

October
2026

WATTS *Current*

Local Voices Shape Local Solutions

October is National Co-op Month

By Abby Berry, NRECA

When you hear the word cooperative, what comes to mind? As your local electric co-op, we hope you think of MVEC/MVlink.

Regardless of the services offered, all cooperatives have one thing in common: they're led by the people they serve—and that simple idea makes a meaningful difference.

Cooperatives come in all shapes and sizes, each created to meet a specific need. Credit unions help members save and borrow money. Producer cooperatives, like Ocean Spray and Land O'Lakes, help farmers bring their products to market. Retail cooperatives, like REI and ACE Hardware, are owned by their shoppers or a membership of store owners, while housing cooperatives give residents a voice in managing their communities. And utility cooperatives like MVEC—provide reliable electricity to the communities they serve.

Unlike many businesses that answer to outside investors or shareholders, cooperatives are built for their members. Their goal isn't simply to earn a profit—it's to provide value, meet unique local needs and strengthen the communities they call home.

That's exactly what makes MVEC/MVlink different.

Our story began in 1935 when neighbors came together to bring electricity to an area when other utilities wouldn't. A lot has changed since then, but our purpose has remained steady. We're still here to provide power and make decisions with our community's best interests in mind.

Being locally owned means we have the flexibility to focus on what matters most to the communities we serve. That's why no two electric cooperatives are exactly alike. Every community has different needs, and every cooperative reflects those priorities.

For some co-ops, that means programs that help members save energy and money. Others may focus on supporting economic development, investing in new technology or creating new opportunities for local students. Ten years ago, MVEC went beyond electricity to launch MVlink fiber internet to bring fast, reliable broadband to our members to improve their quality of life.

You'll also find the co-op difference in the little things. It's the lineworkers restoring power after a storm. The employees answering your questions when you call. The team volunteering at community events. The board members—neighbors—who help guide decisions for the future.

This National Co-op Month, we invite you to join us in celebrating the cooperative difference, because this co-op belongs to you. Follow us on social media for fun information and special Co-op Month giveaways.

Your membership is what makes our mission possible—and it's what keeps us focused on serving the people and communities that matter most.

Watts Inside:

Watts Up at MVEC: Why Protecting Our Electric Cooperatives Keeps the Lights On
Page 2

September Board Meeting Update
Page 2

Your Co-Op Your Share: MVEC Retires \$1,000,000 to members
Page 3

RECARE
Page 3

Iowa LIHEAP 2026-2027 Guidelines
Page 4

2026-2027 Heat Plus
Page 4

Our Energy Working for You: Leveraging Ag Rebates to Improve Efficiency on Your Farm
Page 5

TechLink - This Fall, Refresh Your Cybersecurity Habits
Page 6

Safety Matters: Simple Steps to Protect Your Hearing
Page 7

CO-OPS
are led by their
MEMBERS.



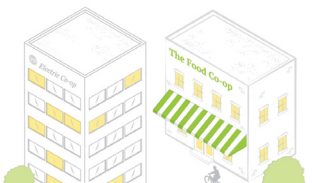
CO-OPS
prioritize
LOCAL NEEDS.



CO-OPS
unite local voices to shape
LOCAL SOLUTIONS.



CO-OPS
are guided by seven
PRINCIPLES.





Watts Up at MVEC: Why Protecting Our Electric Cooperatives Keeps the Lights On

By Jeremy Richert, CEO

Every October during National Cooperative Month, we celebrate a legacy rooted in community and purpose. Rural electric co-ops were born in the 1930s out of necessity—bringing light and power to rural areas that investor-owned utilities simply left behind in the dark. Cooperatives were built by the people, for the people, and that mission-driven focus remains at the heart of everything we do today.

In Iowa, where you choose to plant roots, determines which electric utility serves you. Five decades ago, Iowa passed Senate File 1258, establishing defined electric service territories. This landmark law guaranteed that every square foot of our state has a utility obligated to deliver power upon request. Because of this protective boundary, reliable electricity is available to every single Iowan—no matter where they choose to live, work, farm, or explore.

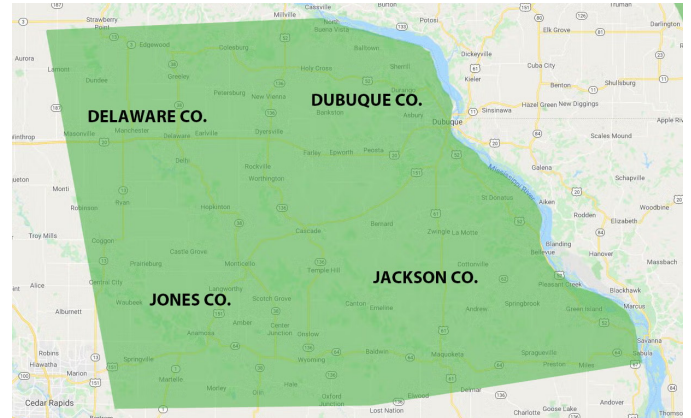
These defined service areas do more than merely assign lines on a map; they build the foundation for long-term stability:

- **Affordable & Resilient Infrastructure:** Certainty allows cooperatives to make smart, long-range investments in power generation, grid upgrades, and cutting-edge technology without spiking rates.
- **Proactive Maintenance:** Clear territories empower co-ops to stay ahead of weather and outages with rigorous vegetation management and equipment upgrades.
- **Thriving Local Economies:** Cooperatives invest directly back into the places they serve, fueling economic development, creating jobs, and strengthening community tax bases.

The proof is in the numbers. From 2018 to 2023, Iowa electric consumers experienced 34% fewer outages on average compared to deregulated Midwestern states. Even when factoring in major weather events, Iowans still saw 20% fewer power disruptions. According to a 2023 New York Times investigation, “Deregulation has resulted in increased rates/fees in every state where it has been introduced. ... On average, residents living in a deregulated market pay \$40 more per month for electricity...”

Weakening or dismantling Iowa’s defined service areas threatens this progress, opening the door to higher bills and diminished reliability. National Cooperative Month is a reminder that keeping local power strong, safe, and affordable requires protecting the policies that made it possible.

Stand with us to protect our rural grid. Learn more and take action at www.ProtectRuralIowa.com.




**DON'T MISS
THE NEXT
BIG PLAY.**
STREAM WITHOUT
BUFFERING.

MVlink
FIBER INTERNET

SIGN UP TODAY!

September Board Meeting Update

- Discussed the 2026 Annual Meeting that was held in August. Approved date and location for the 2027 Annual Meeting.
- Reviewed the results of the recently completed electric services ACSI member satisfaction survey. The Cooperative received a score of 90 this year which is the highest score the Cooperative has ever received.
- Reviewed Employee Medical Coverage plans for 2027. Approved participation in the IAEC Health Care Plan.
- Approved the retirement of \$1,000,000 of member patronage from the years of 2011, 2013, and 2014.
- Appointed Directors to the Board Policy Committee and Board Finance Committee.



Your Co-Op Your Share: MVEC Retires \$1,000,000 to members

At the September meeting, the Board of Directors approved the retirement of deferred patronage dividends totaling \$1,000,000 to active members, and former members, in accordance with our cooperative principles. The amount represents:

- 100% of remaining allocated operating margins for 2011
- 19.34% of remaining allocated operating margins for 2013
- 13.12% of remaining allocated operating margins for 2014

Your 2026 patronage check is based on a percentage of how much energy you purchased during 2011, 2013 and/or 2014. Checks will be mailed out at the end of October. Current and former members with patronage amounts of \$5 or more will be mailed a check. Lesser amounts will be left to accrue for future payouts. Ownership in a cooperative has many benefits, which includes receiving cash back over time. Each year, the Board of Directors determines the amount of excess margins that can be allocated back to the members based upon the amount of energy and fiber services they each purchased during the year. The allocated funds are retained to cover emergencies such as natural disasters, and other unexpected events, and to maintain and expand our electric and fiber systems. This practice decreases the need to raise rates or borrow money. Then, as the financial condition of the Cooperative permits, the directors elect to pay the allocated margins back to its members. To ensure you receive future payments, please keep MVEC informed of any address changes or notify us of the death of a member or former member.

If you prefer to receive your patronage as a bill credit (instead of a check), please contact our office at 800-927-6068 to make this request.

Note: Please cash your dividend check as soon as possible. It will only be honored for 120 days from issue date.





RECare

**You Care, We Care,
RECare, a way for
members to help members**

MVEC's RECare program allows members to contribute to a fund that assists low-income members with weatherization to help improve their heating and cooling costs or supplement energy assistance. Funds collected are distributed by local community action agencies.

Yes, I care and want to contribute.

☐ **I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is closed.**

☐ **I will contribute \$_____ per month to RECare.**

I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

*(Even one dollar shows you care.)
Monthly pledges may be cancelled at any time by notifying MVEC in writing.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Account Number: _____

Email: _____

Please mail to MVEC or include with your electric bill payment.



Maquoketa Valley
Electric Cooperative

**109 N. Huber
Street,
Anamosa IA
52205**





Iowa LIHEAP 2026-2027 Guidelines

Attention Residential Members: Get Help with Your Heating Bill.

The 2026-2027 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs for the winter heating season. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing. If you are not sure where to apply, you can dial 2-1-1, visit <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs-and-services/liheap> to locate and contact your local community action agency, or write to:

LIHEAP

Iowa Department of Health & Human Services
Capitol Complex
Des Moines, IA 50319

Contact the local community action agency in your area as listed below:

Hawkeye Area Community Action Corporation (HACAP)

Delaware County:	Manchester	563-927-4629
Dubuque County:	Dubuque	563-556-5130
Jackson County:	Maquoketa	563-652-5197
Jones County:	Anamosa	319-462-4343
Linn County:	Cedar Rapids	319-366-7632

Community Action of Eastern Iowa

Cedar County:	Tipton	563-324-3236
Clinton County:	Clinton	563-324-3236

Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation

Clayton County:	Decorah	563-382-8436
-----------------	---------	--------------

Operation Threshold

Buchanan County:	Independence	319-334-6081
------------------	--------------	--------------

2026-2027 Heat Plus

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative offers a Heat Plus program which is a heating rate for geothermal, air source heat pumps, or qualifying electric heating systems. All electricity is registered through a sub-meter from October 1 to May 31 and billed at a rate of \$.0460 per kilowatt-hour, plus a monthly basic service charge of \$5.00. The bill you receive in November will reflect your first month's usage for this heating season. MVEC strives to keep this rate as low as possible to encourage the installation of highly efficient heat pump systems. If you are planning a building or remodeling, contact us at 800-927-6068 for energy efficiency ideas.

WHEN TO APPLY:

- Elderly (60 & over) and/or disabled October 1, 2026 to April 30, 2027
- All other households November 1, 2026 to April 30, 2027

WHAT TO TAKE:

- Proof of Income (for all household members age 18 and over) Depending upon your household income type, income documentation from the past 30 days, the last 12 months, or last calendar year, whichever is easier or more beneficial for you.
- Social Security numbers for **all** household members (documentation required)
- Most recent heat bill
- Most recent electric bill

WAGE EARNERS:

Please bring copies of your check stubs for the 30-day period preceding the date of application, or a copy of your federal income tax return.

FIXED INCOME:

This income may include: Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Veteran's Assistance, and pensions. Please bring copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.

SELF-EMPLOYED/FARMERS:

Please bring a copy of your most recent federal income tax return. Note - Additional countable income and/or income verification not listed above may be required for eligibility determination

Income Maximums

Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$31,300
2	\$42,300
3	\$53,300
4	\$64,300
5	\$75,300
6	\$86,300
7	\$97,300
8	\$108,300

Note: For households with more than eight members, add \$11,000 annually for each additional member.



Our Energy Working for You: Leveraging Ag Rebates to Improve Efficiency on Your Farm

By Jeff White, Energy Advisor

Once the harvest is wrapped up, the off-season is the ideal time to upgrade your farm's equipment and take advantage of MVEC's rebates. While residential applications account for most of our submissions, our agricultural incentives are often overlooked—and we want to change that. Learn more about our Ag rebates below.

Dairy Equipment

Milk Pre-Cooler-\$4/cow

Refrigerant Heat Reclaimer- \$5/cow

Scroll Compressor-\$250/unit

Variable Speed Vacuum Pump-\$40/hp

* Number of cows currently being milked that are served by this equipment. Round up to nearest 25.

** Horsepower rated at full load for pumping equipment controlled.

***Maximum rebate per location is \$2,000 per year for each technology. Rebate not to exceed installed cost.

Robotic Milking

Robot-\$2,000/each

*Maximum rebate per robotic milker is \$2,000 with a limit of four installed robots per calendar year.



Livestock Equipment

Efficient Livestock Waterer-\$50/unit

Single Crate Heating Pad-\$25/unit

Double Crate Heating Pad-\$50/unit

Controller for Heat Lamp or Pad-\$50/unit

* Rebate not to exceed purchase price. The maximum combined rebate per location is \$1,200 per year for the above types of equipment.



Agricultural Livestock Ventilation

Ventilation Fans-\$3/inch

Circulation Fans-\$1/inch

High Volume Low Speed Fans-\$35/foot

Ventilation Controllers-\$25/each

*Maximum rebate per facility is \$5,000 per year, not to exceed installed cost.

IMPORTANT: Ventilation and circulation fans must be tested by the Bio Environmental and Structural Systems Laboratory (BESS Labs) at the University of Illinois and have performance ratings (CFM/Watt or Thrust lbs./kW) that meet the criteria shown on the tables below.

- CFM and CFM/Watt values for ventilation fans must be rated at a static pressure of 0.10 inches.
- Prior to purchase, see Terms and Conditions for all equipment requirements (*on back of form or provided separately*)

Ventilation Fan Table:

Fan Size	Minimum CFM/Watt
14"- 23"	10.5
24"- 35"	13.0
36"- 47"	16.5
48"- 49"	18.5
50" & up	19.5

Circulation Fan Table:

Fan Size	Minimum lbs _f thrust/kW
12"- 23"	11.0
24"- 35"	15.0
36"- 47"	18.5
48" & up	23.0

As with many of the rebates in the various categories, there are very specific requirements and energy efficiency standards that must be met to qualify. I encourage members to have the blank rebate form in hand when meeting with dealers or equipment suppliers to ensure it will qualify, before committing to a purchase.

If you have questions, reach out to us at memberservices@mvec.com or 800-927-6068. You can view specific requirements and download all MVEC rebate forms at mvec.coop/rebates.

MVEC's 2026 rebate program will end on January 31st, 2027, for purchases made in 2026
(note: members must apply for rebates within 6 months of the purchase date).

Don't forget to send in your 2026 REBATES



TECH LINK

This Fall, Refresh Your Cybersecurity Habits

By Brent Wegmann, IT Director

As the leaves begin to change and we settle into the routines of fall, it's a good time to take stock of a few things around the house—preparing for cooler weather, checking our heating systems and getting ready for the months ahead. It's also a good time to refresh our cybersecurity habits.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but protecting your personal information is something that deserves attention all year long.

At MVEC, cybersecurity is a critical part of providing safe, reliable electric and fiber internet. While much of our focus is on protecting the physical systems that operate the electric grid, we also work to protect the systems and information that help us serve you including online accounts, payment systems, member portals and outage communications.

Unfortunately, scammers are becoming more sophisticated, too. Artificial intelligence (AI) is making it easier for cyber criminals to create convincing emails, text messages, websites and even voice messages that can look and sound legitimate. The FBI has warned that generative AI can make fraudulent schemes more believable by eliminating many of the errors that once helped us identify a scam.

That matters when it comes to utility scams.

A scammer may impersonate MVEC and claim your account is past due, your service is about to be disconnected or you need to make an immediate payment. The message might even include our logo, use professional-looking language or direct you to a website that appears legitimate. With AI helping scammers create more convincing communications, simply looking for spelling mistakes or other obvious warning signs may no longer be enough. And these scams are not a small problem.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumers reported losing \$3.5 billion to imposter scams in 2025, making these types of scams the most commonly reported type of fraud. Nearly one in three fraud reports involved an imposter scam.

So, what should you do if you receive an unexpected message claiming to be from MVEC? If a message creates a sense of urgency or threatens immediate disconnection, take a moment to verify it. Don't click the link or call the phone number provided in the message. Instead, contact MVEC directly using our trusted methods. You can reach us by phone at 800-927-6068; through our website chat at mvec.coop; or by email at memberservices@mvec.com.

You can also take steps to protect your online accounts before a scam occurs. Start with your password. Longer is generally better than simply adding more special characters. Choose a long, unique passphrase that is difficult for others to guess, and don't reuse the same password across multiple accounts. If the accounts you access online offer multifactor authentication (MFA), consider using it. MFA adds an extra layer of protection by requiring an additional way to verify your identity, such as a code sent to your phone or an authentication app.

Most importantly, remember that you don't have to make a payment simply because someone tells you that you do. We want you to have an opportunity to verify any unexpected request.

MVEC is committed to protecting the systems that help us deliver your electricity and serve our members. You can help by protecting your own account, slowing down when something seems urgent and contacting us directly when you're unsure.

For questions about your account or payment options, contact the Billing department at 800-927-6068 or via email at billing@mvec.com.

Longer
Passwords =
Stronger
Protection



Think Before
You Click.



Watch for Co-op
Impersonation
Scams.



Use Multifactor
Authentication.





Safety Matters: Simple Steps to Protect Your Hearing

By Jenna Curtis, MVEC Safety Director

Hearing loss is the third most common chronic physical condition in the US, according to American Hearing & Audiology. Whether triggered by aging, medical factors, or noise exposure, the loss is often irreversible. While many of us follow safety protocols at work, we drop our guard at home—leaving our ears vulnerable to everyday sounds.

October is National Protect Your Hearing Month, making it the ideal time to evaluate your habits and safeguard your sense of sound. Here are some essential strategies to protect your ears today:

Essential Tips to Safeguard Your Hearing

1. Know Your Decibel Limits

- o **85–90 dB** (Lawn mowers, heavy traffic): Safe for up to 2 hours.
- o **100 dB** (Motorcycles, power tools): Hearing damage can occur in just 15 minutes.
- o **110+ dB** (Concerts, gunshots): Permanent damage can happen in seconds.

2. Measure Sound on the Go

Download a free sound meter app on your smartphone to instantly check noise levels around your home, workplace, or event venues.

3. Keep Earbud Volumes Low

Stick to **50% or less** of your device's maximum volume. If you constantly feel the urge to turn the volume higher to hear clearly, it may be an early warning sign of existing hearing damage.

4. Ditch the “Drowning Out” Habit

Never crank up your music to block out surrounding noise. Instead, switch to noise-canceling headphones or wear earplugs so you can listen comfortably at a safe volume.

5. Step Back From the Noise

Moving just a few feet away from loud speakers, machinery, or traffic reduces the intensity of sound waves hitting your eardrums.



6. Geared Up to Protect

Keep earplugs, earmuffs, or custom-molded ear protection accessible. Wear them consistently during noisy activities like mowing the lawn, attending concerts or operating power tools.

8. Schedule Regular Hearing Checkups

Early detection makes all the difference. Millions live with undiagnosed hearing loss without realizing it—annual screenings help catch changes before they worsen.

Protect Your Ears from the Inside Out

Did you know your daily menu directly impacts your auditory health? Research shows that what you eat plays a vital role in preserving your hearing over time.

To nourish your hearing health, load your plate with foods rich in these key nutrients:

- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Boost blood flow to the inner ear (found in salmon, flaxseeds, and walnuts).
- **Vitamin B2:** Helps neutralize free radicals (found in eggs, dairy, and lean meats).
- **Carotenoids:** Beta-carotene and beta-cryptoxanthin protect against age-related ear damage (found in carrots, sweet potatoes, and citrus fruits).
- **Dietary Fiber & High-Quality Protein:** Support overall vascular health, keeping blood vessels in the ears healthy and responsive.

Protecting your hearing isn't about making drastic life changes; it's about making smart, consistent choices every day. Turn down the volume, wear ear protection when things get loud, and fuel your body with nutrient-rich foods. Your future self will thank you for listening today.

Watts The Answer?

1. Being locally owned means we have the _____ to focus on what matters most to the communities we serve.

2. Ownership in a cooperative has many _____, which includes receiving cash back over time.

3. At MVEC, cybersecurity is a _____ part of providing safe, reliable electric and fiber internet.

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

July winners:

Rita Kurt, Cascade

Tom Koopmann, Bernard



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

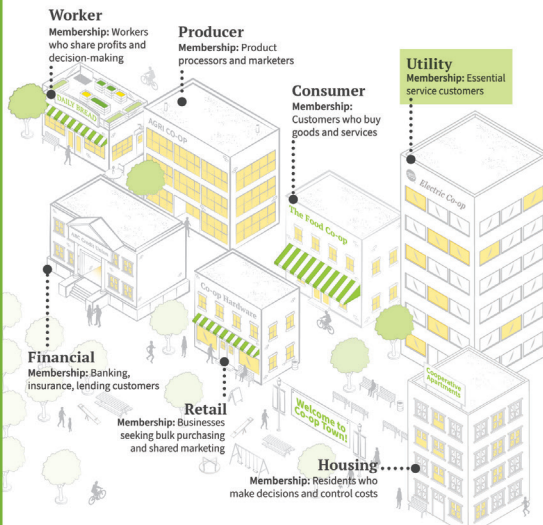
PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Cedar Rapids, IA
Permit 174

KINDS OF CO-OPS

Cooperatives come in many forms—from electric utilities and credit unions to farm supply stores and housing co-ops—but all cooperatives are built with a common purpose: to meet the needs of the members they serve.

Co-ops strengthen local communities, keep decisions close to home and invest in long-term success.

October is National Co-op Month.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Don't let phantom energy haunt your electric bill this October. Many electronics continue using electricity even when they're turned off. TVs, gaming systems, coffee makers and phone chargers can quietly draw power around the clock. While each device uses only a small amount, the energy waste can add up over time. Before heading out for Halloween fun, unplug devices you don't use regularly or plug them into a smart power strip that automatically cuts power when equipment is off. It's a simple trick that can help keep phantom energy waste in check.

Source: U.S. 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

is published monthly for members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Mailing Address:

109 North Huber Street • Anamosa, IA 52205

319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068

Office Hours:

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

After Hours Call Center: 800-927-6068

www.mvec.coop



Email direct to the following departments:

Electric Billing: billing@mvec.coop

Electric Service: maintenance@mvec.coop

Internet/Phone Service: fiber@mvec.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Printed by Julin Printing Company
Monticello, IA

