

WATTS Current

February 2022

For Our Members

Five Reasons We Love Serving Our Members

Valentine’s Day may seem like an observance originally created by a greeting card company, but over time, it’s become a widely celebrated day generating millions of dollars spent on flowers, candy and of course, greeting cards professing our love. But Valentine’s Day isn’t just for the lovebirds. It’s also the perfect time to let our friends, family, co-workers and other special people in our lives know we care about them—with or without a store-bought greeting card. So, in that vein, we’ve created our list of the top five reasons why we love serving you, the members of MVEC.

1. We love serving our members because without you, the co-op wouldn’t exist.

Our purpose is to provide you with reliable, responsible and safe electricity and fiber internet. Simply put, MVEC exists to serve you. That’s why we were formed in 1935 - to bring power to our local area when for-profit utilities would not.

2. You enable us to complete our mission by supporting our efforts to give back.

A major part of our mission is to serve our communities and look after the greater good. With your assistance, we’re able to help the most vulnerable members of our communities through food and toy drives and other programs that help local families pay their energy bills when times are tough.

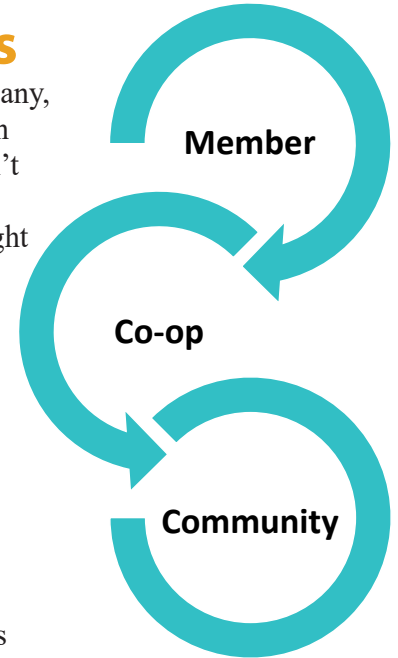
3. Members of our co-op also serve on the board of directors.

They provide guidance for setting co-op priorities and helping make big decisions. Because our board members live in the area, they’re able to serve as the pulse of the communities served and identify immediate and long-term needs. The broader co-op membership provides helpful input through their vote on director elections and weighing in on co-op and community issues.

4. You help us get it right. MVEC members are great about keeping us in the know. We do our best to avoid power outages, but Mother Nature can occasionally throw us a curveball; our members are quick to report any power disruptions and are patient as our crews work to safely restore power. We know outages are frustrating, and your support as we work through storms means so much to our employees. We also appreciate your feedback on co-op programs and services like MVlink and rebates. Your opinions are critical for the co-op’s success, and we thank you for that.

5. You and other MVEC members make up the communities we serve - and for us, it’s all about community. Our employees live and work here too and care about our communities the same way you do. We’re invested and work to help our area thrive. That’s why MVEC donates to local charities, schools, parks, trails, and scholarship funds. It’s also why we invest in economic development, and why you’ll see our employees volunteering at local schools and other charitable and community endeavors.

As a co-op, our mission is to enhance the quality of life in our communities and look after their long-term interests. We love serving our members and our local communities, and just like you, want to see our region continue to thrive.



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Iowa's Electric Cooperatives Discuss Important Issues at Legislative Reception

More than 160 directors, managers and employees from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with nearly 90 state legislators on January 11 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in downtown Des Moines. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives hosted the annual reception in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Communications Alliance, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives and FUEL Iowa.

The event provided a valuable opportunity to meet with state legislators at the beginning of the 2022 Legislative Session to discuss issues that impact rural electric cooperatives and the communities we serve. For example, as the legislature and Governor prioritize tax cuts this session, we're asking for a correction to a 2018 legislative oversight that left electric cooperatives out of a tax exemption on digital goods and services. This unfair tax burden has resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased taxes for rural electric cooperatives.

Please Cash 2021 Dividend Checks!

Dividend checks were issued to eligible Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative members on October 18, 2021, and automatically become void on February 15, 2022.

If you have not cashed your check, please do so soon. Dividend checks not cashed by February 15, 2022, will be retained by the Cooperative and redistributed next year when dividends are paid.

Please call the office at 800-927-6068 and talk to Jan if you have any questions. As a reminder, if your dividend was under \$5, it is being held until the accumulated amount in the future is over \$5.

"The Welcome Back Reception was a great opportunity to talk with several of our key legislators about issues that are important to MVEC and the members we serve," said Jeremy Richert, CEO, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. "We are fortunate to have senators and representatives in our districts who are advocates for the co-op, our mission and our members' interests. We are excited to see what will come out of this session and appreciate the hard work these legislators will put forth."



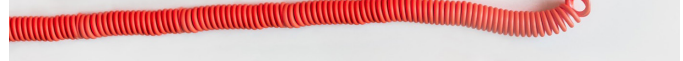
Pictured from left are Representative Shannon Lundgren (District 57 Dubuque Co.), MVEC CEO Jeremy Richert and Senator Dan Zumbach (District 48 Delaware, Jones & Linn Co.)

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including energy-related matters that are central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, electric co-op directors, managers and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues.

Collectively, Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives provide affordable, reliable, safe and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans throughout all 99 counties every day.

Lifeline Financial Assistance Available

Financial assistance through the Lifeline program is available to help those who qualify, to afford and maintain either telephone service or broadband internet access service, or bundled services. Lifeline participation enables Iowans to stay connected to jobs, family, community resources, and government and emergency services. For more information and the application form, visit mvec.coop/lifeline-assistance





DIYers:

HOW SAFE IS YOUR WORKSHOP?

Make these tips standard practice in your workshop:



Inspect tools for damage before using them



Inspect cords and plugs for signs of wear



Use electrical outlets equipped with GFCIs (ground fault circuit interrupters)



Keep floors and areas as clean and dry as possible



Ensure cords are not a tripping hazard



Use a clamp or vise to secure whatever you are working on



Use the right tool for the job



Wear proper clothing for the task; avoid loose clothing or jewelry



Make sure your work area is well-lit



Use heavy-duty, properly rated extension cords

Safe Electricity.org®

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442 or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov



MVEC Hosted Continuing Ed Course for Electricians

MVEC hosted a continuing education course for electricians on Friday, January 14th at the Lawrence Community Center in Anamosa. Nearly 80 area electricians attended the course on Dwelling Wiring taught by Dave Sullivan of Sullivan Training & Consulting from Clive, IA. MVEC will also host a course on Hazardous Location Fundamentals and Agricultural Areas including NEC article 547 at the LCC on Friday, February 11. MVEC is pleased to host these continuing education courses so that electricians in our service area do not have to travel far to keep up on their training.



Pull The Plug

Do you have old appliances taking up space? Get rid of that old refrigerator, freezer or window air conditioner and get paid through MVEC's Pull The Plug program.

Sign up today by calling our recycling contractor, CLEAResult, at 855-838-7817 (toll-free).

Please have your account number as you will be asked to provide it. Appliances in *working condition (run and cool)* will qualify for the rewards to the right.

(Limited to three appliances per year.)



STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE

TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT



When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees to stay toasty and warm. However, turning to other (FREE!) ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills.



Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill. No one home during the day? Adjust your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting to save up to 10% annually.

Source: Department of Energy

Here are ways to help you stay warm when it is cold outside:



- Bundle up by wearing layers and heavy socks
- Get your body moving and stay active
- Use blankets while sitting still
- Caulk windows and door frames that leak air
- Replace or update old or ineffective door seals
- Make sure your home's heating system is working properly
- Keep your furnace clean and change the filter monthly
- Let the sun shine in during the day and close window coverings at night
- Reduce how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside)
- Keep a fireplace damper closed when not in use
- Humidify your home to make the air feel warmer

If you use a portable space heater, use it safely and for short amounts of time. Using one for extended periods can cause your energy bill to spike since it draws a lot of power.

Learn more at: SafeElectricity.org



Are You Ready For Some FOOTBALL?!

It's that time of the year again - the Super Bowl. Whether you are an avid football fan or you just watch the game for the commercials and indulge in game-day favorites, it's a fun way to spend a winter evening.

You know the electricity used in the stadium is high, but did you know that home energy consumption actually decreases during the big game? That's right, during the Super Bowl, residential electricity use across the nation dropped 5 % below average. This is likely because people gather at homes, focusing their energy use in one location, and because activity during the game tends to center around the TV, not on typical Sunday evening activities like laundry or other chores. You can do the same in your home.

Even if your team isn't playing for the Lombardi Trophy this year, you can add these quick tips to your playbook and score big with energy savings:

Super Bowl Energy Savings Tips



- **Reduce the heat during the game** - Having more guests will warm the area with their body heat and movement, so you can probably turn down the thermostat a few degrees.
- **Try to avoid peeking into the oven at those jalapeño poppers as you cook** - Each time you open the oven door, a significant amount of heat escapes, which means your oven has to work harder to cook the food.
- **Don't leave the refrigerator and freezer open** - Whether you're prepping snacks, or have lots of hands in the kitchen grabbing drinks from the fridge, keep the door shut as much as you can, it takes a lot more electricity to maintain the temperature with the door open. Stock a cooler instead!

Cook with smaller countertop appliances to save energy



- **Turn off the lights and electronics in your other rooms during the game** - If you're focused on the TV in the living room, make sure everything else is off in the house! This 3-hour block can help save energy.
- **Use the dishwasher - but run a full load** - Generally using a full dishwasher is more energy efficient than hand washing dishes, especially with an energy efficient Energy Star dishwasher. So, make life a little easier for yourself and save energy by letting your dishwasher do the work.

With these tips, you can relax and enjoy the game. Or, relax and enjoy the commercials - it's up to you!



If you're streaming the big game, is your internet game-day ready? If you don't already have our MVlink high-speed fiber internet, contact us to sign up for the fastest, most reliable internet available in the area (plus, you get the same friendly, local service you're used to as an MVEC member!). Packages start at \$59.95/mo. for 85 mbps/85 mbps. Call 800-927-6068 or email fiber@mvec.coop.





TECH LINK

Fixed Wireless Vs. Fiber Internet (MVlink)

Over five years ago, MVEC invested in Smart Grid technology to improve the strength and reliability of our electric service. Because of that technology investment, MVEC now offers high-speed fiber internet service, MVlink, to members on our "lines" (and in some additional nearby communities). Members can now get reliable, ultra-fast internet with the same responsive, personalized local service you've grown accustomed to on the electric side of MVEC.

In some cases, members don't have much choice when it comes to internet providers in rural Iowa. However, we realize that in other cases, you may have several options including "fixed wireless". Below is a comparison between fixed wireless and MVlink. We believe MVlink is the clear choice for reliable, fast internet for our members. Visit www.mvec.coop/mvlink-internet for more information.

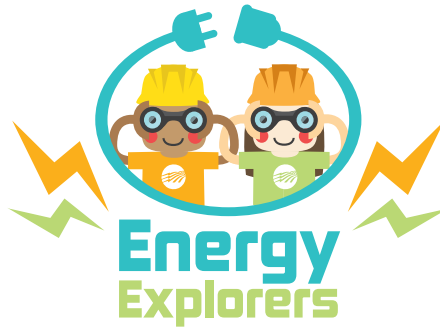


	MVlink (Fiber Internet)	Fixed Wireless
Speed	Up to 1 Gb	Up to 50 mbps
Technology	Fiber Optic Cable Network - from the MVLink data centers into your home. (Fiber optic cable is the backbone of the internet used to transport information around the world)	Wireless receivers that rely on line of sight to communicate between the home and the tower
Reliability	Not affected by environmental issues such as weather and trees	Vulnerable to environmental issues and barriers
Capacity	No effects of evening usage from the neighbors impacting your speed/service	Has to compete for air waves
Security	Highly secure	Concerns related to encryption and authentication
Installation Requirements	No line of sight needed	Line of sight needed
Cost (Residential)	\$59.95 for 85 mbps up to \$89.95 for 1Gb	\$50 for 50 mbps (higher cost per mbps)
Installation Fees	\$0	\$99 to \$299
Local Service	Friendly, local service you've come to expect from MVEC as an electric member	In some cases, local service is offered, and in other cases, customer support is located outside of Iowa
Capital Credits	Earn \$ back on what you spend	\$0



ENERGY CONSERVATION BINGO

Cross off a square for each energy conservation task you complete. Share this with your friends and family to see who can get a "BINGO" first!



B	I	N	G	O
Turn water off while brushing your teeth	Use a reusable bag	Pick up trash	Turn off lights when you leave a room	Walk somewhere instead of riding in a car
Unplug unused phone chargers	Collect items to recycle	Use a smart power strip	Carpool with friends	Reuse a water bottle
Take a 5-minute shower	Use solar lights outdoors	FREE	Unplug unused phone chargers	Use a reusable bag
Carpool with friends	Pick up trash	Turn off lights when you leave a room	Take a 5-minute shower	Collect items to recycle
Reuse a water bottle	Use a smart power strip	Turn water off while brushing your teeth	Walk somewhere instead of riding in a car	Use solar lights outdoors

Watts The Answer?

1. So, in that vein, we've created our list of the top five reasons why we love serving you, the _____ of MVEC.

2. That's right, during the Super Bowl, residential electricity use across the nation dropped _____ below average.

3. Because of that _____ investment, MVEC now offers high-speed fiber internet service, MVlink,

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

December winners:

Richard Hillard, Peosta

Charles Kramer, Manchester

January MVEC Board Update

- Discussed and approved the addition of new employees to the fiber and engineering departments.
- Approved the purchase of two new basket trucks to replace existing vehicles approaching end of life.
- Reviewed and discussed the recently completed Long Range Engineering Plan that was completed by the Cooperative's Engineering Department.
- Reviewed and discussed progress made to date on initiatives identified during the 2021 Strategic Planning session.
- Discussed a board performance self-evaluation that the Directors had recently completed.
- Discussed the legislative reception that was attended by some of the Cooperative Staff and Directors.



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

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**Our Office Will Be Closed
Monday, February 21
In Observance Of Presidents' Day**

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip all windows to seal air leaks.

When running your home heating system, lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

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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www.mvec.coop  

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