

WATTS *Current*

June
2024

CEO Insight: Getting Involved in Your Cooperative

By *Jeremy Richert, CEO*

As a member of an electric and fiber internet cooperative, you are not simply a customer who purchases a power and internet connection from MVEC, you are a member-owner of the cooperative. But, what does this really mean to you? As a member-owner, you have a stake in the business—each year, our Board of Directors determines the margins to allocate to the membership of the cooperative, allowing you to earn money back based on what you spend with the cooperative. Customers of investor-owned utilities and internet companies do not receive these benefits.

As a member-owner you also have the opportunity to get involved with your co-op. One of the ways you can do so is to cast your vote for the Directors running for election each August. Members can vote either by mail (ballots come in the August Watts Current) or in person at our Annual Meeting (Thursday, August 15th in Peosta). Directors represent you and work on behalf of our entire membership, and I encourage you to participate each year in our Director elections.

Or, you can become even more involved by running for a seat on MVEC's Board of Directors. In total, there are nine seats on MVEC's Board, each with a three-year term. This August, we are filling the following seats:

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

As a Director, you have the opportunity to learn first-hand about the electric and internet industries. While there is an investment in time for training and Board commitments, you are rewarded by helping co-op management prioritize initiatives and plan for the future. We are in a challenging but exciting time in the energy industry and appreciate the perspective our members provide as we execute on our mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity and internet.

For more details about the nomination process and requirements for running for a Board seat, visit the Governance page of our website: www.mvec.coop/governance or feel free to contact me at jrichert@mvec.com or 800-927-6068. If you are interested in being considered for this year's Director openings, please reach out prior to June 7th.

If you aren't ready to consider running for a seat on MVEC's Board, I hope that you do consider joining us at our Member Meetup at the Great Jones County Fair (Tuesday, July 16th in Monticello) and/or attending MVEC's Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 15th in Peosta (at the Peosta Community Centre). Both of these events are great opportunities to not only connect with your cooperative but to meet the current board of directors as well as the people who work hard every day to bring power and internet to improve your life.

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**SAVE
THE
DATE**

NEW LOCATION
Annual Meeting of Members
August 15th 2024
Peosta Community Centre 7896 Burds Rd. Peosta



Annual Meeting and Director Election in August

As a member-owner of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, you are encouraged to participate in the business of the co-op you own. One way to participate is by electing directors either via mail in August or at the in-person Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 15th (at the Peosta Community Centre). Watch for candidate and election information 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 7, 2024.**

Region 1- Jones County and portions of Cedar and Linn Counties

Region 3- Dubuque County

Region 4- Delaware County and portions of Buchanan and Clayton Counties

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.



Shine the Light: Nominate a Local Volunteer by June 30!

Do you know someone in our community who deserves to be recognized for making a difference? Nominate them for the Shine the Light contest by June 30 and they could win \$3,000 for their local charity or non-profit.



“We’re excited to participate in this statewide effort to celebrate our cooperative commitment to community,” said Jeremy Richert, MVEC CEO. “There are so many wonderful volunteers throughout our service area who deserve to be recognized.”

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, this is the fourth year of the Shine the Light contest, which celebrates the people who make our communities better. Three winners will be announced in September and each will receive a \$3,000 donation for their charity or nonprofit. The winners will also be featured in the September issue of Iowa Electric Cooperative Living magazine.

How to Nominate

Member-consumers and employees (current and retired) of Iowa’s electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers. If you receive electricity or fiber internet from MVEC, you’re a co-op member-consumer and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

Go to www.IowaShineTheLight.com by June 30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules. Nominators will need to provide basic contact information and answer this question. In 500 words or less, your nomination answer should creatively showcase how your nominee has positively impacted your community and how their local charity/nonprofit might use the \$3,000 donation.

Help us shine the light on our community volunteers; make a nomination by June 30!



Our Energy Working For You: Tips for Home Buyers

By Al Reiter, Energy Advisor

In this month's issue of Our Energy Working for You, we are focusing on steps the prospective home buyer can take to get the best value when purchasing a house. As interest rates have increased on home mortgages, it is more important than ever to ensure that the energy efficiency of a home is evaluated before a purchase.

While it is a lot to take in when doing a walkthrough of a perspective home, and features like cabinetry, spacious patios for entertaining, and an open layout have the wow factor, buyers should also consider the monthly energy cost of the home. Here are some items to make sure are on your checklist during a visit:

1. An important first step is to request the utility bills for the last year. While every family uses energy differently, the monthly utility bill is a helpful guide on what it will cost to operate the home. Also look at the difference in monthly costs from summer to winter.

| 109 N. Huber Street Anamosa, IA 52205 319-462-3542 800-927-6068 www.mvec.coop | | Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative | | Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:30a.m. - 4:00p.m. After Hours Call Center Outage Reporting 800-582-8998 | |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------|--|---|
| Account Number | Account Name | Service Address | Meter No. | Bill Date | |
| XXXXXXX | XXXXXXXX XXXXXX | XXX XXXX XXXXXX | XXXXXX | 05/08/23 | |
| Previous | Present | Mult | KWH Usage | Read Type | Charges |
| 9218 | 9579 | 1 | 237 | 2 | |
| 23245 | 24368 | | 623 | X | ON PEAK Energy Used 4pm-9pm |
| | | | 860 | X | OFF PEAK Energy Used Remaining 19 Hours |
| | | | | X | ON PEAK 0.1720 |
| | | | | X | OFF PEAK 0.0840 |
| | | | | X | 0.00058 |
| | | | | | ON PEAK \$37.92 |
| | | | | | OFF PEAK \$49.84 |
| | | | | | -\$0.50 |
| | | | | | BASIC SERVICE CHARGE \$42.00 |
| | | | | | OPTION TAX \$1.27 |
| | | | | | CURRENT ELECTRIC CHARGES \$128.03 |
| | | | | | PREVIOUS AMOUNT DUE \$125.51 |
| | | | | | THANK YOU FOR YOUR PAYMENT -\$125.51 |
| Your Electricity Use Over The Last 13 Months Averaged 1017 KWHs Monthly | | | | | Total Due Now \$128.03 |
| | | | | | Cycle 209 Due Date 05/28/23 Bill is Delinquent After Due Date Rate After Due Date Pay \$129.95 |

2. Does the home have Energy Star rated appliances or what is the age of the appliances that may need to be replaced at some point in the near future? The appliances also may have an Energy Guide (the yellow card) that gives an average annual cost to operate.

3. Is the lighting in the home LED technology that significantly reduces energy consumption compared to other lighting?

4. Has the home ever had an Energy Assessment done and will the seller share this report? A HERS (Home Energy Rating System) index is a nationally recognized evaluation of a home's energy efficiency. While this rating is not prevalent in our area yet, it is used more on new homes.

5. With heating and cooling a home representing over half of a monthly energy cost on average, focusing on this system is important. Is it an energy efficient heat pump and what is the age of the system? For homes in the MVEC service area that have either a geothermal or an air source heat pump, they may also enjoy the reduced cost of the Heat Plus rate for the heating season. Also, is there a smart thermostat controlling the heating/cooling system?

6. While it may not be easy to assess, determine the insulation of the home, and ideally, look at the attic insulation. The age and type of windows and doors are also important to be aware of as this can be a major expense.



7. Most home purchases will likely require an inspection by a qualified person but there are some things from an electrical perspective that you can observe during a walkthrough. Is there any evidence of heat damage around electrical outlets or light fixtures? Are GFCI outlets protecting bathroom and outside outlets? The home inspector will also look at the main electrical panel if it shows any signs of overloading or missing grounding.



8. Also consider extra expenses if you are planning any additional loads that may require an upgrade to the service.

For most people, a home is the largest purchase they will make in their life. For the prospective home buyer, understanding the energy efficiency of a house can give them confidence in their decision.



Powering a Brighter Future:

MVEC linemen to help electrify rural Guatemalan village

This month, 14 line workers from Iowa and Minnesota electric cooperatives, including Maquoketa Valley, will embark on a 2,800-mile journey that will improve the quality of life for a rural Guatemalan community for generations. The trip is part of the International Program affiliated with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), which has been coordinating electric co-op volunteers to electrify villages and communities in impoverished countries around the world since 1962.



MVEC journeyman lineman Bailey Bautsch will join six others from Iowa cooperatives, including Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative, East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative, Eastern Iowa Light & Power Cooperative, Midland Power Cooperative, North West Rural Electric Cooperative and Prairie Energy Cooperative. They will work with seven linemen from Minnesota electric co-ops and together the team will string lines and wire homes for electricity in the remote community of La Hortiga.

“I am excited to go on this trip to bring electricity to people who haven’t had it,” Bautsch said. “It will be sweet seeing the joy from them and knowing the impact electricity will have on their lives.”

The linemen will leave for Guatemala on June 7 and return home on June 21. The remote community is about an hour from San Marcos, situated in the mountains at about 10,000 feet of elevation. The team will build out about 3 miles of line that will be connected to the local municipal power company, which will take over the service of the lines once completed. After framing pre-set poles and building out conductor, they will install wires and circuits in approximately 15 homes.

The leads for this trip are journeyman line workers Mike Berkenpas from North West REC in Iowa and Eric Dessner from People’s Energy Cooperative in Minnesota. The men traveled to the location in February to scout the work and determine resources and inventory needed to construct the line. For everyone but Berkenpas, this will be their first time volunteering for this life-changing trip.

NRECA started the International Program to bring prosperity to those less fortunate around the world. Since that time, the organization has powered the lives of more than 160 million people in 48 countries on the continents of Africa, South America, Central America and Asia. Teams assist with all stages of planning and executing electrification projects, promoting electric cooperative development and empowering communities around the world.

“At Maquoketa Valley, we are mission-driven to power lives and empower communities. We are proud to support this project in Guatemala because we know how access to electricity improves quality of life through better education, economic opportunity, safety and health care,” said Jeremy Richert, MVEC CEO.

The linemen will also provide each household with a water filtration kit to help them access clean water. We look forward to sharing more details about the project with you in future issues of Watts Current.

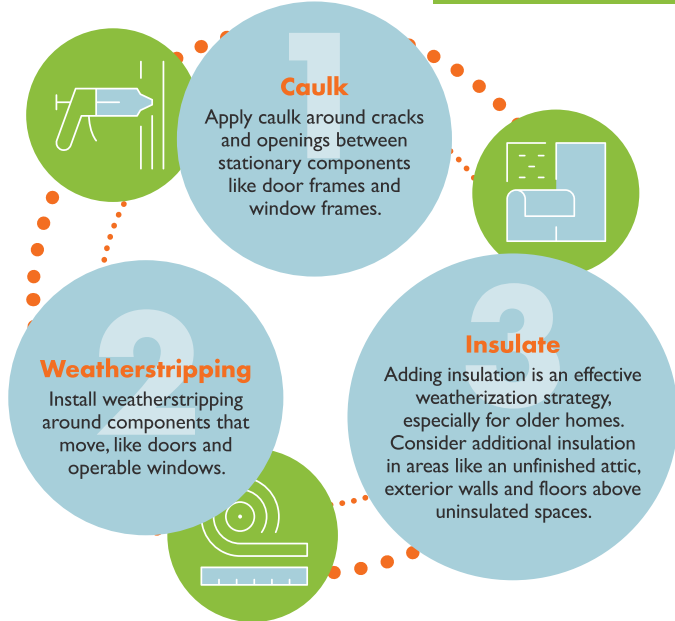
You’re welcome to join the Facebook group called “2024 Powering a Brighter Future in Guatemala” to follow the journey on social media. We will share updates before, during and after the project in this public group. MVEC will also post project updates on our Facebook page.





3 WAYS TO SEAL IN COMFORT

In addition to increased comfort, weatherizing your home is an excellent way to save energy and lower your cooling and heating costs.



Editor's Note: The costs to offer energy efficiency services and incentives are collected through the monthly energy charge on your bill. In 2023, the cost to our members was \$0.0008 per kilowatt-hour used.

Watt's Up: Training at Your Co-op

By Jolene Kramer, MVEC Human Resources Manager

When people think of human resources, oftentimes, hiring comes to mind first. While it's certainly important to attract quality employees, it is just as important to retain and cultivate them once they are working at the cooperative.

At MVEC, our mission is to provide our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity and reliable, affordable fiber internet. We do this through the work of our hardworking, talented team of employees, managers and directors. For our cooperative to deliver on our mission, we must continually train to stay abreast of industry trends and learn how to do our jobs more effectively and safely. To accomplish this, MVEC invests in training for employees in all departments as well as continued education of our board members. Sometimes, this training is done in house and occurs at the cooperative and sometimes training requires our employees to travel to learn from experts in the field.

Some of the recent trainings MVEC employees and directors have participated in include:

- IT training on cybersecurity and industry-specific software platforms
- Human Resources training on hiring, onboarding, employment and benefits laws
- Director training on financials, cybersecurity, rate structures, and industry trends
- Apprentice line worker training
- Technical training for our engineering and technical services teams
- Safety training for line crews, management and all employees
- Communications training on writing, video, social media, and crisis communications
- Broadband training to support fiber internet team members in billing, member service, IT and management

How does this continued training impact you, our member? Training ensures our employee team is prepared to use our resources and skill sets in the best manner possible to implement technology and work practices that can allow us to best serve our members. Training also helps our team learn how to do their jobs in a safer manner which not only keeps our crews safe, it keeps our members and the public safe. MVEC invests in our employees' growth, which is an investment in our future as a cooperative so that we can continue to serve you with safe, reliable and affordable power and internet.

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

MVlink FIBER INTERNET

Great Jones County Fair

MVEC DAY AT THE GREAT JONES COUNTY FAIR

Stop by and visit with us at the Goettsch Shelter (between the Berndes Center & the Fair Office)

Win a prize and pick up fair bucks!

MEMBER MEET-UP EVENT! TUESDAY JULY 16TH 4-7 PM

See you at the fair!





TECH LINK

Keep in Touch with MVlink Telephone Service

MVEC has been providing fast, reliable internet service with our MVlink Fiber Internet since 2016, but did you know that MVEC also offers VoIP phone service? With MVEC's VoIP phone service, members can enjoy unlimited long distance telephone service. Voice over the Internet (Protocol), or VoIP service, means telephone service can be supplied through a broadband internet connection for making and receiving calls instead of an analog telephone line. Instead of plugging into a wall telephone jack, the phone plugs directly into the internet router just as a computer does. Most members are able to retain their current telephone number and their current telephone(s). Residential telephone service is only \$34.95 per month when bundled with MVlink internet service (cost is \$49.95 if not bundled). VoIP members receive all of the following features:



- Voicemail to Email
- Unlimited local calls
- Unlimited long distance calls (within the contiguous US)
- Call Waiting
- Caller ID
- Call Forwarding

For members needing dedicated fax lines, an additional line can be added for \$14.95 per month.

Businesses needing multiple extensions or services can contact MVEC for a customized telephone service solution. The benefits of VoIP with telephone service from MVlink, members can generally continue using their existing telephone and phone number to make and receive calls. Users will find the clearest connections when plugged directly into the router versus an old copper-wired telephone jack. VoIP is easy to use, provides a clear connection, can be set up in minutes and offers many features such as voicemail to email, call waiting and caller identification. With MVlink's telephone service, members can call anyone in the world provided there is an internet connection for all parties. MVlink allows unlimited calls, making it easier, faster and less expensive to stay in touch.

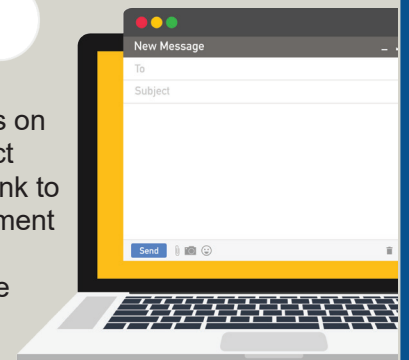
If you no longer want or have a landline and cellular service isn't quite fitting the bill or maybe the kids are home for summer break and you want to make it easy for them to reach you or dial emergency services, consider MVlink's VoIP phone service. Visit www.mvec.coop/telephone-service or contact our friendly fiber representatives (800-927-6068 or fiber@mvec.com) today to learn more.

**WE'VE GOT YOUR NUMBER....
BUT DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL?**

XXXXXXXXXX@XXXX.XXXXX

Does MVlink have all of your contact information? Our Fiber CSRs recently mentioned there are several MVlink members who do not have email addresses on file with us. Please consider providing your email address so that we can contact you with important information. Without your email address, it is difficult for MVlink to provide you with outage notifications, planned maintenance notifications or payment confirmations. If MVlink doesn't have your email address, you may be missing important information from us! Reach out to fiber@mvec.com to ensure we have your current email address.

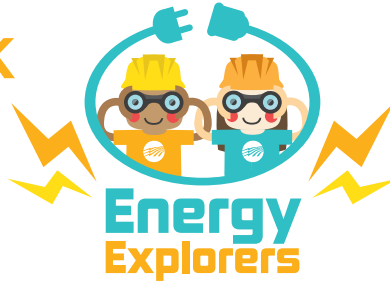
We will not bombard you with emails, nor will we share your email address with third parties.





WATER SAFETY FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Summer means fun in the sun and spending time in the water to cool off. But remember, electricity and water never mix! Read the safety tips below and fill in the blanks with the correct choice from the word bank.



Psst! Check your work in the answer key.

1. When possible, use _____ operated or rechargeable devices when you're near water sources like a swimming pool.
2. If you hear _____ while swimming, go inside until storms have passed.
3. Never bring _____ devices near a swimming pool or other body of water. Devices should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources.
4. All outdoor electrical outlets should be covered and kept _____.
5. Never handle electrical devices if you are _____ from swimming or other water activities.

WORD BANK

thunder wet battery dry electrical



Answer Key: 1) battery 2) thunder 3) electrical 4) dry 5) wet

Watts The Answer?

1. One of the ways you can do so is to cast your _____ for the Directors running for election each August.
2. As interest rates have increased on home mortgages, it is more important than ever to ensure that the _____ of a home is evaluated before a purchase.
3. If you no longer want or have a landline and cellular service isn't quite fitting the bill or maybe the kids are home for summer break and you want to make it easy for them to reach you or dial emergency services, consider MVlink's _____ phone service.

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:

Ron Schwartz, Maquoketa

Randall Streif, Peosta

May MVEC Board Meeting Update

- Discussed the Safety Leadership Summit that staff attended
- Pre-approved the purchase of substation power transformers for the 2025 Capital Budget
- Received an update on the Cooperative's application for Iowa Grid Resilience Grant program
- Approved an adjustment to Rate 18 for large power users
- Approved a new member agreement with Federated Insurance



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

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Happy
Father's Day

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know ceiling fans can help you save energy? Ceiling fans create a windchill effect on your skin to make you feel a few degrees cooler. Raise the thermostat a few degrees and turn on fans to reduce air conditioning costs.

Set fan blades to rotate counterclockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter months. Remember, ceiling fans cool people but don't actually lower the indoor temperature. Turn them off when you leave the room.

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.

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Monday-Thursday • 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Friday • 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

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Electric Service: maintenance@mvec.coop
Internet/Phone Service: fiber@mvec.coop

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