

# WATTS *Current*

June 2023

For Our Members

## Energy-Saving Projects for the Weekend Warrior

Are you a weekend warrior? If you're considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and money, we've got a few project ideas for you - all of which can be completed in a day or less!

Here are three energy-saving projects that you can easily tackle whether you're a weekend warrior pro or a DIY dabbler.

### Get smart about home cooling and heating.

Cooling and heating your home typically account for a large portion of energy bills. Smart thermostats can help keep your cooling and heating costs in check, with ENERGY STAR®-certified models saving about 8% on annual energy costs.

Now that smart thermostats are more affordable (as little as \$70!), this simple upgrade makes for a fun, efficient weekend project. Smart thermostats offer a variety of bells and whistles, but the average model will allow you to set custom temperature schedules, adjust the settings from anywhere (from your phone), and over time, learn your cooling and heating preferences.

Your new smart thermostat will come with step-by-step instructions, but this project typically involves shutting off your HVAC at the breaker panel, disconnecting/removing the old thermostat, installing the new smart thermostat and connecting it to your home Wi-Fi.

Play it safe: remember to carefully read the installation instructions before you get started.



### Go green and boost your greenery with a rain barrel.

If you've got a green thumb, you already know that rainwater is the best water for your outdoor plants. Rainwater is free of minerals, salts and treatment chemicals found in tap water or groundwater. It also contains helpful macronutrients to foster healthy plant growth.

Installing a rain barrel is an easy way to harvest large amounts of rainwater and reduce home water use - it's a win-win. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, one rain barrel can save a homeowner 1,300 gallons of water annually. Most residential rain barrels range in size from 50 to 90 gallons, so the size you purchase will depend on your watering needs.

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The simplest way to install a rain barrel is positioning a plastic or wooden barrel directly under your gutter downspout. Consider a cover for the top of your rain barrel to keep insects and small debris out of your harvested water.

**Create fresh savings with a DIY clothesline.**

If you have enough outdoor space available, installing a clothesline is a great way to save energy. Not only will you save on dryer costs—in the summer, you can also save on cooling costs since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be added to your home (which makes your air conditioner work harder). Additionally, air drying is much gentler on fabrics and will keep your clothes and linens looking fresh longer.



You can create a clothesline with two T-posts, wire and hook-and-eye turnbuckles. Depending on your soil, you may need Quikrete to set the posts. Another option is installing the line between two trees. A typical load of laundry requires about 35 feet of line, so keep this in mind as you're determining the best location.

If an outdoor clothesline isn't an option, no sweat! You can easily create an indoor drying rack that folds to save space. Home improvement websites like [thespruce.com](http://thespruce.com) and [hgvtv.com](http://hgvtv.com) offer step-by-step tutorials for a variety of indoor clothes racks.

These are just a few simple ideas to help you save energy and money. So, get out there, roll up those sleeves and tackle a few projects.

Check out MVEC's website ([mvec.coop](http://mvec.coop)) for additional energy-saving ideas and tips.

*Editor's Note: The costs to offer energy efficiency services and incentives are collected through the monthly energy charge on your bill. In 2022, the cost to our members was \$0.0006 per kilowatt-hour used.*

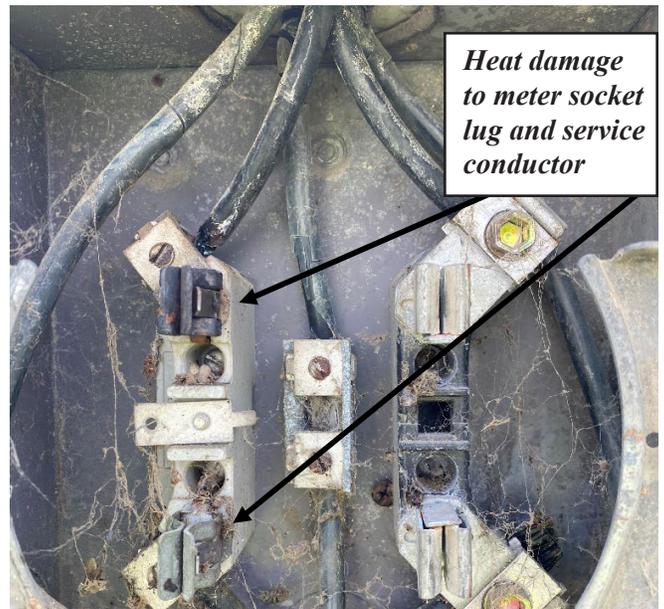
## Our Energy Working For You: Maintaining Your Electric Service

*By Al Reiter, Energy Advisor*

This month's article aims to clarify some of the components of your electric service and what parts are maintained by MVEC and what is maintained by you, the member.

Overall, the electrical equipment operates in the background, safely and reliably, but these components don't last forever. Heat and moisture take their toll on equipment over time. Additionally, electric loads that may have been added to the service can also stress the system. Similar to other items in your home or business, the electrical service requires occasional maintenance. This maintenance takes time, effort, and sometimes requires a financial investment, but it is a vital part of ensuring safe, reliable power when you need it. If the electrical service is not properly maintained, it can lead to unplanned outages for the member, increased costs for emergency repairs that are incurred both by the member and MVEC, and most importantly, an installation that is not safe.

The electric service may need repair or replacement when storm damage occurs, and power cannot be restored until the necessary repairs are completed. More commonly, repairs are needed when regular MVEC maintenance identifies a problem. MVEC performs testing and checks of the electrical service





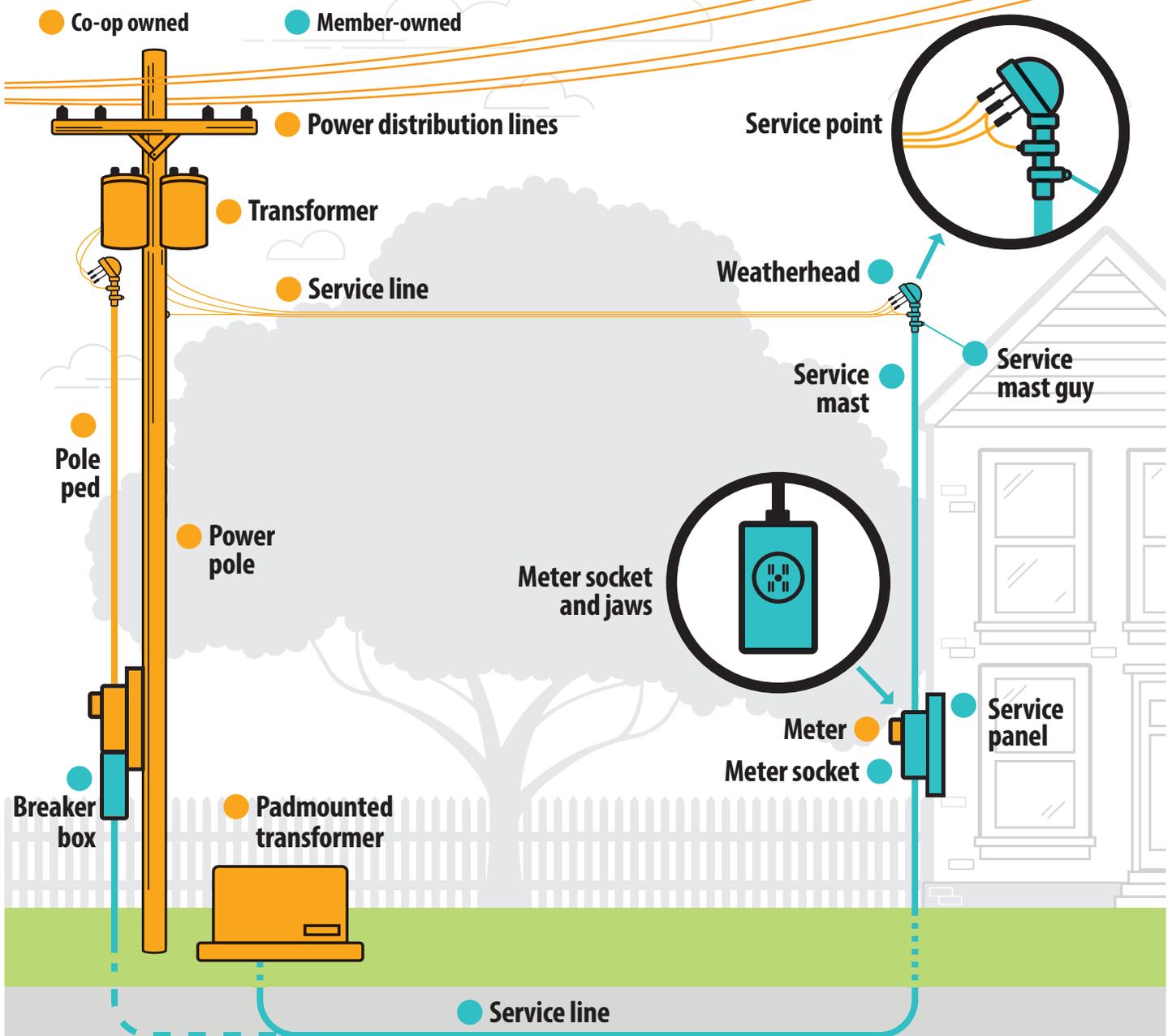
as part of an overall required testing program. The testing program's goal is to ensure power is delivered safely, reliably, and metered accurately.

A component of your electric system, the meter socket, does wear out over time, and needs to be replaced. While MVEC provides the meter and the meter socket, it is the member's responsibility to install and maintain the meter

socket in your electric service. It is the responsibility of the member to arrange for the replacement of the meter socket if that is needed. This is also a great opportunity to review with your electrical contractor, if the electrical service should be upgraded to handle any increased loads added to your system or for future planning.

## Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a qualified electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business.



## 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 17th (at the Berndes Center in Monticello). Watch for candidate and election information coming out 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 9, 2023.

**Region 1-** Jones County & portions of Cedar & Linn Counties

**Region 2-** Jackson County & portions of Clinton County

**At Large -** Dubuque County

**Looking To Get Involved?**

We are searching for dedicated, passionate members who are interested in serving on the Board of Directors.



**Due June 9th**

### Are You Interested In The Governance Of Your Cooperative?

For more information about the election process visit [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop), or contact CEO Jeremy Richert at 800-927-6068 or [jrichert@mvec.coop](mailto:jrichert@mvec.coop).

## Matt Althoff, Bailey Bautsch Attain Journeyman Status

Matt Althoff and Bailey Bautsch were recognized at May’s safety meeting for completing their Lineman Apprentice Program. Director of Operations, Dan Schulte, presented both with their Journeyman Lineman Certificate. The apprenticeship program is a U.S./Iowa Department of Labor-registered program. It is a four-year, 7,000-hour commitment that provides lineworkers with occupation-related instruction and hands-on experience. Althoff and Bautsch started in other MVEC outposts but both currently work out of the Peosta outpost. “Their education and experience are welcomed additions to our journeymen level linemen,” said Dan Schulte, Operations Director. “This investment in training and their achievement reinforces MVEC’s commitment to providing safe, reliable electricity.” Althoff and Bautsch have each been with MVEC for four years.



Bailey Bautsch



Matt Althoff

## May MVEC Board Update

- Reviewed current activities for the economic development and marketing group.
- Discussed construction status of 2023 MVlink fiber network extension projects.
- Approved a revolving loan fund application for a Jones County business.
- Approved donations to community improvement projects in Jones, Jackson, and Delaware counties.
- The Board Policy Committee led a discussion on various policies that had been reviewed at a meeting of the Policy Committee. No policy changes were approved at this time.



## MVEC Hosts Students

MVEC recently hosted a group of Anamosa Middle School Students through Kirkwood's Workplace Learning Connection. Students toured MVEC HQ and talked with representatives from our Engineering, Technical Services, IT and Fiber Internet departments to learn about the career opportunities at an electric and fiber co-op. Events like these are great opportunities for MVEC to connect with our communities and the future workforce. The goal of the tour is to give students a realistic look at the world of work and better prepare them for their future. By seeing firsthand how MVEC runs and the careers available here, it helps to open up possibilities to students that they may not have considered or can give them valuable insight to something they're interested in pursuing.



**MEMBER ROUND-UP** *July 27th*  
**2-7 pm**

**Mosey over to our booth**

**Win a prize & pick up Fair Bucks!**

**outside the Grand Ballroom/  
 Commercial Building**  
*(across from the 4H-Building)*

**Dubuque County Fair**  
**70<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL July 25 - 30, 2023**

## 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 \$2,500 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 third 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 \$2,500 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](http://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: How has your nominee made a difference in the community and how might their local charity/nonprofit use the \$2,500 donation?

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



# TECH LINK

## Is Your MVlink Account Information Current?

To provide you with efficient and effective member support, it is important that MVlink representatives have your current and complete account information. To review your MVlink account information, click the blue My Internet Account button at the top of any mvec.coop page. In this portal, you can update your billing email address, add a secondary email address for notifications, edit or add phone numbers and update your account address information.

You can also add all appropriate authorized users to your account (anyone from your home or business who should have the ability to contact MVEC/MVlink about service or billing) by calling our Fiber department (800-927-6068). One of our Fiber representatives will take you through the appropriate security steps before making changes to your existing account information. It is important that you have authorized users and passwords set up correctly for your MVlink account. Doing so will allow multiple members of your household to contact technical support, make payments or billing inquiries. MVlink representatives are unable to make changes, share information and access accounts without the appropriate security clearances.

Thank you in advance for taking this step. It will save you time and will allow our member service representatives to better assist you.



### My Account

- My Services
- Setup Email Billing
- Update Account Information
- Security Questions
- Manage Payment Methods
- Change Password
- Manage Account Access
- Alerts and Notifications

### Help

Email Address XXXXXX@XXXX

Email	Name	Recipient Type	Verified	Actions
XXXXXX@XXXX	SAM SMITH	Primary	✓	Actions ▾
XXXXXX@XXXX	XXXX XXXX		✓	Actions ▾
XXXXXX@XXXX	XXXX XXXX		✓	Actions ▾

✗ - Only a verified email address can be used for email billing.

Add New Email

## KIDS HOME FOR THE SUMMER, PUSHING YOUR CURRENT INTERNET TO THE LIMIT?

With MVlink, your family can stream, game, and enjoy a superior online experience without buffering or downtime.



Call us today!  
800-927-6068

MVEC.COOP

### Summer checklist

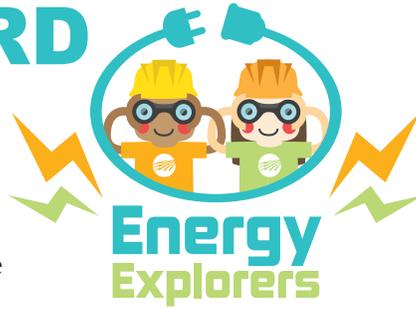
- ✓ Stocked up on sunscreen
- ✓ Extra food in the fridge
- ✓ **Superfast internet**

Better Call  
MVlink NOW





# SWIMMING POOL SAFETY WORD SEARCH



Water and electricity never mix. Always practice safety when you're near or in the swimming pool this summer. Read the following safety tips, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle below.

Never bring electrical **devices** near a swimming pool. **Electrical** devices that come in contact with **water** can cause electric shock. When possible, use **battery**-operated devices when **outdoors** near a swimming pool. Outdoor electrical **outlets** should be **dry** or covered. If you hear thunder, immediately exit the swimming **pool**. Thunderstorms and lightning may be near.

C Y P G V Q B X S E D R N L Y  
 I R O J R H S R L J M R I J F  
 I E O X M W O E V T W G Y L A  
 M T L T J O C M H O H M H K H  
 V T P A D T M C K T Z G E U Q  
 E A Y T R P O Z N E J K Y M B  
 H B U I P T E I D Q K C X Q M  
 Z O C L F W N W W C N K J N S  
 R A I T B G G S D R T H T I K  
 L E I T K J K N H X Z C B Y J  
 L K T A Z X T Y H E Q D P R R  
 N X M A X M Q S E C I V E D F  
 Z O Y D W O U T L E T S U V L  
 X N P Y C Y O H O P J L R C Q  
 Z M J Y L X R L B E N B H C K

## Watts The Answer?

- If you're considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and \_\_\_\_\_, we've got a few project ideas for you - all of which can be completed in a day or less!
- MVEC performs testing and checks of the electrical service as part of an \_\_\_\_\_ required testing program.
- It is important that you have \_\_\_\_\_ users and passwords set up correctly on your MVlink account.

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

April winners:

Jerry Marbach, Manchester

Gary Childers, Durango

**MVEC reminds our members and mini members to be safe around electricity this summer. For more safety tips, visit [mvec.coop](http://mvec.coop).**



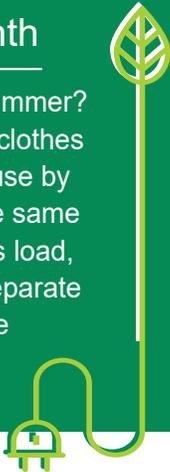
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Electric Cooperative  
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Anamosa, Iowa 52205

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### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for additional ways to save energy this summer? Your laundry room is a great place to start. Wash clothes with cold water, which can cut one load's energy use by more than half. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up when you can. When drying clothes, separate the heavier cottons. Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.



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

is published monthly for members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Mailing Address:  
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**319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068**

Summer Office Hours (May 1-September 29, 2023)  
Monday-Thursday • 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Friday • 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**800-927-6068**  
**www.mvec.coop**



Email direct to the following departments:

Electric Billing: [billing@mvec.coop](mailto:billing@mvec.coop)  
Electric Service: [maintenance@mvec.coop](mailto:maintenance@mvec.coop)  
Internet/Phone Service: [fiber@mvec.coop](mailto:fiber@mvec.coop)

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Printed by Julin Printing Company  
Monticello, IA

