

July  
2025

# WATTS *Current*

## Attend YOUR Annual Meeting on August 14!

At Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, you are a member, not just a customer. With your MVEC/MVlink 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 14th at the Peosta Community Centre in Peosta. 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. NEW this year is an online voting option—MVEC strives to make it easier than ever to engage with your cooperative. Stay tuned for more details on the new online voting option coming soon to your email inbox and in the August Watts Current/Annual Report.

This year's Annual Meeting is special as it is also an opportunity to celebrate MVEC's 90th anniversary. In 1935, our founding members banded together to bring electricity to rural eastern Iowa to improve quality of life on the farm and in the home. Ninety years later, our team works hard every day to fulfill on that same mission, now also offering our members lightning fast, reliable fiber internet as well as safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

See you in Peosta on August 14th!



### NEW THIS YEAR! ONLINE VOTING

Your participation and confidence in the upcoming director election is crucial to MVEC! Feel at ease knowing your vote is well-protected with our new online voting system. Look for more information in the Annual Report.

To vote online, you will need your:  
**Account Number and Mailing Zip Code.**

### YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

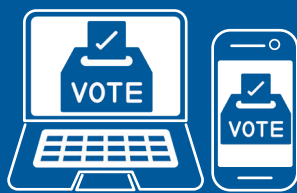


## YOU HAVE 3 EASY WAYS TO VOTE

Reminder, you can only vote once and must choose 1 of the 3 methods below.



**BY MAIL**



**ONLINE**



**IN PERSON**

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## COUNTDOWN TO ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS



**PEOSTA COMMUNITY CENTRE**  
7896 BURDS RD. PEOSTA



## Safety Matters: Commitment To Zero Contacts

By Jenna Curtis, Safety Director

At Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, the safety of our employees, members and the public is our number one priority. In addition to investing in my role (as full-time Safety Director), establishing a Safety Committee and holding monthly training, MVEC participates in the Commitment to Zero Contacts initiative via our national association, National Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NRECA). The goal of the Commitment to Zero Contacts initiative is straightforward: to eliminate serious injuries and fatalities due to electrical contact.

There are technically two phases to Commitment to Zero. MVEC finished Phase 1 in 2019 and Phase 2 in 2023. In 2025, MVEC has chosen to go beyond the first two phases and develop our own custom Phase III to continue to improve our safety practices and procedures.

This first phase was a one-time re-commitment to the life-saving rules (LSRs) which as a co-op, we use in our day-to-day operations. The goal was for co-op leaders and field employees to reflect on their personal utilization of the LSRs to help motivate a shift in behavior to eliminate shortcuts if needed. The three LSRs are:

1. *Use rubber gloves and/or sleeves when required.*
2. *Use ground straps or similar protective equipment when required.*
3. *Follow a switching order when switching from one substation to another.*

In the second phase of this initiative, the initial Commitment to Zero approach was refined by working directly with operational department leaders and their teams to review current work practices using a hands-on approach incorporating employee input, facilitation and two-way discussion. The purpose of this assessment is to better understand actual work practices, create ownership and to create a plan to minimize future risk as needed.

For this current phase, we had all MVEC linemen and engineering technicians take a safety assessment survey. The survey included questions such as, how the co-op rates on prioritizing safety, how the co-op rates on reporting safety issues or incidents, adherence to switching procedures, MVEC's strongest and weakest areas from the 'Golden Rules' established by the Safety Committee, and the biggest challenges of their job.

The survey data was tabulated and Jim Wolfe, a representative from our statewide association, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC), met with the group of journeymen/apprentice linemen as well as

with the group of lead linemen/foremen at MVEC. During these sessions, each group reviewed the survey results and shared ideas on strengths and weaknesses in the safety program.



After meeting with the two groups, Jim met with MVEC's Safety Committee to discuss the outcome from each group session. The Safety Committee then met, considered all of the information gathered and developed seven initiatives to focus on going forward. The seven initiatives include Underground Work Practices, Improving Field Observations and Speaking Up. Each safety meeting, we will pick one of the initiatives to focus on either with a discussion or an exercise. We will also keep this as a focus for the crews in the field to ensure these seven initiatives are woven into our daily work practices.

MVEC keeps safety top of mind in all we do and that includes reminding you, our members, to always use caution around electricity.

- *Always assume downed power lines are energized (and use extreme caution when cleaning up after storms).*
- *Look up when heading in and out of the fields during planting and harvest (and be mindful of the height of your equipment/vehicle).*
- *If your vehicle comes into contact with power lines/pole, stay in the vehicle and call 911. If the vehicle is on fire and you must evacuate, hop clear of the vehicle to safety.*
- *Water and electricity **never** mix.*

### Congratulations



Keith Helmold on **25 years** of service to MVEC and our members!

**Keith Helmold**  
**GIS/Dispatch Technician**

**25** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
*Years of Service*




# Our Energy Working For You: The Clear Value of Quality Windows

By Al Reiter, Energy Advisor

As we get into our weather extremes, we tend to notice our windows more. With the hot summer weather arriving, how well a home's windows perform is not only one of the more important factors in a comfortable living space but also can reduce energy bills. Today's homeowner has many options in selecting windows that not only will look nice but also add value to the home.

An important tool in selecting a window is the energy efficiency rating of a window. To get an unbiased test rating of a window, the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC) evaluates and certifies the performance of windows. The NFRC will assign a U Factor to a window that is a measure of how quickly heat transfers through that window, with a lower number being more efficient. In Iowa's climate zone, the U Factor of a window should be .30 or less. An additional factor on the window's efficiency sticker that would be beneficial in our colder northern climates is the Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC), with a higher number indicating greater heat gain from passive solar. Air Leakage is also listed, and a lower value is better with less than 0.03 being a good rating.

 National Fenestration Rating Council® <b>CERTIFIED</b>		
<b>ENERGY PERFORMANCE RATINGS</b>		
U-Factor (U.S./I-P)	Solar Heat Gain Coefficient	
<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.30</b>	
<b>Ranges from 0.25 – 1.25; lower the number, the better it insulates</b>		<b>Ranges from 0.25 – 0.80; lower the number, the less heat is transmitted</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE RATINGS</b>		
Visible Transmittance	Air Leakage (U.S./I-P)	
<b>0.51</b>	<b>0.2</b>	
<b>Ranges from 0.20 – 0.80; higher the number, the more light you see</b>		<b>Industry standard is 0.3 cf m/ft²; lower the number, the less air leakage</b>
Manufacturer stipulates that these ratings conform to applicable NFRC procedures for determining whole product performance. NFRC ratings are determined for a fixed set of environmental conditions and a specific product size. NFRC does not recommend any product and does not warrant the suitability of any product for any specific use. Consult manufacturer's literature for other product performance information. <a href="http://www.nfrc.org">www.nfrc.org</a>		

Ranges from 0.25 – 1.25; lower the number, the better it insulates

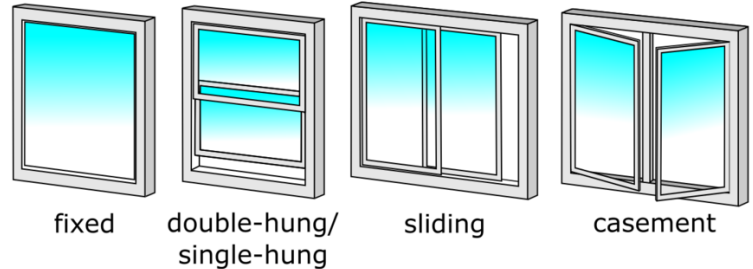
Ranges from 0.25 – 0.80; lower the number, the less heat is transmitted

Ranges from 0.20 – 0.80; higher the number, the more light you see

Industry standard is 0.3 cfm/ft<sup>2</sup>; lower the number, the less air leakage

**Sliders** – A lower cost option that has one sash sliding horizontally past the other. Because of this style they tend to have higher air leakage ratings.

**Fixed** – Windows that do not open and are more airtight but not useful for ventilation or egress.



Another measure of window quality is its warranty, and details are important when evaluating the warranty. A lifetime warranty may mean the lifetime of the window which can be 10-20 years. Also, pay attention to the specifics of what the warranty covers. Is labor included? Does the warranty cover a broken seal or just defects in the glass? The warranty may not cover problems if the window installation wasn't completed to a specific standard. A reputable supplier/installer should take the time to answer all your warranty questions.

A final critical factor in the selection of a window is the installation. A qualified installer will use the manufacturer's approved installation products like sealants, weatherproofing tapes, and fasteners along with methods to result in a reliable leak-free window.

Based on Department of Energy information, efficient windows can reduce energy used in a home by 12%. Selecting windows can be a maze of specifications, efficiency ratings, and warranty details that can be overwhelming, but time and effort at the front end of a purchase from a reputable local supplier can bring years of comfort and enjoyment.

## 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 2022. To see if your name is on the 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.

The operating mechanism of a window also plays an important role in how well it will serve the homeowner's needs. Here are common types used in our area and advantages and disadvantages of each:

**Double and Single Hung** – Very popular style because of their value and appearance. Because one or both of their sashes slide, they have higher air leakage ratings than some other types.

**Casement** – Hinged at the sides and sash closes by pressing against its frame. They will protrude from the wall when opening. Usually lower in air leakage.



## Watt's Up at MVEC: Update from the Fiber Department

*By Jeff Geistkemper, Fiber Plant Manager*

Summer is a busy time for the MVlink Fiber Department. The weather allows us to be out in the field extending our fiber footprint into new areas and performing maintenance on existing portions of our fiber network. This year marks MVEC's 90th anniversary and MVlink's 9th, what better time for a fiber update?

If you recall, MVEC launched the MVlink fiber project initially to help us better communicate with and manage our electric grid. The added bonus of this investment was the capability to provide a fiber-to-the-home connection for members along our electric lines. To date, MVEC has constructed 2,353 miles of fiber and connected more than 7,600 fiber internet members. If you haven't already taken advantage of our fiber connection, contact our Fiber team today (800-927-6068 or [fiber@mvec.com](mailto:fiber@mvec.com)).

So far, this summer, MVEC/MVlink maintenance crews have been working on line transfers due to powerline relocations and rebuilds, and small maintenance projects throughout the servce area. Our third-party contractor, Corridor Network Construction (CNC), wrapped up projects in the following areas: Castle Hill (Dyersville), Teglers Pond (Dyersville), Old Hwy 20 (Centralia), among others.

Additionally, the mainline crews are working in the Sundown area to expand our fiber reach and drop crews are working to get members connected in that Asbury neighborhood. Our fiber staking technician, has also been preparing the next construction areas of Sherrill and Hopkinton.

Speaking of Sherrill, earlier this spring we held an Open House at The Barn (in Sherrill). We were humbled by the great turnout and excitement for MVlink to come to the community later this season. We are planning our next Open House for early fall in the community of Hopkinton.



On the infrastructure side, MVEC is currently nearing completion on our 100 Gb ring upgrades and will be offering standard home services as fast 5 Gb in parts of Jones, Delaware and Dubuque counties within the year - stay tuned for that exciting announcement.

Our team is constantly evaluating our offering and strives for high member satisfaction. Earlier this year, MVEC/MVlink gathered member feedback on our MVlink fiber internet product and earned an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score of 89. This score is 21 points higher than the average Internet Service Provider (ISP) and 13 points higher than the average fiber ISP. Our entire team is dedicated to providing our members with reliable and affordable internet backed by superior customer support.

One last thing that would help our team (and other members) immensely: As you continue to enjoy the weather and work in your yards, please don't burn ditches. Already this year, we have had several costly fires that have damaged not only electric poles but our fiber as well. This damage causes downtime for members and extra work for our crews.

## MVEC Welcomes New Employees

MVEC is excited to welcome these new employees to the cooperative family:

- Bereket Loer joined MVEC in early May as our new Distribution Engineer. Bereket is a graduate of the University of Minnesota–Duluth with a degree in Engineering.



- Brady Kennedy returned to MVEC as an Apprentice Lineman - Peosta. Brady worked for MVEC during the summer of 2024 as a Lineman Assistant. He recently graduated with a technical diploma in Electrical Power Distribution.



- MVEC welcomes Ethan McCaulley as an Apprentice Lineman 8. Ethan will be working out of the Maquoketa outpost. Prior to coming to MVEC, he worked at Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) and Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility.



- Logan Bell joined the team as Lineman Assistant, Anamosa, to assist crews with maintenance this summer. Logan will be attending Northwest Iowa Community College's Powerline Technology program in the fall.





*Jackson County*  
**FAIR ASSOCIATION**  
*Maquoketa, Iowa*

Enjoy Fair Activities  
**Thursday, July 24th**

**Kid's Day**  
FREE Admission  
16 and under

**Mobile Safari**  
**Magician**  
**Agri-Golf**

**Discount Rides**  
Noon-5pm

**Kids Pedal Pull**  
2pm - 4pm  
in front of Pearson Center

ECIPA  
**Truck & Tractor  
PULL NIGHT**  
starts at **6pm**

**STOP BY OUR BOOTH**  
on the westside of  
Pearson Center building.

**MEMBER  
MEET-UP EVENT!**

at the *Jackson County Fair*

**THURSDAY  
JULY 24TH  
3-7PM**

**VISIT US HERE**

**Pickup  
4-H Food Vouchers**

**Touch a Truck, Meet a Lineman!**

**Prizes, Giveaways  
& More!!**



**E QUARRY ST**

**E QUARRY ST**



**E PLATT ST**



Maquoketa Valley  
Electric Cooperative



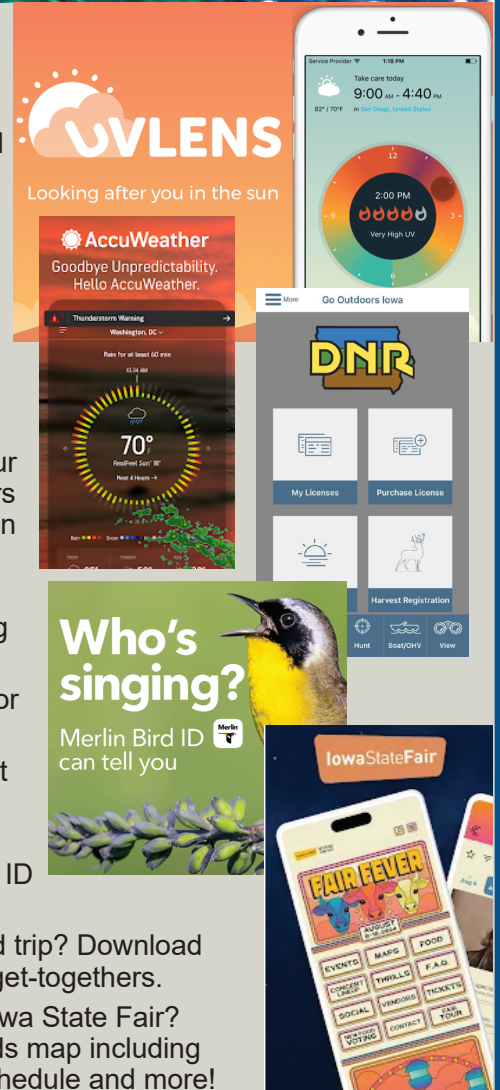


# TECH LINK

## 9 Must-Have Apps for Summer

While summer is the perfect time to put down the electronics and get outside, consider using your smart phone or tablet to download a few apps that will help you maximize your summer fun. There are many third-party apps (*some free and some paid*) to help you prepare your bucket list of summer activities whether they take you on trails, the water or to area farmers markets and festivals. Consider using these convenient applications to access discounts, lineups, helpful hints and more:

1. Download the free UVLens App to help you protect your skin from harmful UV rays.
2. Consider a general weather app such as Accuweather to help you plan the best day for your outdoor events.
3. Looking to hit the trails or lakes this summer? Before you lace up your hiking boots or grab your fishing pole, download the free Go Outdoors Iowa app from Iowa Department of Natural Resources—you can even store your electronic fishing license in the app.
4. In addition to using your SPF sunscreen, hydration is key to summer self-care. Check out the free WaterIn app to make sure you're getting enough water for the amount of activity and heat.
5. Download the HeyGrillHey app to help you become the grill master for your backyard barbecues.
6. If you're traveling this summer, use the PackPoint Travel Packing List app to help you with what to pack for your next trip (you plug in your destination and the app tailors this list!).
7. As you're hiking along Iowa's beautiful trails, use the free Merlin Bird ID to help you identify the feathered friends in your midst.
8. Who doesn't love a good summer playlist or soundtrack for your road trip? Download the Spotify app to curate the best tunes for your summer travel and get-togethers.
9. Finally, what Iowa summer would be complete without a trip to the Iowa State Fair? Download the free Iowa State Fair Authority app to get the fairgrounds map including food vendor locations (fried Twinkie? Yes, please!), entertainment schedule and more!



# DREAM WITH BIG!

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FIBER INTERNET

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NO CONTRACTS**

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**800-927-6068 or [fiber@mvec.coop](mailto:fiber@mvec.coop)**



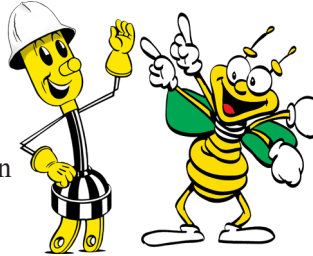
## 1980s at Your Co-Op

Economically, the 1980s were a challenging decade. Iowa was in the midst of the Farm Crisis, and the 80s also brought high gas prices (\$1.19/gallon which equates to \$4.25/gallon in today's prices). Gas had been around \$.36 cents until the global oil crisis of 1979. These economic challenges prompted MVEC to begin offering special rates and incentives to help members save money on their electric bills.



1988 MVEC employee group photo

- April 1980, a major fire at a substation near Wyoming, IA, caused seven MVEC substations to go offline, affecting 2,000 MVEC members. Given the magnitude of the fire, most members were back on within a few hours.
- To support members' energy efficiency goals, MVEC began offering free energy audits in 1981 (a service we still offer).
- MVEC's power supplier, (CIPCO), introduced the Dual Fuel (or Heat Plus) rate in 1982 to encourage members to use lower priced electricity vs. oil and gas. MVEC still offers the Heat Plus rate today (\$.0440 per kWh).
- The Louie the Lightning Bug was created in 1983 to teach children about electrical safety. By 1984, he was trademarked and licensed allowing electric co-ops and utilities across the country to use Louie as their electric safety spokes-bug. Co-ops like MVEC still use Louie and Willie the Wirehand today.
- MVEC Manager John Parham retired in January 1988 with Dorothy Postel succeeding him as the 4th Manager of MVEC.
- The member newsletter made a subtle name change to Watts Current in April 1988.
- The Co-op began using satellite communications to send and receive information making it easier and faster to review members' accounts and process bills.



John Parham & Dorothy Postel



Don Zimmerman lineman & Larry Osterkamp mechanic

## May MVEC Board Meeting Update

- Discussed NERC's 2025 Summer Reliability Report for the MISO region.
- Received an update on MVlink projects.
- Received an update from MVEC's IT Director on ongoing IT and cyber security projects.
- Approved a new employment policy related to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by the Cooperative.

## June MVEC Board Meeting Update

- Reviewed the Cooperative's Commitment to Zero Safety program.
- Discussed the results of a safety audit that was completed by the Cooperative's insurance provider.
- Discussed and approved rate adjustments for MVlink's internet services.
- Discussed and approved a request by the City of Peosta to increase their franchise fee on electric usage by MVEC members within the city limits of Peosta.
- Discussed plans for the August 2025 Annual Meeting of the Cooperative.
- Reviewed the results of the End Use Member survey that was recently completed.

## Watts The Answer?

1. NEW this year is an \_\_\_\_\_ voting option—MVEC strives to make it easier than ever to engage with your cooperative.

2. MVEC keeps \_\_\_\_\_ top of mind in all we do and that includes reminding you, our members, to always use caution around electricity.

3. As you continue to enjoy the weather and work in your yards, please don't burn \_\_\_\_\_.

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:  
Kevin Dunne, Wyoming  
Jason Heisler, Dyersville



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

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



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat such as clothes dryers and dishwashers during the evening when the outdoor temperature is lower. Running heat-emitting appliances in the evening will reduce indoor heat gain during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest and ultimately keep your air conditioner from working harder than necessary.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.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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Mailing Address:

109 North Huber Street • Anamosa, IA 52205

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

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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.

**800-927-6068**  
**[www.mvec.coop](http://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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