

WATTS *Current*

June 2022

For Our Members

'All of the Above' Energy Approach Key to Reliable, Always on Power

As technology changes and continues to electrify the world with new devices, vehicles, smart homes and more, the demand for increased generation escalates. The electric grid is the critical infrastructure that all other infrastructure systems and our economy relies upon; and it is becoming stressed as electric demand increases and available generation decreases. To best support the end-of-the-line member-consumers, cooperatives like Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative (MVEC) need access to a broad energy portfolio that encompasses an 'all-of-the-above' strategy to ensure safe, reliable, and cost-effective delivery of energy.

MVEC purchases our power from Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO). As a 24/7 energy provider, CIPCO is committed to meeting the energy needs of MVEC's members through a diverse mix of wind, hydro, solar, landfill gas, natural gas and coal energy resources. CIPCO has invested in renewable technologies to transition from predominantly coal fueled power to more diversified energy sources.

For instance, in 2007, CIPCO's energy portfolio was 54.7% coal based. In 2021, that number decreased to 29.3%. See the chart for CIPCO's energy sources as of 2021. While intermittent resources like wind and solar add cost-effective generation to the mix, cooperatives like MVEC need access to 24/7 resources that can be distributed 365 days a year to meet demand at critical times. A consistent baseload is required for reliable, always on power.

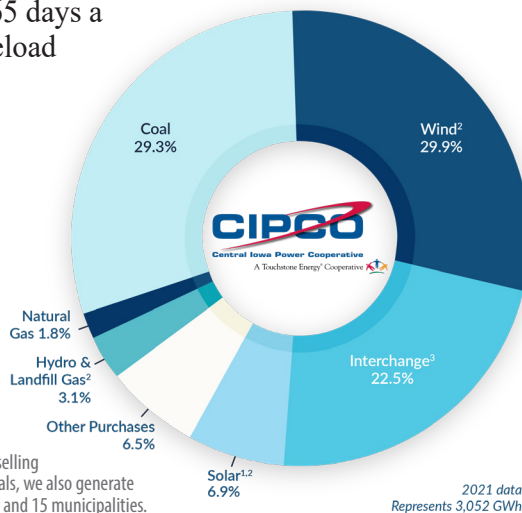
Lastly, a continued transition away from traditional fossil fuel resources requires a reasonable and realistic

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¹ CIPCO's purchase power agreement for Wapello Solar LLC locks in stable, long-term pricing and avoids the risks associated with rising fuel costs. Renewable energy certificates (RECs) are not included in this agreement.

² CIPCO's invests in the development of renewable energy projects in several ways. We operate six small-scale solar arrays near communities we serve and retain the renewable energy certificates associated with each. We also contract with energy producers for the electricity output from wind, hydro, and methane gas from a landfill (converted into electricity). CIPCO cannot claim these resources as renewable within our supply portfolio as we have either sold to third parties or do not receive the renewable attributes associated with the electricity produced from these renewable power sources. By selling these attributes (RECs), we not only support other organizations in meeting their renewable energy goals, we also generate revenue to help us lower our wholesale power rate to our 12 member-owner distribution cooperatives and 15 municipalities.

³ A percentage of market purchases exist within the portfolio to meet additional supply needs not covered by existing contracts or CIPCO-produced generation. Weather volatility and unplanned operational events at power plants may also impact market purchases.



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MVlink
FIBER INTERNET
IS HERE

and here and here and here

SIGN-UP TODAY!
MVEC.COOP

YOUR HOUSE

FAST . RELIABLE . LOCAL

DO YOU WANT IT HERE?



Continued from front page

time period to prepare infrastructure to collect, harness and distribute power from new sources while maintaining cost stability and reliability for members. While various long-term energy storage technologies continue to mature in terms of performance, cost, and in their ability to deploy, fossil fuel based generating capacity remains a critical part of a reliable generation portfolio that balances the intermittency of renewable resources.

An 'all-of-the-above' approach will allow us to transition to a clean energy future using both renewable and nonrenewable sources in a manner that will allow utilities across the country to best provide safe, reliable energy at an affordable cost.

May MVEC Board Update

- Received an update on initial planning for the 2022 Annual Meeting.
- Discussed the wholesale power contract negotiations.
- Reviewed and discussed the Cooperative's policy for supporting economic development groups working within the Cooperative's service area.
- Reviewed and discussed feedback provided by members surveyed on MVlink broadband and telephone services.
- Reviewed and approved a loan application with RUS to provide financing for construction projects associated with the 2023-2024 Construction Work Plan.
- Reviewed and approved proposed changes recommended by staff to Employment Policies and Operating Procedures.
- Approved proposed change to board policy B-12 in regards to Director per diems and community events where Directors are asked to represent the Cooperative.



To ensure your home's electrical system is safe, its wiring should be up to date and any defects corrected.

How do you know if your home needs an electrical inspection?

Safe
Electricity.org

DOES YOUR HOME NEED A CHECKUP?

If your home was last inspected:

- 40 or more years ago, an inspection is overdue.
- 10 to 40 years ago, an inspection is advised.
- Less than 10 years ago, an inspection should not be necessary unless there are issues.

Regardless of when your home was last checked, consult a qualified electrician/licensed contractor if you notice symptoms of a potential hazard, such as dim/flickering lights, unusual sounds, a frequent need to reset fuses or breakers, overheating, odors, loose plugs, damaged insulation on wires or conditions that cause electrical shocks.

SOURCE: U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION

Hoppiness on the Hill

By Christie Remley, Manager of Communications & Public Relations

Perched on a picturesque hill in rural Jackson County is the residence of Bob Siegwarth and Lori Gravel - home to several small businesses run by the energetic, musical and community-minded couple. I originally reached out to Lori about her Hoppiness on the Hill business but as we corresponded, she shared that the couple actually runs four businesses: Hoppiness on the Hill, Ain't Got Time for That (personal concierge/handywoman work), Iowa Speed & Supply and Ace Radio. In addition, you might recognize Lori's name from some of her music performances - she recently portrayed Patsy Cline in a performance at the Ohnward Fine Arts Center in Maquoketa and also performs with Lori Gravel & The Timber City Ramblers, a Branson-style singing group, and the Nutsy Turtle Band. I knew I was in for an interesting tour with a true Iowa renaissance couple!

Upon arrival, Lori first walked me up to the hops garden where hops 'bines' (what hops vines are called) were growing just tall enough for Lori to start to "train" them



onto the wire trellises. Lori and Bob started growing the hops back in 2014 when their friends started Jubeck New World

Brewing in Dubuque. True to form for the couple, they thought they would use part of their property to grow hops to help their friends out. Lori admitted that when they began, they had no idea the work involved nor that it would take three years to start producing a large enough supply of hops. By the time the hops production was mature enough, the brewery had found other sources for hops. Lori brewed tea out of the papery hops flowers and discovered that the aromatic tea solved many of her digestive issues. So, Lori started researching ways to use the hops, and learned that they have natural healing qualities. Hops are natural anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, natural sedative, and aid in digestion. As such, she has produced products to aid in various ailments such as neuropathy, arthritis, migraines, skin irritations and several digestive or gut issues, and much more.

Lori currently grows five varieties of hops in a 30x30 garden on their Jackson County land: Cascade, Galena, Nuggets, Magnum and Citra. Each with a slightly different



taste - some more sweet or citrus flavored than others. According to Lori, the care of the hops is “labor intense, lots of weeding and training the vines.

The hops grow under the leaves like grapes, and can get as big as your thumb though most are pinkie sized. One vine produces about three gallons of hops.”



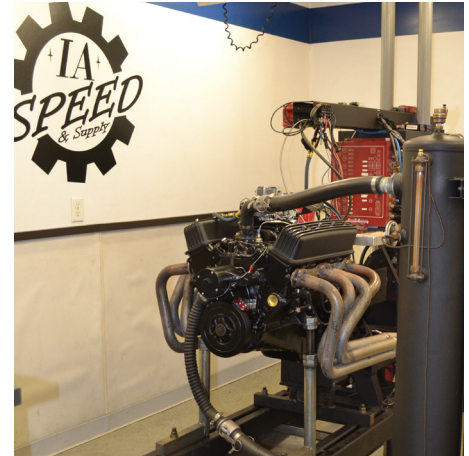
The hops grow all summer, with harvest the first week of September depending on weather. Lori does all the nurturing and care herself and then has a few friends help hand pick them during harvest. Specifically, Lori harvests the lupulins (or oils) from the hops and infuses them with sunflower oil for six to eight weeks. Lori makes several natural products with the hops including: Hops tea, Hopped Up massage oil (which Lori likens to a liquid topical aspirin), Hoppy Life relaxation roller, Hoppy Body deep muscle rub, Hoppy Dreams sleep sachet, Hoppy Hands hand sanitizer and Hoppiness ultra body lotion among several other products. “These products are perfect for people who are curious about naturally made products and are seeking natural relief where traditional medicines have failed. My goal is to educate my customers on the benefits and qualities of hops to improve their quality of life,” Gravel said.



Hoppiness on the Hill products can be found online at www.hoppinessmatters.com, from her greenhouse (by appointment), or in retail stores around the area such as Savor the Barn near Monticello, Plain de Vie in Epworth, Butch & Frankie’s in Cascade, both of the Moore Local locations in Bellevue and Maquoketa, and other stores across Iowa and Illinois. Lori also attends various local farmer’s markets as well, including Dubuque, Platteville and Waterloo markets. Lori can also conduct a “Hoppy Tour” by appointment, if you are interested in learning more.

Lori and Bob aim to be good stewards of the land and in their community. Along with growing the hops in a natural environment, Lori believes in supporting Iowa-made products. During the height of the pandemic in 2020, Lori provisioned Iowa-made products from a variety of artisans to make baskets that were shipped as far as Georgia, Arizona, California and Washington State. Two years later, many of those local artisans, including Lori herself, are still receiving orders from out-of-state recipients who enjoyed the unique products.

As we came back to the main house from the hops garden and greenhouse area, it was Bob’s turn to showcase his businesses. Judging by the modern and classic muscle cars in the garage, it was a safe bet that Iowa Speed



& Supply is selling speed and performance. Bob is a car enthusiast who worked for Xerox for 25 years and raced on the side. When he lost his job with Xerox in 2004, he opened Iowa Speed & Supply and started building and testing engines. He also has a ‘dyno’ that monitors how a car engine will perform under various conditions.

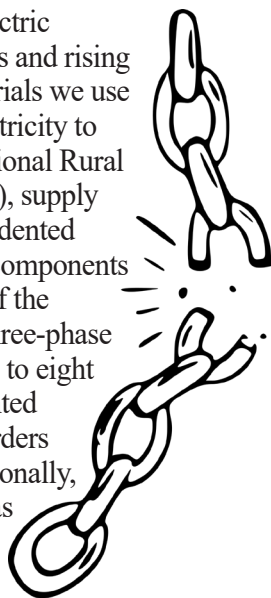
Our tour concluded in the basement where Bob recently finished building a state-of-the-art recording studio to complement his other talent and passion: music. This business is named Ace Radio & TV in honor of Bob’s dad’s TV repair business. Bob does live sound production for various bands and venues all over Eastern Iowa, including the nationally renowned Codfish Hollow Barnstormers venue near Maquoketa. He records many of the performances, edits them and sends the recordings to Iowa Public Radio to share with listeners across Iowa.

When I asked the couple what other MVEC members and the community can do to support their businesses, both were generous with their responses, keeping their neighbors, fellow artisans and the community around them top of mind: attend live music shows, support craft brewers/local artisans and volunteer. “Get involved and make the community a better place. I am fortunate to have wonderful friends, a wonderful partner, a wonderful place to live and my work is a hobby. It doesn’t get any better than that,” said Siegwarth. There is truly hoppiness on the hill in Jackson County.



MVEC Not Immune from Supply Chain Challenges

Since the pandemic, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative has faced increasing lead times and rising prices on much of the equipment and materials we use to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our members. Per a recent article from National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), supply chain delays are contributing to an unprecedented shortage of the most basic machinery and components essential to ensuring continued reliability of the electric system. The typical lead time for three-phase transformers of 10-12 weeks has ballooned to eight months. Some manufacturers of pole mounted transformers are declining to accept new orders all together due to historic backlogs. Additionally, the lead time for substation transformers has been extended by a full year. Orders for electrical conduit have been delayed five-fold to 20 weeks and costs are up 200 percent year over year. Digital meters, bare wire and primary underground distribution cable are all taking longer to procure and impacting project schedules.



on construction projects will be kept informed on the impact material shortages could have on construction timelines. To this point, we have not had to pass along price increases to our members. However, that may have to change if material and fuel prices continue to increase. MVEC will continue to plan ahead and work closely with our suppliers to continue to meet the needs of our members.

For instance, at MVEC, items ordered last fall with an expected delivery date of March 2022 have still not arrived and there is no firm date on when to expect them. MVEC continues to work diligently to plan and budget ahead to accommodate these long lead times and price increases. Where possible, we are taking steps to limit the impact of material shortages on our members' need for new service and service rebuild construction. Members working with us



OPEN HOUSE

Come learn about MVEC's High-Speed Fiber Internet MVlink and the benefits of a fiber connection

Join Us!

Where?
MVEC Headquarters
109 N. Huber St., Anamosa

When?
June 29 5:00pm-7:00pm

MEMBER MEET UP

4-8 PM
JULY 12

AT THE DELAWARE COUNTY FAIR

FIND US
NW corner of
the Pavilion

WIN
A prize

Our very own MVEC CEO
Jermey Richert
will be a guest player at the
Harlem Wizards Pro
Basketball Game
7:00 PM

Watch for our truck in the kick-off
parade Monday July 11 starting at 7:00 PM and
see the EV Rider the CIPCO all-electric vehicle

IT'S A BLOOMING

Good Time



2022

DELAWARE COUNTY FAIR



Questions to Ask Your Home Inspector

Spring and summer are peak buying times for real estate. While many factors go into buying a home, for most people, energy efficiency does not top the list. It can be difficult for a buyer to know how efficient a home is when viewing the listing online or taking a tour. But a home inspector can help you identify potential energy costs and energy-efficiency upgrades.

1. How old is the HVAC system, has it been maintained, and how efficient is it?

As the largest energy user and often the most expensive equipment in the home, you will want to know the energy, maintenance and replacement costs of the HVAC system.

2. How old is the water heater?

The lifespan of a water heater is about 10 years. If an older water heater is in a finished space or on a second floor, replace it before it fails and causes water damage.

3. What is the condition of insulation in the attic, walls?

Insulation is one of the easiest and most beneficial energy-efficiency upgrades you can make. It can make a home more comfortable, and waste less energy. If your new home needs insulation make this your efficiency priority.



4. Are there extras in this home that will increase my utility bills?

Any motors in the home or on the property should be assessed, including pumps for wells and septic systems.

Additional considerations

You can request the home's utility bills for the previous two years from the seller or real estate agent.

Ask your home inspector the right efficiency questions. Understanding the condition of appliances, features and building materials can save you from hidden surprises in your home and on your first utility bills.

Editor's Note: The costs to offer energy efficiency services and incentives are collected through the monthly energy charge on your bill. In 2021, the cost to our members was \$0.0008 per kilowatt-hour used.

Annual Meeting Event In August!

Members will have a chance to elect directors either via mail in August or at the in-person Annual Meeting on August 18th at the Berndes Center in Monticello. Candidates and election information will be in the August issue of Watts Current.

Director Candidate Applications

A nominating committee has been appointed to fill three positions on the Board of Directors, each for a three-year term. If you wish to be considered for one of the positions listed below, please submit a brief biography with your qualifications to: Nominating Committee, %Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa IA 52205 no later than June 9, 2022.

Region 2- Jackson County & portions of Clinton County

Region 3- Dubuque County

Region 4- Delaware, Buchanan & Clayton Counties

Looking To Get Involved?

We are searching for dedicated, passionate members who are interested in serving on the Board of Directors.



Due June 9th

Are You Interested In The Governance Of Your Cooperative?

For more information about the election process visit www.mvec.coop, or contact CEO Jeremy Richert at 800-927-6068 or jrichert@mvec.coop.



TECH LINK



MVlink Employees Share Frequently Asked Questions.

What is the difference between your MVlink fiber service and what I have now?

Our MVlink service brings fiber all the way to the home. Other service providers use fiber to go from city to city but then will use copper wires (Ethernet) to the home to provide internet. Competitors in our area use DSL to the home, Coaxial Cable (round cable used for Cable TV in the past) or wireless point-to-point service (and then Ethernet cable is run into the home from the radio outside). Fiber is the backbone of the internet and that is what MVlink uses to serve our members to provide quality, high-speed connections for streaming, gaming, schooling and working from home.

Why does it take longer for MVlink to be installed/connected compared to cable or satellite options?

Since MVlink is a fiber to the home service, each new area we expand to requires construction (either boring underground or overhead on electric poles) from the nearest MVlink feeder. Speed of construction is dependent on weather and consistency (sand, dirt, rock, etc.) of the ground we are boring through.

Can I remove the flags from my yard once the construction contractors have left my neighborhood?

No, the flags should be kept in the ground until MVlink has met with you to conduct a "drop" meeting. The Fiber drop consists of a fiber cable that connects the fiber cables from our network to the Network Interface Device (NID) on the side of your home.

Why is a speed test not showing the speed I pay for?

There is a box (usually some type of modem) that brings Internet into your home from your service provider. In order to run a speed test against what you are paying for, the speed test should be run with an Ethernet cable and capable device. Visit www.speedtest.net to conduct a speed test for your connection.

Why are my Internet speed tests slower when I'm on Wi-Fi?

Your testing speeds over Wi-Fi are impacted by many things; consider the following:

- What is the type and age of router you are using? An older router may not support the speed to which you subscribe.
- Do you have the latest firmware (software) updated on your router? This is important for both performance and security.
- What is the maximum speed the device you're using will support?
- Are you connected to the 2.4Ghz or 5Ghz band with your router? With higher speeds such as those offered by MVlink, conducting a test on the 2.4Ghz will likely not allow you to reach the speed you are paying for. The device as well as the 2.4Ghz band tend to max out around 144Mbps. It is best to use the 5Ghz band for optimal speed.
- Is there a chance you have a virus or malware on your device?

- Do you have other apps or programs running on your device when you're running the speed test?
- And finally - how far are you from the wireless signal?

Why can't I get a good signal in my bedroom?

The wireless radios in your router/gateway push service out from the device. Think about it like a speaker, the further you get away, the softer the sound is. Your Wi-Fi works the same way. The further away you get, the weaker the signal. If there are things like metal, concrete, thick walls, and mirrors between you and the router, these can weaken the signal even more.

Why should I buy your GigaSpire?

The best thing about our GigaSpire router is that we take care of it. You don't have to try and select the right kind of router, or worry about updating firmware, we make sure it supports the latest devices, the fastest speeds and helps to keep your Wi-Fi secure. We will help you place it in an area that maximizes coverage throughout your home. If you ever have any problems, we take care of it.

What if after that I still can't get a signal everywhere?

With our solution, we can easily add a mesh extender to make sure all areas of your home are covered; especially if you need the router in a specific location and do not want to move it. Some homes are just too big for a normal router signal and will need the mesh device to get signal to all areas.

For commercial accounts, what is the difference between an active E service and a standard Gpon?

Active E service is more of a dedicated connection for each member while GPON is fiber coming from a splitter to the home, multi-unit dwelling or small business. Each splitter can hold up to 32 to 64 ports - typically, MVlink only uses about half of the ports to minimize members having a negative impact on each other when all are connected to the same splitter.





Shine the Light on Community Volunteers: Nominate Someone This Month!

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa's Shine the Light Contest is back for a second year! Last year's contest attracted 39 applicants from across the state and awarded three finalists with donations for their selected charities. During this month of June, co-op employees, retirees or members can nominate volunteers in the communities we serve for the positive impact they are making. Three winners will be selected and announced in September with each receiving a \$2,000 prize for the non-profit/charity organization of their choice. MVEC had two volunteer nominees last year - let's see if we can increase that number in 2022. Nominate the people you know who make a difference in our communities! For details and entry form, visit www.IowaShineTheLight.com any time in the month of June. Thank you for spreading the word to recognize all of the great volunteers we have in MVEC's service territory!



FAKE DISCONNECT THREATS

MVEC members are being informed that their bill is past due, and service will be disconnected if payment is not made immediately. **STOP THIS IS A SCAM**



Slow Down

Take your time. Scammers pressure members to act fast.



Verify

Scammers often pose as the utility. Always verify the info being provided to you matches your latest bill.

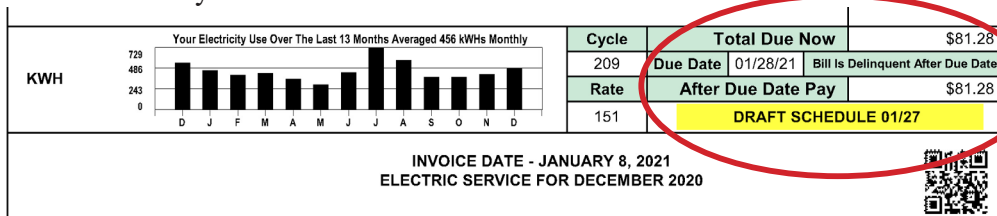


Stop

Utilities never demand immediate payment and do not accept bitcoin, prepaid cards, or third party payment.

What is 'Draft Schedule' on My MVEC Bill?

Automatic Bank Draft is a service that allows you to automatically pay your monthly MVEC bill. If you have selected this payment option either when signing up for MVEC service, calling in, stopping at our office or via the member portal, you will still receive a monthly bill from MVEC. However, you will notice a line on your bill (see below) that states 'Draft Schedule' along with the date that the amount is scheduled to be automatically withdrawn from your account. If you have not set up auto draft for your MVEC payments and would like to, click on the My Electric Account or My Internet Account buttons found at the top of any mvec.coop page. To use the member portals, you will need to first create an account using your full 8-digit account number, the last 4 digits of your social and the phone number associated with your account.



Watts The Answer?

1. MVEC will continue to plan ahead and work closely with our suppliers to continue to meet the needs of our _____.

2. Candidates and election information will be in the _____ issue of Watts Current.

3. Our MVlink service brings _____ all the way to the home.

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 _____

April winners:

Peggy Cobb, Anamosa

Robert Grant, Worthington



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

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

Happy 4th of July

MVEC's office will close
at 11am on July 1st
and remain closed
thru July 4th



SUMMER OFFICE HOURS
MVEC will observe summer hours
May 2nd-September 30th, 2022
Monday-Thursday: 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday: 7:00 AM - 11:00 AM

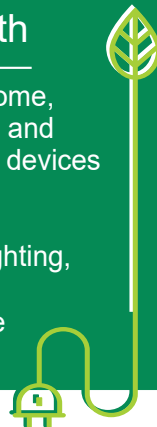


Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control lighting and other electronic devices through a smart phone app.

With smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. By powering off unused devices when you're away, 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

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Mailing Address:

109 North Huber Street • Anamosa, IA 52205

319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068

Summer Office Hours (May 2-September 30, 2022)

Monday-Thursday • 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Friday • 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

After Hours Call Center: 800-582-8998

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

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