

# WATTS *Current*

July 2023

For Our Members

## St. Clement Catholic Church: MVEC's Oldest Active Account

Recently, MVEC's Directors asked how long members are typically connected and active on MVEC's electric system. As part of this research, it was noted that 75% of MVEC's electric members have been active for 25 years or less while 12% have been active for 35 years or more. This research also brought to light that MVEC's oldest but still currently active account is St. Clement Church in Bankston—the church was connected on July 27, 1938 (only three years after MVEC starting providing electricity). St. Clement is currently part of the St. Elizabeth Pastorate, with Father Michael Schueller serving more than 160 parish families. St. Clement Church is a beautiful brick structure nestled in the rolling hills of Dubuque County near the communities of Epworth, Farley and Holy Cross.

According to the St. Clement website, Reverend Dr. John Alyward organized St. Clement Parish in 1860. It was said that the church site was chosen for travelers on the old Fort Atkinson-Dubuque Military Rd. The present church, which is of Gothic architecture, was built in 1898 and completed in 1900.

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*Photo courtesy of Father Michael Schueller. Aerial view of St. Clement Church, Bankston*



*Photo courtesy of Father Michael Schueller. Interior of St. Clement Church*

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According to the St. Clement website, Father William Banfield had this 52x130 feet brick and Bedford cut stone church erected at a cost of \$30,000. While the new church featured pointed arches, murals, three gold and white altars and a pipe organ, it would not have had electricity until 1938 when MVEC brought power to improve the worship experience of St. Clement parishioners. Electricity helped the church provide comfort to parishioners as well as expand its campus to include a rectory, a convent for nuns, a high school and an elementary school. The high school closed in 1959 and the elementary school closed in 1993.

MVEC Director and Treasurer, Judy Gotto and her husband Dan, are longtime members of the St. Clement parish. In 2020, the Gotto family farm and beautiful drone photography taken by Father Schueller attracted viral social media attention for the church. During the 2019 holiday season, the Gotto family orchestrated a symbolic photo of Dan's and son Chad's cow herd gathered in the shape of a cross. Father Schueller, a drone photography hobbyist, took the photo and shared it on the Pastorate's Facebook page where it went viral.



*Photo courtesy of Father Michael Schueller. Aerial photo taken via drone of a cattle cross set up by the Gotto family on Dec. 23, 2019, on their farm in Bankston, Iowa.*

***St. Clement is holding a 125th anniversary celebration on Sunday, July 30, 2023, to commemorate the completion of the present church building. The celebration will include a parade and other activities.***

Over the years, St. Clement Church has undergone expansion and renovation to continue to meet the needs of those it serves. While much has changed in the world since MVEC first brought power to St. Clement, one thing remains the same: MVEC still has the same simple mission of bringing safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our members.

## Attend YOUR Annual Meeting on August 17!

At Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, you are a member, not just a customer. With your membership comes ownership and involvement in the cooperative. Attending MVEC's Annual Meeting is one way you can exercise your membership in the cooperative you own. We hope that you will join us on Thursday, August 17th at the Berndes Center in Monticello. Look for the August Watts Current as it will include MVEC's Annual Report, director candidate biographies, and election information for voting via mail or in-person at the Annual Meeting. We believe that the combination of an in-person meeting, with the option to vote by mail for directors, allows for greater member participation in the cooperative. All details will be addressed in the official Annual Meeting packet to be mailed in early August (it will come in the form of your Watts Current). Participating in MVEC's Annual Meeting provides you an opportunity to connect with fellow members, MVEC staff, employees and Directors. In addition, MVEC's CEO Jeremy Richert and Board President Ron Thielen will share updates on the co-op and you will have a chance to vote for directors. Plus, enjoy lunch and win prizes!

We hope to see you on **August 17th!**







# Our Energy Working For You: Top 5 Electrical Hazards Inside the Home

By Al Reiter, Energy Advisor

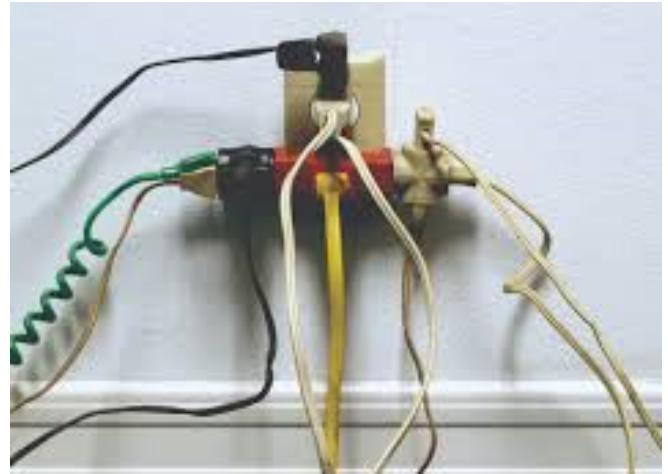
This month's article is the first in a two-part series on common electrical hazards. In this article, we will focus on hazards inside the home. Electrical power provides us a quality of life and comfort unheard of in the 1800s. The standards for a safe electrical installation in your home are mainly guided by the National Electrical Code (NEC), which has been updated every three years since 1897. As you would expect, the code has grown, from a 58-page booklet initially, to the current 2023 code containing over 850 pages, with new electrical equipment and wiring methods added over the years.

While the majority of electrical issues stem from the items plugged into or connected to the hardwired electrical system in your home, the following are some other common hazards:

- Heat damage. Electrical usage and loads increase as we use more items. If the wiring is not updated to handle the changes, the insulation protecting the wire becomes damaged and cracked. Or, the insulation may not be rated for the environment it is in, such as a damp location.



- Physical damage of equipment and conductors. Rodents chewing on wiring, or cords that are frayed from abrasion break down the insulation protecting the wire.
- Loose or arcing connections. This is sometimes more difficult to locate, but a common one would be an old, frequently used receptacle that has loosened.
- Overloading a circuit. The wires themselves become brittle and connections weaken if a circuit is carrying more Amps than what it is rated for.



- Electrical system that is not childproof. Since 2008, the NEC has required that homes be equipped with tamper resistant receptacles (but anything built or wired prior to that date may likely not have these receptacles). Additionally, more circuits in the home are protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI), and now, arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCI). Also, ensure that appliances on a counter do not have a cord dangling within reach of a toddler.

The good news is that a regular visual inspection of your electrical system and items connected to it will do a lot to prevent these problems from becoming a fire or shock hazard. If repairs are needed to your home's electrical system, contact your local qualified electrician to make the repairs. Further information is also available at <https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/hazard-hunt-home-electrical-safety>.

## June MVEC Board Update

- Discussed the results of the annual safety audit completed by the Cooperative's insurance provider, Federated Rural Electric Insurance.
- Discussed NERC's 2023 Summer Reliability Report for the MISO region.
- Discussed potential projects that MVEC could consider for USDA's New ERA funding opportunity.
- Due to longer lead times, the Directors pre-approved the purchase of electric meters that will be needed in 2024.
- Approved changes to Board Policies B-3: Member Service and B-21: Record Retention for Directors.
- Approved Operating Policy O-35 detailing MVlink Internet and Telephone Rates and Fees
- Reviewed progress that has been made on the key initiatives identified in the Cooperative's strategic plan.



## Director Judy Gotto Recognized for 25 Years on MVEC Board

Judy Gotto is serving her 25th year on the Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Directors in 2023. Gotto, who serves as

Treasurer, was elected to the board in 1998 as the Director-at-Large. During her tenure on the board, Gotto has completed over 23 training and leadership courses through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association including achieving the Director Gold Credential.

*Thank you, Judy, for your loyal service to the members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.*



Suzy Gilkerson

Suzanne Gilkerson retired in June, after eleven years serving the Members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. Suzy joined the MVEC family in March of 2012 when she was hired as the Human

Resources Manager. In Suzy's eleven years at MVEC she worked with all MVEC employees and Directors to help them navigate training, benefits enrollment, employment policies and procedures and much more. For many MVEC employees, Suzy was the first introduction to the co-op, welcoming everyone with a warm smile. Suzy plans on filling her days by spending time with her husband Bill, her children and grandchildren.

*Thank you, Suzy, we wish you all the best in retirement!*

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY LAUNCHES NEW CONSUMER ENERGY SAVINGS HUB

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has launched the Energy Savings Hub – an online one-stop shop for families and consumers to access the savings tools that the Investing in America agenda has made available to drastically cut energy costs. The new website – [Energy.gov/Save](https://energy.gov/save) – puts clean energy tax credits and forthcoming rebates right at Americans' fingertips, helping people take control of their energy costs and have cleaner and more efficient options as a consumer – whether you are looking to purchase an electric vehicle, update an appliance, or make your home safer and more comfortable.

**There's something for everyone at [Energy.gov/Save](https://energy.gov/save), with features geared toward homeowners, renters and drivers.**

DOE's Energy Savings Hub also highlights a variety of low or no-cost DIY energy efficiency tips that can reduce energy usage and energy waste.

Source: [energy.gov](https://energy.gov)







# MVEC MEMBER ROUND-UP

## at the Dubuque County Fair Thursday, July 27th 2-7 pm

Mosey over to our booth outside the  
Grand Ballroom/Commercial Building

Have fun &  
take a selfie in  
our booth  
tag @MVEC on  
Facebook

### Win a Prize

Ask us  
Questions

### Pickup Fair Bucks

Learn about



*Dubuque County Fair*  
**LAUREN ALAINA** THURSDAY, JULY 27 WITH SPECIAL GUEST **DAVID J**  
AND **NATASCHA MYERS**

**MVEC** is sponsoring  
**FREE Hillside seats**  
at the concert that night!

**Visit Us Here**

**Thursday July 27th Country Day**

- 8 am Grounds Open
- 10 am-8 pm Creative Arts
- 10 am-8 pm 4-H Building
- 11 am-7 pm Chain Saw Guy
- 11 am-8 pm Exhibit Hall
- 11 am-8 pm Creative Adventure Lab
- 2 pm-10 pm RC Racing Challenge
- 2 pm-10 pm Axe Throwing
- 1 pm-11 pm \$30 Ride Bracelet
- Petting Zoo Daily
- Bubble Tower Daily

**Dubuque County Fair**





# TECH LINK

## Put Your Wi-Fi to Work This Summer

You might think of summer as a time to unplug from your devices to unwind. However, you can put your internet and Wi-Fi connection to work during these warm summer months to entertain and protect your family. Here are five ways to get the most out of your Wi-Fi connection this summer:

- 1. Family Movie Nights:** Bring the entertainment outside and set up a backyard movie by streaming your family's favorites. Use a Wi-Fi extender to bring your fast connection to your backyard. Need ideas on the best streaming platforms for your family? Check out our StreamNow guide for the latest packages ([mvec.coop/streaming-guide](http://mvec.coop/streaming-guide)).
- 2. Wireless Speakers:** Enjoy music or your favorite podcasts while you garden or relax in your backyard. We know talking to our plants is good for them, so singing (and playing music) has to be even better, right? Install wireless speakers on your deck or patio that use your Wi-Fi signal.
- 3. Dance Party:** Use those wireless speakers and host a dance party outside under the stars. Master the new TikTok moves or teach your kids the electric slide. Move to your own beat – all in good fun.
- 4. Outdoor Workouts:** Bring the yoga mats outside and enjoy the fresh air while you do your favorite online workouts or relaxation techniques. Get the kids off the couch and have them join the fun as well!
- 5. Home Security:** Make your Wi-Fi work even when you're on vacation. Wi-Fi isn't just for fun and games—put yours to work for you while your family is away. Install a home security system and/or camera so that you can keep an eye on your home—even when you're traveling!

To take advantage of all of the entertainment and security that a Wi-Fi connection can offer, make sure you have a reliable, fast connection and whole-home Wi-Fi coverage. Visit [mvec.coop/mvlink-internet](http://mvec.coop/mvlink-internet) for more information on our blazing fast speeds, reliable service and W-Fi routers and mesh unit extenders to boost your online experience this summer!







## Outstanding Patronage Dividend Checks

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, 109 North Huber Street, Anamosa, Iowa 52205, has abandoned property that results from uncashed patronage dividend checks issued in 2020. The list to the right is a subset of the members with uncashed dividend checks.

To see if your name is on the complete list of uncashed patronage checks, visit: [www.mvec.coop/patronage-dividends](http://www.mvec.coop/patronage-dividends). If this property is not claimed within three years from the original check date, it will be forfeited to Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative according to Iowa law.

MARLENE DECKER	WALTER MARCH
JOHN M MAIERS	EDWIN ROLLER
DELBERT RONNEBAUM	ROGER S MERKES
ANGIE KOPPE	STEVEN J WOLF
DAVID J MULLIS	THOMAS HOPPE
JOYCE LYON	GIBBS REPAIR
JOHN DEPPE	DONALD J SISLER JR
RICHARD REITER	GARY L GRANT
SHELLY M HARGRAFEN	JIM PUGMIRE
TED D RECKER	KATHY L BUDD
BERNARD G HAY	DONNA THOMPSON
ANTHONY L NORBY	LEROY ANDERSON
ROBERT FANGMANN	FORREST L SCANLAN
JOSEPH S CORPSTEIN	THOMAS A BOLLINGER
NICHOLAS L STEFFENS	KIRK KILBURG
PAT MERFELD	LAUREL DAVIS
SHIRLEE BRUNSCHEEN	JENNIFER HEYER
KEVIN MALONEY	DENNIS E PEARSON
SCOTT D CRUISE	SIDNEY R MYERS
BERNADINE I NIEMAN	ALLISON SCHROEDER
KATHY L MCCABE	KRISTY TAYLOR
BETTY DAVISON	JOSEPH D ZWACK
PENNY KULA	JOSEPH JAEGER
MARIE HEINRICH	CAROL HAFERBIER

## CDL Requirements

We would like to take the opportunity to share information regarding Commercial Driver's Licenses.

Regulations changed on 2/7/2022 resulting in new training, testing, and licensing requirements for individuals who want to become professional truck drivers. Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) is the requirement that has been implemented by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the Department of Transportation. All commercial licenses are subject to the new regulations, however not everyone's situation is the same. Depending on when you were issued your permit and if you have ever had one in the past, determines what you are required to complete.

A driver holds a CLP that was issued prior to 2/7/2022	NOT required to complete ELDT
A driver was issued a CDL or a School bus, passenger, or Hazardous Materials endorsement before 2/7/2022	NOT required to complete ELDT
A driver holds a CLP issued before 2/7/2022, but the CLP expired before the driver applies for their CDL	MUST complete ELDT
A driver obtained a CLP on or after 2/7/2022	MUST complete ELDT
A driver held a CDL prior to 2/7/2022 and applies to upgrade to a higher class for the first time	MUST complete ELDT for the upgrade only

## Watts The Answer?

1. All details will be addressed in the official Annual Meeting packet to be mailed in \_\_\_\_\_ August (it will come in the form of your Watts Current).
2. The good news is that a \_\_\_\_\_ visual inspection of your electrical system and items connected to it will do a lot to prevent these problems from becoming a fire or shock hazard.
3. To take \_\_\_\_\_ of all of the entertainment and security that a Wi-Fi connection can offer, make sure you have a reliable, fast connection and whole-home Wi-Fi coverage.

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

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

Please complete the following:

Name

Address

May winners:

Dennis Freiburger, Delhi

Erwin Felderman, Bellevue



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

PRSRT STD  
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Permit 174



- 4TH OF JULY -

*Happy Independence Day*

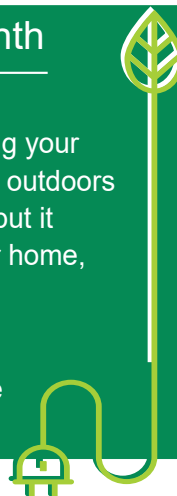
**MVEC's office will close on July 4th**

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling.

You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. Get creative in the kitchen (or the backyard) and find new ways to save energy!

Source: Dept. of Energy



## 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 

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**319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068**

Summer Office Hours (May 1-September 29, 2023)

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](mailto:billing@mvec.coop)

Electric Service: [maintenance@mvec.coop](mailto:maintenance@mvec.coop)

Internet/Phone Service: [fiber@mvec.coop](mailto:fiber@mvec.coop)

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