



THE OUTLET

Monthly Publication of Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

VOLUME 55
NUMBER 5
MAY 2024

APPLY TO BE A BOARD MEMBER!

Candidate filing for MLEC director positions from Districts Five, Six, and Seven is now open.

District 5 - includes members whose electric account numbers start with 40, 41, 45 or 46. The present director is Don Appel of Aitkin; Don does not plan to run for re-election in 2024.

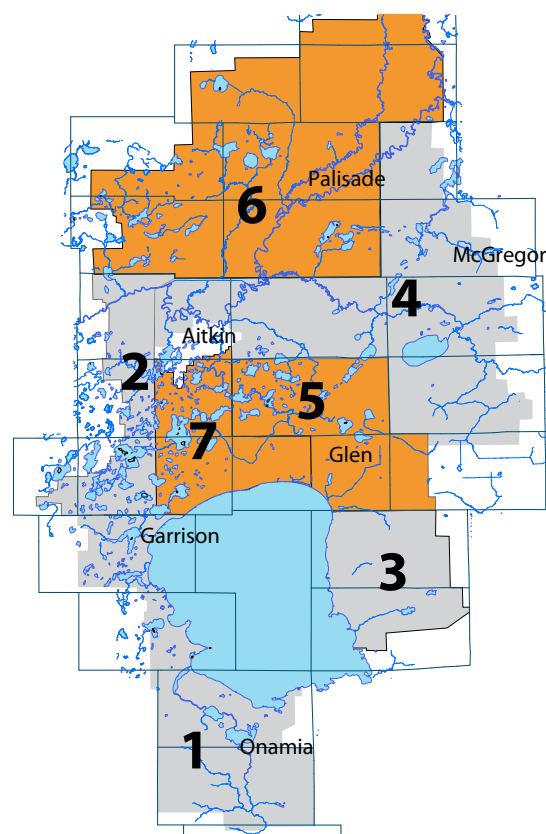
District 6 - includes members whose electric account numbers start with 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26 or 27. The present director is Bruce Robinson of Palisade.

District 7 - includes members whose electric account numbers start with 39, 47, 48 or 53. The present director is Michael Reem of Aitkin.

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 Kassie Peterson at 927-8243 or 800-450-2191 or, email kpeterson@mlecmn.com for director election filing forms and a complete information packet.

All filings must be received at the Cooperative by July 15, 2024.

You can find additional district and annual meeting information on the MLEC website www.mlecmn.net. If you have any questions about applying, please contact Kassie Peterson at 218-927-8243.





THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Air source heat pumps are a safe and efficient home solution!

A smarter solution is available for members seeking to more efficiently heat and cool their home year-round: air source heat pumps (ASHPs).

ASHPs provide a safe, environmentally-friendly solution for home comfort conditioning as well. They don't use an open flame or create products of combustion – such as carbon monoxide and other emissions – so there is no need for venting, and their extended equipment life means less pollution associated with discarding old units or parts and manufacturing their replacements.

Able to deliver hyper-efficient home heating and air conditioning, ASHPs help members realize savings in energy consumption as well as cost. You can save up to 30% on your home cooling expenses by using an Air-Source Heat Pump instead of other conventional air conditioning units. They are also 200-400% more efficient when it comes to home heating. This is possible because it uses advanced technology to transfer more energy than it consumes.

The warmth provided by ASHP technology is superior in quality compared to conventional furnaces. The heat distributed by an ASHP is distributed more evenly and holds its moisture better, resulting in more natural, comfortable warmth.

For a limited time, if installed in June, July or August, you can get an additional \$250 in rebates on ducted air source heat pumps when installed by a qualified contractor and put on our dual fuel program.

Air Source Heat Pump	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
SEER2 of 14.3 or higher	\$750	\$1,000
Ductless	\$500	\$750

*Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-service basis. Rebate amount and programs are subject to change without notice. Low interest financing is available for qualified members.

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

Mark Anderson - District 1
320/469-0951
manderson@mlecmn.com

Derik Midthun - District 2
218/821-4349
dmidthun@mlecmn.com

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

Aileen DeMenge - District 4
218/768-4900
ademenge@mlecmn.com
Secretary/Treasurer

Don Appel - District 5
218/927-4134
dappel@mlecmn.com

Bruce Robinson - District 6
218/851-4760
brobinson@mlecmn.com
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Michael Reem - District 7
218/839-5697
mreem@mlecmn.com
Vice President

Sarah Cron - CEO
218/927-8224
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,
Marketing & Communications Administrator

Questions? Contact our Energy Services Team at 218-429-0432 or 888-433-4279.



**ENERGY
WISE MN**

FIRST QUARTER UPDATE

Dear Member:

As we say goodbye to the first quarter of 2024, I am feeling good about the state of our electric cooperative. While sales are still far under budget – so is our cost of power expense. The mild winter gave us a break from winter storm outages, which also helped in the expense category. Please knock on your nearest piece of wood! The mild winter also helped control the costs of the new building project. Stay tuned as we find out how far the new building project is under budget. The building budget has greatly impacted our borrowing and helped our cash position remain strong.

Our Fiber business unit is holding strong, with the addition of numerous new fiber consumers. Like all businesses, we are grappling with supply chain concerns in both the fiber and electric sides of our operations. However, our cooperative model has provided us with a slight advantage, thanks to our cooperative partnerships. We are navigating these challenges with resilience, ensuring that we meet all our lending requirements and continue to operate your electric cooperative as you expect.

It has been a full year since we eliminated the wholesale and MLEC power cost adjustment (PCA) on your MLEC bill. This move was aimed at achieving a fair and transparent cost recovery method across all rate classes, clearly displayed in your monthly power bill. Thanks to the diligent fiscal management by your MLEC Management Team and Board of Directors, we have absorbed all rate adjustments from Great River Energy (GRE). We do not foresee a rate adjustment in the next year, but rest assured, we will

continue to monitor our cost recovery and make adjustments to the per kWh charge when necessary.

Carbon-free mandates, government regulations, legislation, and power grid congestion continue to be wild cards that can (and will) impact MLEC on the local level. While we work directly with our legislators and cooperative partners, we rely heavily on GRE and Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) to help us through these uncertainties. Both GRE and MREA have lobbyists and lawyers on staff who are well-versed in the outside concerns that impact our cooperative, and they are working hard to be our voice to lessen the impact of the changes these concerns bring.

Every time I bring good news, it is 100% because of the great group of folks I work with every day. I want to thank them for their hard work and commitment to making MLEC a thriving member-owned cooperative and a really great place to come to work every day.



Sarah Cron, CEO



WATER YOU WAITING FOR?

Save 30% on Niagara Conservation outdoor water-saving products!

May 1 through June 30, 2024



LET'S DISH

Thank you to Ezra Andersen of McGregor for sharing this month's recipe.

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:

kpeterson@mlecmn.com



SUMMERTIME HOMEMADE ICE CREAM

1 cup half-and-half	3 cups ice
2 Tbsp granulated sugar	1/3 cup salt
1/2 tsp pur vanilla extract	

In a small resealable plastic bag, combine half-and-half, sugar, and vanilla. Push out excess air and seal. Into a large resealable plastic bag, combine ice and salt. Place small bag inside the bigger bag and shake vigorously, 7-10 minutes, until ice cream has hardened. Remove from bag and enjoy with your favorite ice cream toppings!

ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

At MLEC, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May, but we also know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our co-op crews to you, the members we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity, and it powers our daily lives. But we know first-hand how dangerous electricity can be because we work with it 365 days a year.

You'll see MLEC hosting safety demonstrations at community events and in schools throughout the year, to demonstrate the dangers of electricity. We discuss emergency scenarios, such as what to do in a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines. We caution students on the dangers of pad-mounted transformers and overloading circuits with too many electronic devices.

Electricity is an integral part of modern life. Given the prevalence of electrical devices, tools and appliances, I'd like to pass along a few practical electrical safety tips.

Frayed wires pose a serious safety hazard. Power cords can become damaged or frayed from age, heavy use or excessive current flow through the wiring. If cords become frayed or cut, replace them, as they could cause a shock when handled.

Avoid overloading circuits. Circuits can only cope with a limited amount of electricity. Overload happens when you draw more electricity than a circuit can safely handle—by having too many devices running on one circuit.

Label circuit breakers to understand the circuits in your home. Contact a qualified electrician if your home is more than 40 years old and you need to install multiple large appliances that consume large amounts of electricity.

Use extension cords properly. Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord. If you "daisy chain" them together, it could lead to overheating, creating a potential fire hazard. Don't exceed the wattage of the cord. Doing so also creates a risk of overloading the cord and creating a fire hazard. Extension cords should not be used as permanent solutions. If you need additional outlets, contact a licensed electrician to help.

We encourage you to talk with your kids about playing it safe and smart around electricity. Help them be aware of overhead power lines near where they play outdoors.

MLEC's top priority is providing an uninterrupted energy supply 24/7, 365 days per year. But equally important is keeping our community safe around electricity.

Contact MLEC for additional electrical safety tips or if you would like us to provide a safety demonstration at your school or upcoming community event.

**PLUG
INTO
SAFETY**



ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Make electrical safety a priority this month, and every month.



HIGHWAY CLEAN UP

This month, MLEC employees participated in the Adopt-a-Highway spring clean-up south of Aitkin. Thank you to Johnston, Daryl, Adam, and Matt for volunteering and keeping our roadsides clean!

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
Jeff Larson 320-227-3009

Northern Crow Wing County
Nathan Readle 218-537-8419

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 under *Quick Links*.



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

UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

Capital credits, patronage dividends, patronage refunds—these are all familiar terms with similar meanings: the allocation of operating margins as equity and, when appropriate, retiring them to the members of the co-op in the form of money or credit on the bill. The retirement of capital credits is one of the most important things we do as a co-op. It's unique to the cooperative business model.

Even if you move and are no longer a member of the cooperative, the capital credits remain in your account. Be sure to update your mailing address with MLEC if you move so we can send future capital credit checks to the correct address. If you are an heir to an estate, please contact MLEC if you think capital credits remain in the estate's account.

A list of unclaimed capital credits can be found on our website at www.mlecmm.net/capital-credits. Maybe a check is waiting for you! If you know someone and how to contact them, please call our capital credits team at 218-429-0431.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Looking for an easy way to manage home energy use? Smart plugs are inexpensive and offer convenient solutions for scheduling and controlling your favorite electronic devices.

With smart plugs, you can easily manage your coffee maker, lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. Smart plugs can help you manage devices through a smart phone app, your home assistant or voice control. By conveniently powering off or scheduling devices, you can save energy (and money!).

Source: energystar.gov





**OUR OFFICE WILL
BE CLOSED
MONDAY, MAY 27TH
IN HONOR OF
MEMORIAL DAY**

*In memory of many,
in honor of all.
Thank You!*

**Twins
COMMUNITY FUND**

YOUTH BASEBALL CLINIC!

AITKIN, MN

FREE TO ATTEND! OPEN TO EVERYONE, AGES 6-12!



DATE:
SATURDAY
JUNE 1

FIELD:
WOOCK FIELD
100 BILL CLINE WAY
AITKIN, MN 56431

TIME:
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM


HOST:
AITKIN AREA YOUTH
BASEBALL
ASSOCIATION

REGISTER FOR FREE: PLAYBALLMN.COM



Internet that donates to local organizations

Our employees donate quarterly to deserving groups and organizations that are doing good in our area. Get fast and reliable Internet service that gives back!



Sarah Cron, CEO

MLEC fiber
Powered by Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative

(218) 429-0433 • www.mlecmmn.net/fiber

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 **May 31st**.

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

OR E-MAIL:
kpeterson@mlecmmn.com

Fill in the blank.

Candidate filing for MLEC director positions from Districts _____ is now open.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Congrats to Darlene Christensen, the March gift card trivia winner!