

WATTS *Current*

May
2024

Member Owned – 2023 Patronage Dividend Allocation

One of the benefits of membership in a cooperative is that you, as both a customer and a member, own a portion of the business. That ownership has value, not only in reliable services and affordable rates, but also in patronage dividend earnings. As not-for-profit entities, cooperatives return margins to their members in excess of those needed for daily operations in the form of patronage dividends. Calculating the dividend amount starts when your Board of Directors reviews the year-end financials and determines the amount of revenue collected that was not needed to cover the costs of providing services during the year. Excess revenues (or margins) are divided among the members based on the total dollar amount of each member’s electric bill during the year. The resulting figure is the allocation earned by each member as a percentage of their business during the year.

At their March board meeting, the Board of Directors approved allocating \$1.2M of the 2023 margins back to the membership. Each member’s individual share of the allocated margin will appear as a message on the energy bill you will receive in May. This is only a notice of allocation and cannot be treated as cash or deducted from your bill. The Cooperative retains these allocated margins to operate the Cooperative until such time as they can be retired (or paid) in cash to the members. Some members may recall receiving a dividend payment or bill credit last fall when MVEC retired \$800,000 from allocations made for the years 2008 and 2012.

Please note that it is the policy of the Cooperative to refund patronage dividends to estates of deceased persons who were patrons of the Cooperative. Notify us if you know of a member or former member who has passed away. Also, keep the Cooperative informed of your current address to ensure notification of margin allocations and patronage dividend payments. If you feel you are owed a dividend please call 1-800-927-6068.

Watts Inside:

Summary of Annual Meeting Requirements
Page 2

Annual Meeting and Election of Directors
Page 2

March and April Board Meeting Summary
Page 2

Our Energy Working For You: Benefits and Considerations of Standby Generators
Page 3

Scale-Tec: Scaling to Support Farmers
Page 4 & 5

Watt's Up? Technology at Your Co-Op
Page 5

TechLink - Tech Gifts for Your Grads, Moms and Dads
Page 6

MVEC in the Community
Page 7

Thank a Lineman Coloring Contest
Page 7

SAVE

Annual Meeting of Members

Nominate a local volunteer and they could win \$3,000 for their charity!

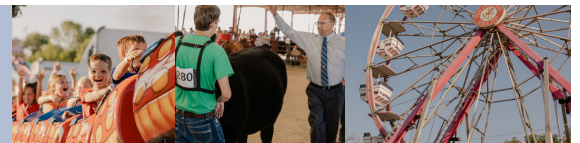
Contest entries accepted in June at IowaShineTheLight.com



August 15th 2024

THE

MVEC DAY AT THE FAIR



MVEC is proud to be the daily host of the fair for our

MEMBER MEET-UP EVENT! TUESDAY JULY 16TH

DATE

NEW LOCATION PEOSTA COMMUNITY CENTRE 7896 BURDS RD. PEOSTA



See you at the fair!





Summary of Annual Meeting Requirements

Annual Meeting

Article II of the Bylaws provides that an Annual Meeting of the members shall be held between August 1 and November 1 of each year with the exact date to be set by the Board of Directors. Article VIII, Section 3 of the Articles of Incorporation indicates that the members shall be “entitled to receive ten (10) days written notice of the time and place of all meetings and of the purpose of all special meetings”.

Directors

Article IX of the Articles of Incorporation provides the Board of Directors shall be made up of nine (9) members of the Cooperative. The directors serve for a three-year term. Each year the terms of three directors expire on the date of the Annual Meeting.

Nominations and Election of Directors by the Members

Article IX of the Articles of Incorporation indicates: “The Cooperative’s service area shall be divided into four (4) numbered geographic regions. Two (2) members shall be elected from each geographic region... The remaining ninth director shall be selected from any geographic region or the geographic region determined by the Board of Directors...”

The election of directors shall be by ballot and each voting member shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for each director to be elected. Article III, Section 5 of the Bylaws states, “Candidates for election to the Board of Directors shall be nominated by a nominating committee... Other nominations can be made with signatures in writing of 50 or more members...not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting...”

Please do not hesitate to contact the Cooperative office should you have any questions concerning membership requirements or the procedure of nomination and election of directors at the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative.

Annual Meeting and Election Of Directors

As a member-owner of MVEC, you can participate in the business of your co-op. One of the easiest and best ways to get involved is to attend our Annual Meeting, scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2024, at the Peosta Community Centre. Attend to get updates about your co-op and cast your vote for the Board of Directors. Members who are unable to attend the meeting will have the option to cast their ballot for directors via mail. Watch for your ballot and voting instructions to arrive in early August. Future issues of Watts Current will provide more details as plans progress.

We believe a combination of an in-person business meeting and mail-in balloting effectively encourages all members to participate in the Cooperative’s business. Members who return their Annual Meeting ballot prior to August 15th will be entered into a drawing for cash prizes.

Three positions for the Board of Directors listed below are up for election. Each position is a three-year term. The Board of Directors has appointed a nominating committee to review and develop a list of candidates for these positions.

- **Region 1** (*Jones County and portions of Cedar and Linn Counties*)
- **Region 3** (*Dubuque County*)
- **Region 4** (*Delaware County, portions of Buchanan & Clayton Counties*)

If you are interested in learning about the requirements for serving on the Board of Directors, please contact CEO Jeremy Richert at 800-927-6068 or email at jrichert@mvec.coop. A packet of information will be mailed to you. After reviewing the qualifications, if you wish to be considered for one of these positions, please submit a brief biography stating your qualifications to: Nomination Committee %Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa, IA 52205, or email jrichert@mvec.coop no later than June 7, 2024.

March MVEC Board Meeting Update

- Executed loan documents for loan with RUS to assist with funding for future projects.
- Reviewed the Cooperative’s 2023 Reliability Report and 2024 Reliability Plan.
- Approved donations to a community projects in Jones, Jackson, Delaware, and Dubuque Counties.
- Approved the allocation of 2023 margins to reserves and member patronage. \$1,200,000 was allocated back to the membership for future retirement.

April MVEC Board Meeting Update

- Eide Bailly staff presented an overview of the 2023 financial audit.
- Directors accepted and approved the 2023 audit report.
- Was provided an update on Cyber Security measures in place at the Cooperative.
- Appointed the nominating committee for 2024 Director election.



Our Energy Working For You: Benefits and Considerations of Standby Generators

By Al Reiter, Energy Advisor

MVEC occasionally fields questions from members considering standby generators. While MVEC's service availability hovers around 99.98%, the effects of the derecho that struck Iowa are still fresh in our minds. The cooperative continues to improve our distribution system for weather events, but for some members, having standby generation adds a level of safety and reliability for their situation. In this edition of Our Energy Working for You, we will review some of the options for standby generation, information for your electric service that will help in sizing a system, and most importantly, how to safely use your standby generator.

A basic option for small load usage is a portable, manually started generator. These are not intended to connect to your electrical system, but rather, to power a few plug-in appliances like a freezer or small heater. They are going to be usually less than 5,000 watts and some of the more high-end units supply both 120 and 240 Volt.



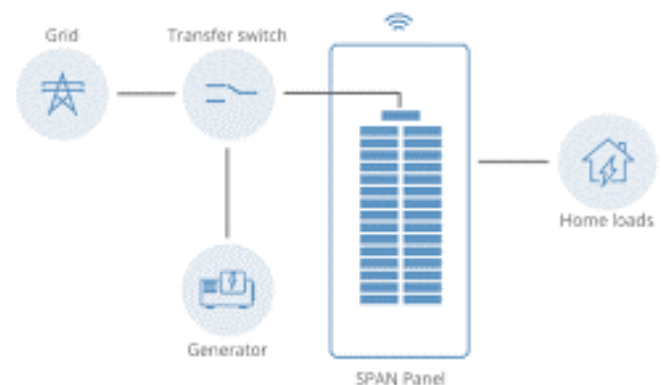
A more common option for standby generation is a whole house/farm generator that is in the 10-50 kilowatt (kW) range. This will be interconnected into your wiring system and has options to be started manually or automatically when

you are not home. These will typically supply the normal load that you will need at your home during an outage. For critical loads, like life-safety equipment found in a hospital, or industrial process where damage or loss would occur with an outage, emergency generators are used. This type of generator will require to pick up all loads within 10 seconds.



For members considering purchasing a standby system, knowing what size of generator you will need is a good first step. As you look at options, you will see that generators will have a continuous rating and a peak rating. MVEC can assist you with sizing the generator by providing a history of your load profile that shows the demand in kilowatts that your service has used. Because generators have to be sized for both the running load and the increased power used to start the load, sometimes called surge power, history of both is useful to your generator supplier.

If you decide to proceed with the purchase of a generator that connects to your home or business' electrical system, you will need a safety switch installed by a reputable electrician. This safety switch, sometimes called a double throw switch, ensures that electrical devices in your home can't be connected to standby power and normal utility power at the same time which would cause damage. There is another important reason: the safety of MVEC linemen working in all conditions to get power restored. While the electrical transformer does an efficient job of stepping the primary line voltage down from 7200 Volts to the 120/240 Volts you use, it does an equally efficient job of stepping up the voltage. If a standby generator is not properly installed and sends voltage back onto the cooperative power system, it presents a shock hazard to linemen working on the power line. As a courtesy, it would also be a good idea to contact MVEC (800-927-6068) to let us know that you are installing a generator on your property.



Once you have a generator installed, the work doesn't end there. To ensure it is ready to perform when you need it, a generator should be exercised periodically to make sure everything is working. If it is a manually connected generator, it is a good practice to go through the steps to set it up and operate it.

Like insurance, a standby generator provides a level of safety and reliability if an outage occurs.



Scale-Tec: Scaling to Support Farmers

By Christie Remley, Manager of Communications/PR

Scale-Tec was founded by Ken and Julie Von Muenster in 1992 when Ken faced an issue with the scale on his Case New Holland Grinder Mixer on his own farm. His wife, Julie, came home to the scale torn apart on their dining room table. From there, word spread and soon farmers within a 25-mile radius were reaching out to Ken for help with their scales. Eventually, Scale-Tec’s reach expanded to Des Moines, Cedar Falls and beyond.

Fast forward to 2012 when son Nick (an MVEC and MVlink member), who had just finished his stint serving the country in Iraq, joined the company. Ken and Nick worked together to develop relationships with leading scale manufacturers, define new standards and establish Scale-Tec as the authority in scale system innovation across the globe.

On a Mission to Serve Farmers

While Scale-Tec got its start by fixing scales for farmers, according to Nick, the company’s mission is to simply “provide the best product support in the farming industry,” said Von Muenster. He and the team of 38 employees take this mission very seriously and work daily to provide solutions to farmers’ precision-ag technology needs.

For nearly 30 years, Scale-Tec fixed and distributed scales for all kinds of agriculture uses: from cattle and chute scales to grain cart and planter scales. Scale-Tec is in elite company, being the top provider for aftermarket agriculture scale technology to the farming industry across multiple brands of implements like Case, New Holland, and John Deere.



Over the years, Scale-Tec developed relationships with over 2,500 implement dealers across the United States and throughout North America. They sell through these

dealers, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and direct to the farmer.

Starting in 2015, Scale-Tec added their own software solutions to adapt to other branded scale controllers with Bluetooth adapters. In 2019, Scale-Tec launched its own native electronic scale controller product line called POINT, allowing for a better overall experience for the customer. In 2024, Scale-Tec added load cell sensors to their offering to support entire weight and measurement systems. Scale-Tec’s software is a cloud-based solution, software as a service (SaaS), making Scale-Tec a leader in Internet of Things (IoT) for precision-ag tech. Scale-Tec products are completely made in the USA.

Pandemic Leads to a Pivot

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent supply chain issues that plagued the world prompted Nick to consider bringing design and manufacturing in-house. Initially, Scale-Tec started with the intent to manufacture load cell sensors in a single building at their location on Harley Drive north of Anamosa, contracting regional CNC machining vendors for the steel and machined parts. “Initially, we were going to use local machining vendors and tested this for three years building vendor relationships, but then COVID hit and it was very difficult to get quality, on time deliveries, and parts built to our standards in a reasonable amount of time,” said Von Muenster. So, Scale-Tec bought the second vacant building on the lot and its first CNC machine hiring two senior machinists as well as an apprentice. Within the course of 12 months they expanded to three total CNC machines.

“There is a certain security in bringing manufacturing in-house,” said Von Muenster. “I am so impressed by how quickly our machinists got up to speed and are providing parts to spec, which allows us to fulfill on our mission to provide timely solutions and the best support for our farmer customers. We turned an 18 month lead time on machining vendors down to 10 days on machined parts, and they are high quality.”

Von Muenster values having MVEC as a utility partner as the company navigates growth and expansion into manufacturing. “I worked with MVEC to get fiber internet to our original location, and they were great to work with. We were serving a digital product in the cloud and MVlink provided the ability for us to bring on a CRM (Customer Relationship Management system) that tied into our phone system, plus we had employees working in four states. All of this would not have been possible without MVlink.”



Then, as Scale-Tec continued to expand its footprint at Harley Drive, Von Muenster worked with MVEC's Engineering and Operations departments to increase the electrical service to bring the Load Cell Sensor manufacturing online, and the CNC machines online. "We worked with Nik (Schulte) and Dan (Schulte) to expand electric service and do it safely. Working with Nik and Dan was very fluid, there were no hiccups. We ordered the equipment in September and flipped it on in December. To be able to accomplish this in such a short timeframe was amazing," Von Muenster said.



Investing in People to Move at Warp Speed

Von Muenster believes that one of company's largest impacts has been, "the speed of Scale-Tec's innovation for the farming industry, which can be attributed to our team. They are our biggest asset--none of this would have happened without the great people we have working here at Scale-Tec."

Additionally, Von Muenster is proud to have experienced substantial growth while continuing to focus on safety at Scale-Tec. "We brought in a safety person who is also our chief continuous improvement officer, who keeps everyone safe as we move at warp speed. We invest a lot in safety training and in making our manufacturing floor ergonomically safe for our valued employees," said Von Muenster.

The company continues to apply its learning to refine processes and manufacturing flow with the goal of constructing a new building. Efficiency and safety will be top of mind to take the organization into the future and continue to fulfill on Ken and Julie Von Muenster's vision of providing the best product support for the Ag industry.

Watt's Up: Technology at Your Co-Op

By Brent Wegmann, IT Director and Dean Koopmann, Technical Services

You may not associate an organization that has been around since 1935 with technology, but the fact is, your co-op uses a lot of technology to supply reliable, affordable electricity and fiber internet to members as well as to run the business itself. MVEC's IT department includes four employees who focus on member tech support, employee tech support and internal systems, as well as maintaining our internet network. The IT department works closely with the 9 person Technical Services department to maintain our SCADA network and metering software.

Technology even allows us to keep our employees safe with GPS, GIS and mapping technology so that we know exactly where trucks are working in case of an emergency.

Back in 1998, MVEC invested in SCADA technology, which we have continued to invest in, to provide enhanced grid management capabilities. SCADA allows us to monitor 37 substations in real time, maintain 3,200 miles of electric line and more than 17,000 meters. The monitoring technology improves system reliability while decreasing outage times by allowing us to identify and address potential issues proactively.

In 2016, we doubled down on our investment in technology by launching a smart grid project which ultimately led to being able to offer members fiber internet with our MVlink. While MVlink internet members enjoy the benefits of a fast fiber connection, MVEC's electric members are also positively impacted. This investment allows MVEC to utilize the Fiber network to improve communication to substations, metering equipment, and line devices.

Additionally, the Cooperative uses various software platforms to run all areas of the business from accounting to operations and engineering to marketing. The IT department works to keep those programs up to date and functioning in synch to maximize the co-op's efficiency, reliability and accessibility.

MVEC also invests in cybersecurity training and tools to keep our data and network secure. Cybersecurity threats have increased significantly over the last decade so this area has required more resources and investment.

MVEC's continued investment in technology allows us to provide reliable power and internet and to continue to meet members' growing needs well into the future.



TECH LINK

Tech Gifts for your Grads, Moms and Dads

May brings graduations and Mother's Day with Father's Day not too far behind. If you are looking for useful and modern gifts this spring gifting season, consider these options sure to please in a range of prices:

FOR YOUR GRADUATES:

1. Help them with all of that note-taking they will do in college with a Smart Notebook (such as Rocket Book) that will digitize and store their notes.
2. Gift your grad a wireless printer/scanner combo so that they can print from the comfort of their dorm or apartment.
3. Upgrade your grad's backpack with a tech laptop bag or backpack. There are even options with a built-in USB port and hidden anti-theft features. Check out the Matein brand with bags starting at just \$39.
4. Help your student get a jump start on the day with a Wakeup Light. If a jarring alarm does not start their day off on the right foot, maybe an alarm that mimics the sunrise will provide a better waking experience. Consider options from Philips, JALL or HOUSBAY—many include other built-in features such as blue tooth speakers, white noise and phone chargers.
5. Give your grad the gift of security and peace of mind with Apple air tags or Tile trackers to help them locate a wallet, keys or laptop bag using blue tooth technology.



FOR MOM:

1. Help mom focus on her health goals by upgrading her watch with a fitness tracker such as a Fit Bit, Apple watch or Garmin.
2. Share those beautiful family memories with mom using a digital photo frame such as Skylight, you can even upload new images via a wi-fi connection so that mom never misses a moment!
3. Help mom stay hydrated with a smart water bottle. The Hidrate Spark PRO can help track water intake and lights up to remind to drink.
4. Give mom a break while still keeping the floors clean with a smart vacuum such as irobot Roomba or Shark ION.
5. Toss the old school masks and help mom relax with an eye mask massager. There are options online in a variety of price ranges.

FOR DAD:

1. Upgrade dad's wallet with an RFID wallet such as the Ridge or the less expensive Stealth Mode Air Tag Wallet which will protect dad's credit card from unauthorized scans.
2. If dad has a beloved four-legged friend, consider a treat dispensing pet camera for times when dad is at the office or away from home. Popular brands include Furbo, Petzi and Petcube.
3. If your dad is a grill master or loves to spend his weekends smoking meat, perhaps a digital meat thermometer will improve his grilling game. Options vary from traditional digital thermometers to the latest Bluetooth options that work with Andriod or iOS phone apps.
4. Consider a wireless speaker to play dad's favorite tunes, sporting events or podcasts while he is working outside, in the garage or relaxing. There are many options in all price levels available.
5. An affordable and entry level way to get the benefits of a smart device is an outdoor smart plug—perfect for lights or other uses where a timer would come in handy.



Many of these devices require a reliable internet connection and Wi-Fi. If you're not already an MVlink member, consider switching today. Visit mvec.coop/mvlink-internet for packages and more information.



MVEC In the Community

Spring has provided several opportunities for MVEC to get out and meet up with members and legislators as well as support some valuable local youth events.



On March 12, MVEC representatives headed to the State Capitol for REC Day on the Hill where we met with legislators to discuss renewable energy, grid reliability, broadband and other topics important to MVEC and our members.

At the end of March, MVEC's engineering and communications teams, including our Energy Advisor, participated in Anamosa Middle School's STEAM night to engage the students with hands-on activities about electrical safety, energy savings and the challenges a lineman faces.

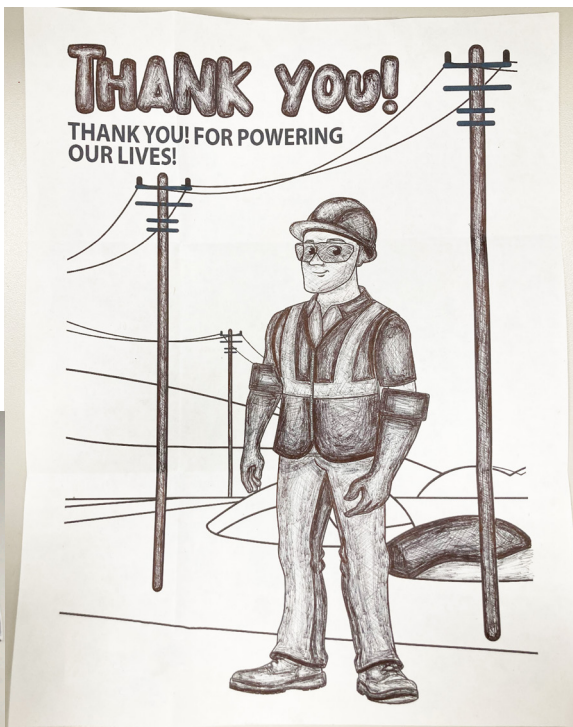
On April 11, MVEC's HR Manager, Jolene Kramer, and Manager of Communications/PR, Christie Remley, helped prepare our next generation of workforce by conducting mock job interviews at Midland High School.



Lastly, throughout the past several months, MVEC Directors and staff members have had the pleasure of attending FFA Annual Banquets across our service territory. MVEC provided scholarships to area FFA chapters sending students to Washington Leadership Conference this summer. MVEC is pleased to support this leadership opportunity for our youth.

Thank a Lineman Coloring Contest

We recently held a coloring contest to celebrate Lineman Appreciation month and received 46 amazing entries—thank you to all our members and mini-members who participated. Mini-Member Natalie R., Dubuque was selected by the voting committee as the winner of a \$50 gift card. Thank you, Natalie, and everyone who helped show our linemen some appreciation for their dedication to providing safe, reliable electricity.



Watts The Answer?

1. MVEC occasionally fields _____ from members considering standby generators.
2. MVEC's continued investment in _____ allows us to provide reliable power and internet and to continue to meet members' growing needs well into the future.
3. Many of these devices require a _____ internet connection and Wi-Fi.

Mail your answers in with your energy bill, or email them to efletcher@mvec.coop

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

Please complete the following:

Name _____

Address _____

March winners:
 Wendy Gansen, Epworth
 Ronald Rauen, Durango



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

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Cedar Rapids, IA
Permit 174



★ ★ ★ ★ ★
MEMORIAL DAY
REMEMBER & HONOR


**MVEC will be closed Monday, May 27
in observance of Memorial Day**

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



Understanding Your Electric Bill

ON-PEAK hours are 4 p.m. - 9 p.m.
OFF-PEAK hours are
Midnight - 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. - Midnight
These times are in effect every day.

Watts Current
is published monthly for members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Mailing Address:
109 North Huber Street • Anamosa, IA 52205
319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068

Summer Office Hours (April 29-September 27, 2024)
Monday-Thursday • 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday • 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

800-927-6068
www.mvec.coop  

Email direct to the following departments:
Electric Billing: billing@mvec.coop
Electric Service: maintenance@mvec.coop
Internet/Phone Service: fiber@mvec.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Printed by Julin Printing Company
Monticello, IA

