept any kind of grant from local, state or federal governments. The dilemma grew out of a 2017 tax reform bill passed by Congress that changed the definition of “non-member revenue” to include government grants. Co-ops are barred by federal tax law from receiving more than 15% of their revenue from sources other than their members. Before the change, grants were considered capital and did not factor into co-ops’ revenue ratios.

MLEC was recently awarded a grant to install fiber broadband Internet, which is the only way MLEC can afford to be in the fiber business. The grant money MLEC received has to be counted as non-member income. The ultimate consequence is that MLEC would have to pay federal corporate taxes – adversely affecting our operating expenses. Please contact your federal legislators to explain the situation and get their support in favor of electric cooperatives. To send a letter of support voicing your opinion, visit <https://action.coop/register-composeletters/1399/>

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

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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 Kokesh,
Communications Specialist

BRINGING FIBER TO MORE MEMBERS

Dear Member:

I remember when I was a little girl, my sisters and I would watch *The Jetsons*. We would fantasize about a robot that could vacuum, a television that could answer the phone and show the person you were speaking with, and a wristwatch that could video conference. Who knew that all these things would not only become a possibility, but they would be considered a necessity to some?

If the Industrial Revolution turned the world upside down, the Information Revolution has turned the world into a Whirling Dervish. It has been noted that since the Information Revolution began in 2007, the pace of change that we are experiencing has now exceeded our ability to adapt to the change. However, one thing that has not changed is that your rural electric cooperative wants to be here to keep you connected to the resources that are available to the rest of the country.

You may have heard the great news that Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative (MLEC) was recently awarded a \$1.9 million Community Connect Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture RUS Telecommunications Program. The grant will be used to provide high-speed fiber internet service to the East Lake area of Mille Lacs in Aitkin County. Homes and businesses are able to take advantage of the modern conveniences of the Information Revolution due largely in part to the advancements in fiber broadband technology; and, we want to help bring that service to you, our member.

In fact, many parallels can be drawn to “the REA” bringing electricity to that last mile of rural America, and MLEC bringing high-speed fiber internet to the last mile of rural America. Studies show that the lack of sufficient internet service has become as big of an economic disparity factor as the lack of reliable and affordable electricity was in the 1930s.

“Many parallels can be drawn to ‘the REA’ bringing electricity to that last mile of rural America, and MLEC bringing high-speed fiber internet to the last mile of rural America.”

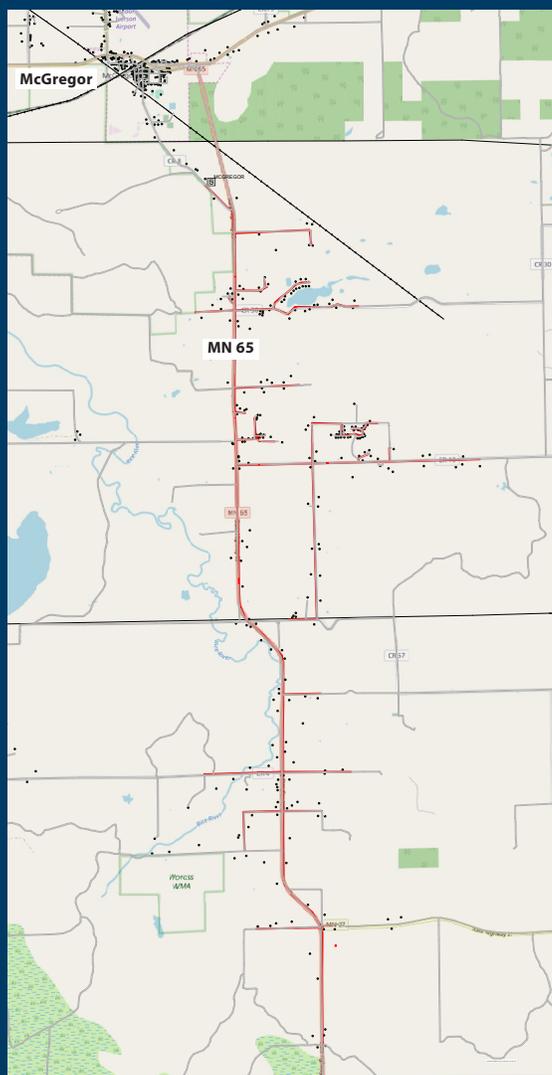
The lack of sufficient internet service can mean the difference between you being able to apply for a job or not; virtually seeing a doctor when you do not have access to transportation; your child being able to complete a homework assignment; or you and your family simply being able to work from home. These are all things that people in “the city” can do. These are all things that people take for granted when they have ready and reliable access day and night.

With the help of the Community Connect Grant, and future grants we hope to obtain, MLEC will keep building out our fiber internet network to that last mile. We will keep working to ensure that you, our member, has access to the same services that people in the city can get. We will keep working to ensure that the people of rural America are not left behind.

Until next month,




Sarah Cron
CEO



LET'S DISH

SEND US YOUR RECIPES!

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

MAIL TO:

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

OR E-MAIL:

kkokesh@mlecmn.com



CAULI SHEPHERD'S PIE

1 medium head cauliflower, cut into florets
3 oz. cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup whole milk
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 cloves of garlic, minced

Thank you to Kajja Kokesh of Palisade for sharing this month's recipe.

1 lb. ground beef
1 cup frozen peas
1 cup frozen corn
2 tbsp. flour
2/3 cup chicken broth
1 tbsp. chopped parsley, for garnish

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Make mashed cauliflower: Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add cauliflower florets and cook until tender (10 minutes). Drain and press with paper towels to remove excess water. Return to pot and mash cauliflower until smooth. Stir in cream cheese and milk then season with salt and pepper to taste. Set the mixture aside.

Make beef mixture: In a large oven-safe skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion, carrots, and garlic and cook till softened (5 minutes). Drain fat. Stir in frozen peas and corn and cook till warmed throughout (3 minutes). Sprinkle meat with flour and stir to evenly distribute. Cook one minute more and add chicken broth. Bring to a simmer and let mixture thicken slightly (5 minutes). Top beef mixture with an even layer of mashed cauliflower and bake for 20 minutes or until there is little liquid visible and the cauliflower is golden. Garnish with parsley and enjoy!

TRUST BOARD AWARDS GRANTS

The Mille Lacs Community Trust Board meets quarterly to distribute funds raised through Operation Round Up. On September 17th the board awarded \$22,700 in grants to local non-profit organizations including: Aitkin Boy Scouts Troop 52, Aitkin Community Meal, Aitkin County Friends of the Arts, Aitkin County Habitat for Humanity, Aitkin County Homeless Coalition, Crisis Line and Referral Service, Deerwood Lakes Lions, Garrison Seniors, Home and Away Ministries, Junior Achievement Aitkin County, Mille Lacs Trails Snowmobile Club, Onamia Fire & Rescue, Palisade Area Community Kids Education Resource, Reading Early Assists Development, and Wild & Free.

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program at Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative where our generous members round-up their electric

bill payment to the nearest dollar. All of the funds raised go into the trust fund which is donated back to the community. Board members include: Shirley Adolphson, Fred Tessmer, Loren Larson, Pat Scollard, Diane Landstad, Linda Weimer, Jack Gilbertson, and Lowell W. Larson.

To receive a Trust application, contact Deb Chute at 218-927-8221 or 1-800-450-2191. The Trust Board meets the second Tuesday in March, June, September and December. Applications are accepted at any time. Those submitted a week before the quarterly meetings will go to the board. Anything submitted after will be seen at the next board meeting.

THANK YOU MEMBERS!



BUSTING EV MYTHS

MLEC wants its members to know the truth about electric vehicles and their advantages.



Electric vehicles (EV) aren't just for short trips close to home. Technological advancements and an ever-expanding charging network have made EVs a good fit for just about everyone.

Even though EVs are becoming more common, some myths remain. Mille Lacs Energy wants its member-owners to know the truth about this growing technology.

Myth 1: They're expensive

The fuel and maintenance costs of an EV are three to five times cheaper than gasoline- and diesel-powered cars, depending on your local gasoline and electric rates. You might also qualify for a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500 for the initial purchase of the vehicle.

Myth 2: They don't go very far

The average range of today's EVs is 196 miles on a full charge. The average American's daily round-trip mileage is less than 30 miles, which makes most models of EVs suitable for the typical commuter.

Myth 3: There's no place to charge them

Most charging can be completed with the regular outlet in your garage at night. Just plug into the 120-volt Level 1 charging cordset that comes with the car. You can also invest in more powerful chargers to power up faster. For road trips, public charging stations are becoming more readily available every day.

Myth 4: They don't perform like traditional cars

While most EVs may not currently look as exciting as a sports car, looks can be deceiving – and the acceleration of EVs is no exception. Several models have already set new records at race tracks and vehicle performance events around the world.

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

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



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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

Last month, an EV charger was installed at MLEC headquarters in Aitkin, MN. This is a public charger and can be used by members or travelers passing by.

Visit energywisemn.com/electric-vehicles to learn more about EVs and find which model would work best for you.



HAPPY
Thanksgiving

**MLEC WILL BE CLOSED ON
NOVEMBER 28th & 29th
TO CELEBRATE THANKSGIVING**
*Please note this month's billing
due date is November 27th.*

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THANK YOU VETERANS!



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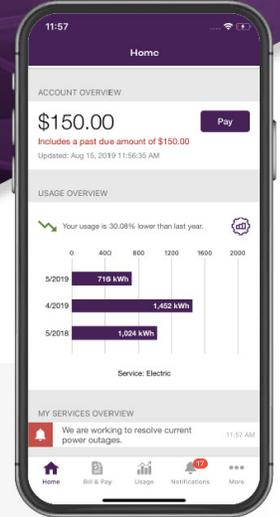
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STRAY VOLTAGE

Electrical supply systems delivering power to farms, homes, and businesses are grounded to the earth to make them as safe as possible and to ensure their reliability. The ground of these electric systems results in some current flow through the earth. Animals sometimes respond to the voltage differences between two points, a condition commonly referred to as stray voltage.

Help with stray voltage problems can come from many sources: veterinarians, dairy field representatives, electricians, county agents, and your electric cooperative. If you suspect stray voltage may be a problem on your farm, the first step is to have your electrician check your equipment in the barn and balance the load if possible. If the problem continues, contact MLEC at **218-927-2191** or **800-450-2191**.



MILLE LACS ENERGY COOPERATIVE

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