

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

# WATTS *Current*

For Our Customers • April 2005

## GET PEACE OF MIND

*With Proper Surge Protection*

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's surge protection program has proven to be a great investment for many members. Recently one customer called to tell us all of his protected equipment took an electrical hit and no longer worked. Once all the surge devices were unplugged and his equipment was plugged directly into the wall outlets, everything was working just fine. That is, everything that was originally connected to our surge protector devices. MVEC responded by delivering new surge devices and re-connecting all equipment and the member is once again safely protected. This minor interruption could have been much longer if electronics needed to be repaired or replaced.

This is the scenario we have repeatedly seen, proving the devices are doing their job to stop the surge before it damages electronics or equipment. The surge devices we provide react more quickly than over-the counter devices to immediately stop a surge and prevent it from damaging connected equipment. The proper surge protection equipment can effectively save your appliances, satellite television, computer and telephone.

This carefree program is available for lease through the Cooperative. There are no upfront installation costs or purchases to make. Monthly lease costs start at only \$5.95 per month with an average installation in the \$7.95 per month range due to the number of electronics most homes now own.



Thunderstorm season is quickly approaching so call 1-800-927-6068 today to get connected to peace of mind.

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**R  
E**

**Care**

*Maquoketa Valley  
Electric Cooperative*  
109 North Huber Street  
Anamosa, Iowa 52205

**OBJECTIVE:** "RECare" is a voluntary energy assistance program established to help low income families weatherize and heat their homes. Funds collected are distributed by a local community action agency. The money does stay in the area; it is a program of members helping members!

One Time Pledge \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payable to: Maquoketa Valley  
Electric Cooperative

Monthly Pledge:

\$1.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$2.00 \_\_\_\_\_

\$3.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize the Cooperative to add this amount to my monthly electric bill. I understand I can cancel my monthly pledge at any time by notifying the Cooperative in writing.

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with your energy payment and meter reading.

## **BOARD ALLOCATES 2004 OPERATING MARGIN TO COOPERATIVE MEMBERS**

At the March 18, 2005 Board of Directors Meeting, board members unanimously approved allocating over \$600,000 of the 2004 operating margin to cooperative members who purchased electric service from Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative during 2004.

Your share of the allocated margin, called capital credit allocation, is based on the total dollar amount of your patronage with Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. We calculated your patronage from the amounts billed to you for electric service in 2004.

Look for a message on your April or May energy bill. The message will identify your 2004 Capital Credit Allocation. (This information is only a notice for you, and cannot be treated as cash or deducted from your bill.)

Payment of the capital credit

allocation, in the form of a patronage dividend, will be made to you at a future time as determined by the Board of Directors. For this reason, continue to inform us of your address changes if you discontinue your electric service with the Cooperative at any time in the future. We want to make sure that you receive your future patronage dividend checks.

Your Cooperative operates as a not-for-profit organization to provide you electric service. Revenue collected that is not needed to cover the cost of providing service is divided among the members and returned as a dividend payment.

If you have questions about your patronage dividends, please call Cleo at 319-462-3541 or 800-927-6068 or email [crogers@mvec.com](mailto:crogers@mvec.com).

## **BY-LAWS AVAILABLE**

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, copies of the Bylaws of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative are available at the reception counter of the headquarters office at Anamosa, Iowa. If you want a copy of the Cooperative's Bylaws, please ask at the Cooperative office or contact us and one will be mailed.



Energy Working For You!

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## PRACTICE SAFE FARMING THIS SPRING

Spring planting season is quickly approaching and farm-related accidents are always a concern of your Cooperative. Farmers are urged to take extra time to locate all electrical facilities before moving farm equipment.

Many types of equipment can come in contact with overhead power lines. Tractors, planters and tillage equipment can easily become an electrical hazard and should be operated with extreme care near power lines.

Today's larger farms require transporting tractors and equipment to fields several miles away. Before transit, avoid raising the arms of planters and cultivators near power lines.

**GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

- Look up, look down and look out!
- Be careful of overhead and buried power lines and residential electrical equipment.
- Farmers – Be conscious of what's overhead – power lines to be specific. Make certain your equipment can pass safely underneath, including any new machinery you have purchased.

**Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative**

*Iowa's electric cooperatives want you to have a safe and productive spring!*

**ESF**

**Your local co-op puts safety first!**

Make sure everyone who works on the farm knows the location of power lines and keeps farm equipment at least 10 feet away from them. The minimum 10 foot distance should be maintained in all directions.

A safe planting season begins with the prevention of accidents. For more electrical safety information, visit our web site at [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop).

## WATTS THE ANSWER?

- 1) In 2003 MVEC provided \$840 in purchases from \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Keep farm equipment at least \_\_\_\_\_ feet from power lines
- 3) Are there any upfront costs to enroll in our surge protection program? \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your answers in with your energy bill or email them to [dreyhons@mvec.com](mailto:dreyhons@mvec.com)

Two winners will each receive a \$10.00 credit on their energy bill.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

February winners:

Larry Young, Maquoketa  
Bobbie Chester, Manchester





## **LAUGH – LIVE LONGER**

*Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa*

Want to live longer? Laugh!  
Want to prevent stress on the job? Laugh!  
Want to promote better health? Laugh!  
Want to prevent burn out? Laugh!  
Want to have a happier family life? Laugh!

This isn't just my opinion! Dr. Paul Pearsall, director of the Daily Living Clinic of Michigan, writes that laughter promotes feedback to the brain. We have our own built-in human pharmacy as laughter releases mood chemicals making you feel better.

The American Association for Therapeutical Humore of Skokie, Illinois states that a good laugh changes blood pressure. Laughter reduces muscle tension and improves digestion. (My mom knew that! She always said we should be happy at mealtime.) They urge you to laugh so hard that you cry because it releases bacteria killing agents. Laughter triggers the release of hormones that increase alertness. We are also told that there are psychological benefits as laughter causes reduction of tension and anxiety.

A Stanford University professor did a study of 20 medical students entertained by a comedian's performance. The result was that the disease fighting blood cells increased by 25%. This kind of reasoning accounts for the many hospitals and nursing homes now promoting laughter, such as clowns entertaining patients.

There is a world reknown laughter guru, Dr. Madan Kataria, who founded Laughter Clubs and is responsible for developing yoga laughter. The premise is that there need not be a reason to laugh, only that you laugh on a regular basis. The Laughter Clubs say it's best to laugh in the mornings, as it tends to set the tone for the day, reducing stress and worry, starting the day with a sense of well-being.

By the way, I have a reason to laugh aloud when I arise in the morning and look into the mirror as I face a

disheveled image. It's either laugh or cry! By the way, if there are others around, they're going to wonder about you! One hundred laughs a day are said to be equal to riding a stationary bike for 15 minutes or equal to 10 minutes on a rowing machine. Laughter is a total body experience!

I like the way that Normin Cousins, Professor of Medical Humanities at the UCLA School of Medicine, tells us that laughter is like internal jogging. It exercises the heart like aerobics, elevating blood pressure just enough so that it provides tissue with more oxygen.

You can become a laughter facilitator. Excuses that you're too busy, under stress, or just don't have enough time don't cut the mustard. The truth is that's when people need laughter the most.

What can you do? Read the comic page. Cut out the ones that bring out the old guffaw and post them where others can see and enjoy them, too. Post funny cartoons and jokes on the fridge, by the coffee pot or bathroom mirror. Posted near the copy machine, the fax or your desk, they can be used to incorporate humor in the workplace. Office managers and CEO's take note. Humor will boost productivity and improve daily performance.

Use the car radio for humorous announcers, comedy tapes or CD's while you're in the car, whether driving to and from work or out for an errand. Or, if you have e-mail, you've already learned that there's no end to the jokes which appear as if by magic.

Cut the jokes out of Reader's Digest and other magazines. Read them again which will help perk yourself up. It's also easy to learn how to tell jokes. When you hear or read a really good one, repeat it right away. Give yourself a clue word. This will enable a bell to ring in your upper story and the joke will come to mind.



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

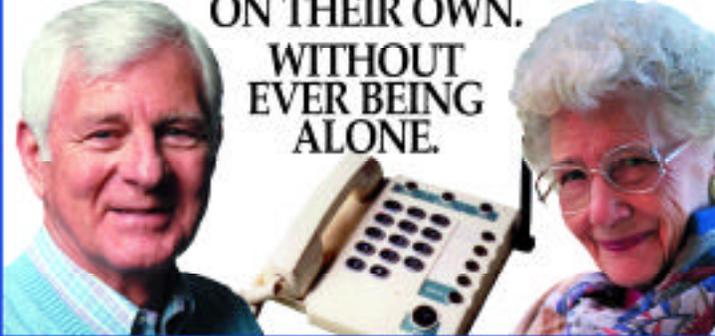


I'm going to end with one you'll remember by using a "Participation Method". Pretend you're in a nursing home or recuperating in a hospital. Lean over to the left a little. The nurse is afraid you're falling out of the chair, so she sets you upright again. Then lean over to the right a little. Again, the nurse is afraid of you falling off the chair. Again, an aide pushes you upright again. Then when a loved one stops by to inquire about you, "How's it going? Everything thing all right?", you answer, "It's OK but they won't let me lean over to pass gas!" When you tell the joke, you can use someone else's name. It works! You may even learn to use a little sound as you lean over.



After giving talks about the importance of laughter, it may account for my transition to delivering more humorous presentations. It's changed my goal in life. I want to make people LAUGH and enjoy life. And it's good for my feeling of euphoria, just seeing the audience react with chuckles and smiles. So, join me to get into the habit of spreading good cheer throughout the year.

**NOW MOM OR DAD CAN LIVE ON THEIR OWN. WITHOUT EVER BEING ALONE.**



*And you can rest easy knowing help is just a phone call away.*

Living alone can be an uneasy situation. Especially when you're elderly and even more so if you've had medical difficulties. But with the installation of a simple, cost-effective FirstCall® medical monitoring service, your parents can enjoy their independence along with the peace-of-mind that comes with always having someone available to help. If a medical emergency arises, mom or dad simply touches a button on their phone or a wireless transmitter and they are instantly put in voice contact with our Cooperative Response Center. If necessary, help will be sent immediately. So call today for details on how quickly and easily your parents can enjoy the security that comes with FirstCall®.

*Because even if they prefer to be on their own, it doesn't mean they have to be alone.*



Call 800-927-6068  
for more details



## MVEC HOSTS ELECTRIC CODE CONFERENCE

MVEC was a host site for a review and conference on the 2005 National Electric Code. Our power supplier, CIPCO, along with other generation and transmission cooperatives in Iowa, arranged for Larry Smith, a full time professional electrical code trainer and speaker, to conduct the conference at six Iowa locations in March. Smith's vast experience in the electric industry enables him to bring practical information to his audiences that can be immediately put to use in their jobs. Several area electrical contractors were among the attendees at the MVEC site and were able to earn continuing education credits for their time. Each attendee received a workbook illustrating the changes in the 2005 Code.





# WATTS HEALTHY

*Susan Uthoff, ISU Extension Nutrition & Health Specialist*

## If Rhubarb is Here - Summer Must be Near!

Scientists are regularly reporting new health benefits associated with fruits and vegetables. Aiming for at least five a day is a worthwhile goal. Eating a variety of different colors of fruits and vegetables every day is a new way of thinking about meeting the goal. Think of the colors of the rainbow. Fruits and vegetables are available in the colors of the spectrum; red, orange, yellow, green and blue/purple.

Eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day! A diet rich in fruits and vegetables in combination with an overall low-fat diet may help reduce the risk of certain types of cancer. You know summer is on the way when you start harvesting one of the Iowa grown fruits - rhubarb. Rhubarb, also known as Pie Plant, is botanically classified as a vegetable, but in this country we use it as a fruit. It is available fresh from April through June. Rhubarb is usually served in desserts as a fruit. Rhubarb blends well with other fruits such as strawberries. The leaves of rhubarb contain poisonous oxalic acid salts and should not be eaten.

Rhubarb, a spring tonic for vitamin C and calcium, is an easy and versatile fruit to use. Rhubarb is fat free and has almost a gram of fiber per one cup serving. One serving of rhubarb will give a

woman over 10 percent of the recommended amount of vitamin C and calcium. One of the drawbacks is that because it is so tart, most recipes call for more sugar than most other desserts. As with other fruits, one-half cup cooked rhubarb is considered a serving. A serving without sugar is only 29 calories, with sugar it is 139 calories. By combining the stalks with sweeter fruits, like strawberries, the sugar content can be lowered quite a bit.

When preparing fresh rhubarb, use a vegetable peeler to remove any brown or scaly spots. Peeling the entire stalk is unnecessary, simply trim the ends and wash and dry the stalks.

When cooking fresh rhubarb, always use a non-reactive pan, such as stainless steel, for cooking this high acid plant. Use anodized aluminum, stainless steel, Teflon coated aluminum or enamel-coated cast iron cookware. Rhubarb cooked in reactive metal pots (aluminum, iron, and copper) will turn an unappetizing brown color. Metal ions flaking off the pan will interact with acids in the fruit to form brown compounds that darken both the pan and the rhubarb.

If you have too much rhubarb it is very easy to freeze. To freeze rhubarb chop into one-half inch pieces, spread them on a baking sheet, and place in the freezer. Once frozen, place in a plastic

freezer bag. Packed this way, it will keep for up to six months.

### Rhubarb Crunch

Serves: 9

- 1 cup flour
  - 3/4 cup oatmeal, quick cooking
  - 3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
  - 1/3 cup margarine, melted
  - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
  - 4 cups rhubarb, cut into 1-inch slices
  - 3/4 cup sugar
  - 2 tablespoons cornstarch
  - 1 cup water
  - 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Mix flour, oatmeal, brown sugar, margarine and cinnamon until crumbly. Press half of mixture in the bottom of a 9x9-inch pan. Layer the rhubarb on top. Combine sugar and cornstarch until smooth, then add the water and vanilla. Cook over medium heat until the mixture is thick and clear. Pour the sauce over rhubarb. Top with remaining crumbs and bake at 350 degrees for 50 to 60 minutes. Serve warm.

Nutritional content per serving:  
212 calories; 7 g fat



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## MVEC ADDS \$27 MILLION TO LOCAL ECONOMY

*Study demonstrates electric cooperatives' commitment to communities*

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative made a significant economic impact to its 9 county service area, contributing \$27 million to our local economies. A recently completed study shows during 2003, MVEC invested approximately \$396,500 in generation and transmission capacity, paid more than \$163,400 in local taxes and returned over \$623,000 in patronage to our members.

The findings are the outcome of a study of the economic impact Iowa's electric cooperatives, including MVEC, have on community and business development programs, charitable donations, community investments and volunteer activities.

"Contributing to the growth and development of the communities we serve is a part of our core business structure," said President Bruce Reade. "When it comes to looking at organizations that are leading the economic future of Iowa – in all counties, not just the metro areas – electric cooperatives should immediately come to mind."

MVEC managed a \$21.5 million business that affected the jobs of 185 local residents, generated \$6.2 million in local income and drove nearly \$27.1 million in local spending. In addition;

\$234,500 was spent on business and economic development; \$177,429 was invested in housing projects; leveraged \$50,800 in investments into a \$151,400 economic impact into the areas we serve



*Louie the Lighting Bug volunteers to help children learn about electrical safety.*

All together, MVEC added an average of \$852 to our local economies for each of our resident members. For each resident, the Cooperative provided an average of: \$7.40 in community, educational, housing and development activities; \$4.70 in community and business investments; \$840 in purchases from local businesses.

The survey was conducted by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives in partnership with Strategic Economics Group, based in Des Moines. Strategic Economics Group was founded in 2001 by Harvey Siegelman and Daniel Otto. Siegelman served as Iowa's state economist for 20 years and Otto is a professor of economics at Iowa State University.

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, formed in 1942, is the Des Moines-based statewide association representing 37 distribution cooperatives in Iowa and

six generation and transmission cooperatives serving more than 200,000 rural homes, farms and industries in all 99 counties. The IAEC provides legislative, regulatory, safety, communications and education and training programs and services to its members. Along with MVEC, the IAEC is also a Touchstone Energy partner – a national alliance of local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives. More than 600 Touchstone Energy cooperatives in 44 states are delivering energy and energy solutions to more than 17 million customers every day.

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative provides reliable electricity and other services to over 14,000 members in Delaware, Dubuque, Jackson and Jones counties and portions of Buchanan, Cedar, Clayton, Clinton and Linn counties.



*MVEC assisted CarteGraph's location in the Dubuque Technology Park.*



## REMINDER

### Spring Member Night

April 7, 2005

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Cascade American Legion

### Visit our Web Site

at [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop) or

Email direct to the following departments:

- Billing questions: [billing@mvec.com](mailto:billing@mvec.com)
- Product or service questions: [memberservice@mvec.com](mailto:memberservice@mvec.com)
- Maintenance issues: [maintenance@mvec.com](mailto:maintenance@mvec.com)



Maquoketa Valley  
Electric Cooperative  
109 North Huber St.  
Anamosa, Iowa 52205-0370

## Watts Current...

...is published monthly for the members of  
Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.

109 North Huber Street

Anamosa, Iowa 52205

319-462-3541 or 800-927-6068

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Friday

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Web Site: [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop)

e-mail: [mvec@mvec.com](mailto:mvec@mvec.com)

## After Hours Call Center

800-582-8998

After hours you may also call the service person  
in your area to report outages or trouble on the  
line.

Anamosa, Dallas Paustian.....319-462-4848  
 Cascade, Pete Boffeli .....563-852-3180  
 Dubuque, Rick Olsem.....563-582-3668  
 Farley, Jim Lehman.....563-744-3005  
 LaMotte, Brett Cox.....563-773-8614  
 Manchester, Dan Petersen.....563-927-6491  
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