

WATTS *Current*

June
2025

CEO Insights: What Matters at Your Co-op

By Jeremy Richert, CEO

As you've read in previous newsletters this year, MVEC is marking our 90th anniversary in 2025. In 1935, our founders made a commitment to MVEC members to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity. We made this commitment to our members long ago, and it is the same commitment we make to our members today. While there has been some consolidation over the last 85 years, today this co-op is part of nearly 50 RECs who provide power in Iowa and part of over 900 co-ops across the country who have the same roots dating back to the REA in 1935.

Cooperatives are unique for a number of reasons, but two of the reasons that make RECs particularly unique is our consumer mix and density. We are largely residential (86% meter count), and we average only 4 electric meters per mile of line. Electric meter densities are significantly higher in investor-owned and municipally-owned utilities. These attributes impact every aspect of our planning and operations. However, we are proud that we continue to offer a high level of service—we do the same, and often more, with less.

Our Employees Matter

Our most valuable asset at MVEC is our people. We have a skilled and dedicated team who work tirelessly to provide the very best electric and fiber internet service to you. Last month, we thanked our staff by treating them to chair massages and a pizza lunch. April is technically linemen appreciation month, however, we chose to recognize all of our employees at that time. While the linemen are on the frontline of what we do, our entire team contributes to our ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable power and fiber internet and we are grateful for what they do every day.

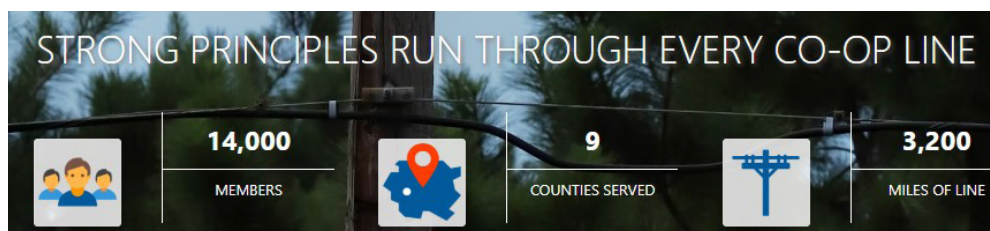


Safety Matters

MVEC is currently working on Phase II of our Commitment to Zero contacts. Our Safety and Operations teams are in the process of reviewing current work practices using a hands-on approach that incorporates employee input, facilitation and discussions. MVEC's Safety Director Jenna Curtis will share more on the Commitment to Zero approach in next month's Safety Matters column. The safety of our employees, members and the public is MVEC's number one priority.

Reliability Matters

The reliability of our service to you is paramount. This year, MVEC is investing significantly more in vegetation management to improve the reliability and safety of our electric plant. You may likely see our vegetation management contractors or our own maintenance crews working to clear the electric lines from disruptive shrubs and trees that impact reliability and our ability to quickly resolve outages.



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Jackson County
FAIR ASSOCIATION
Maquoketa, Iowa

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

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

**MEMBER
MEET-UP
EVENT!**
at the
Jackson County Fair

Maquoketa Valley
Electric Cooperative

**MVlink
FIBER INTERNET**

Kid's Day
FREE Admission
16 and under

Discount Rides
Noon-5pm

Stop by
our booth
**4-H Food
Vouchers**
**Prizes
Giveaways
And More!!**



Member Involvement Matters

As a cooperative member, you have the opportunity to get involved in the cooperative you own. One of the ways to do this is by becoming one of nine directors at the co-op. There are only a few days left to indicate interest in running for a seat on MVEC's Board of Directors. Nominations will be accepted until June 6, 2025. With former Director Manternach's retirement, all four regions have a seat up for election this year, creating a rare opportunity for members from the entire service territory to run. Feel free to reach out to me for more information (jrichert@mvec.com or 800-927-6068).

Our Ability to Serve Efficiently and Effectively Matters

This year's legislative session brought a lot of attention to the energy industry with the Governor's proposed Energy Omnibus bill. MVEC and our statewide organization, IAEC, work together to communicate with local legislators to keep the economic interests of co-op members and the practical application of any laws that will impact rates, or the financial well-being of our members, top of mind as they propose and pass legislation.

Since 1976, service territories have provided exceptional protection to electric consumers, especially those in rural Iowa. Originally, service territories were developed to avoid duplication of facilities and to promote economical, efficient, and adequate electric service. For nearly 50 years, service territories have served to provide stability and predictability to Iowa's electric industry. Today, the stability and predictability provided by service territories help cooperatives keep rates affordable, maintain an exceptionally resilient and reliable electric grid, and strongly support rural economic development.

Iowa's electric co-ops believe strongly that service territory laws should be protected at all costs. Every state that has moved towards full or incremental dismantling of electric service territory shows that large industrial users benefit while farm and residential users pay the price with higher rates while sacrificing service reliability.

Former MVEC Director

Larry Swanson - passed away on Friday, April 11th. Larry served on MVEC's board over 30 years from 1991 through August 2024 representing Region 4 (Delaware County and portions of Buchanan and Clayton Counties). He was Board President from 2006-2017 and helped



initiate a significant amount of change within the co-op (adoption of smart grid technology, time of use rates, and broadband are just a few items he was very supportive of). Larry is survived by his wife Sandy and their children Amy and Jordan Swanson.



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 14th (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 6, 2025.**

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

Region 2- Jackson County and portions of Clinton County

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.

Who is Eligible to VOTE in the Upcoming Director Election?

To be eligible to cast a vote during Director election, a member of MVEC must be listed on the formal membership application filed with the co-op. To add a spouse to your membership, contact Erica at 800-927-6068.

The Secretary of the Co-op, 15 days prior to Annual Meeting, makes a complete list of members entitled to vote.





Our Energy Working For You: Planning for the Future

By Al Reiter, Energy Advisor

This month's Watts Current article looks at planning for future electrical needs, specifically with your main electrical service. We will look at this from the perspective of a single family home, but most of these factors can apply to farm, commercial or industrial facilities. What worked for the size of the electrical service previously, no longer is adequate to meet our needs. Some of the reasons for this include more electrical equipment, new technologies, like electric vehicles, that weren't common when the service was initially put in, and changes over the years with the electrical codes, all have contributed to more energy use.

So where does the planning start when you are building a new home or upgrading an existing service? The most likely place to start is your local qualified electrical contractor. This person will review what your plans are today and possible future additions, then complete a load calculation. They likely will incorporate some extra spaces in the main electrical panel that will be available for future additions. If your electrical box is filled up from the start, any new loads can result in expensive changes or upgrades to the service. Your electrician may also incorporate a sub panel to help with capacity or designs issues of the electrical system. Making these investments now may seem like extra costs, but will save in the future.

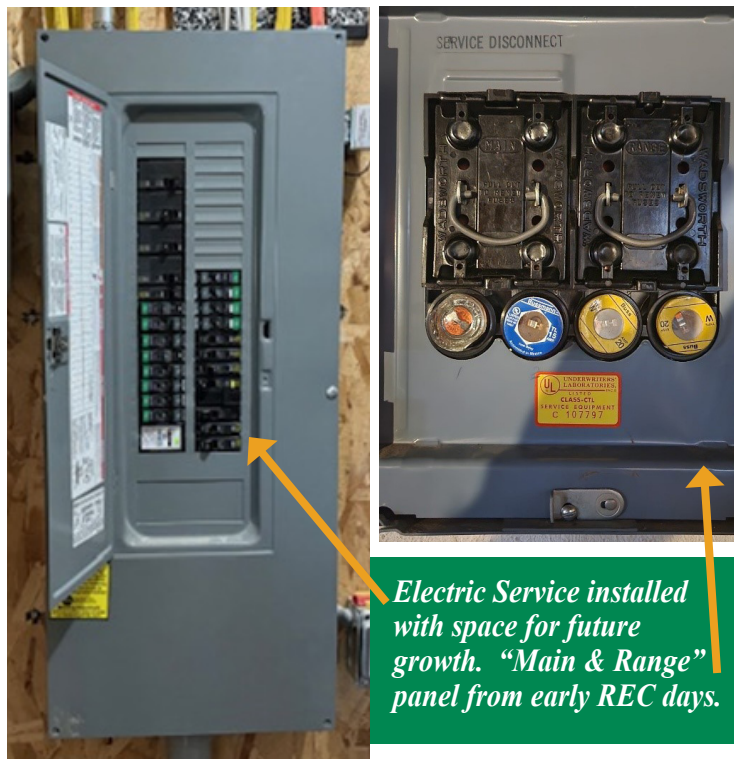
When electric power was first introduced to the rural areas in the 1930's, a 60 Amp "main & range" electrical panel shown to the upper right was able to take care of all of the home's needs. Fast forward to more recent times, and a 200 Amp residential service panel with spaces for 40 circuits is very common to see. We do see occasional homes that have 320 Amp services and larger. It may not be so much because of the total load, but that many spaces are needed for multiple circuits.

The other factor to address with growing electrical needs, is to consider the most efficient appliance or electric load, not only to delay having to upsize your main service, but to also save on your electric bill every month.

Having an undersized electric service adds stress on your system which can be a safety issue and affect reliability. That "main and range" panel if still in use, probably has had a lot added to it and is running out of room to squeeze one more wire in. There also can be

warning signs like frequent tripping of breakers from overload, blown fuses, or evidence of heat damage.

As with MVEC's members, your cooperative team is also doing similar work, planning and sizing the electric distribution system to meet the needs today and capacity to handle future growth.



Electric Service installed with space for future growth. "Main & Range" panel from early REC days.

New electric service completely filled doesn't allow for future growth or loads.





STAY COOL THIS SUMMER

without breaking the bank



Summer heat can strain both your comfort and your budget. As temperatures soar and energy demand peaks in the late afternoon and evening, it's time to take action.

Tips to help lower energy consumption:

1. Request a home energy audit from your local utility to reduce energy loss.
2. Change your air filter regularly to help your HVAC system work efficiently.
3. Increase your thermostat by two degrees and set it to a higher temperature when you're away.
4. Install a smart or programmable thermostat for automatic temperature control.
5. Run dryers, washers and dishwashers during off-peak hours in the early morning or late evening.
6. Wash full loads of laundry in cold water. Detergent, not hot water, cleans the clothes.

Editor's Note: The costs to offer energy efficiency services and incentives are collected through the monthly energy charge on your bill. In 2024, the cost to our members was \$0.0009 per kilowatt-hour used.

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.

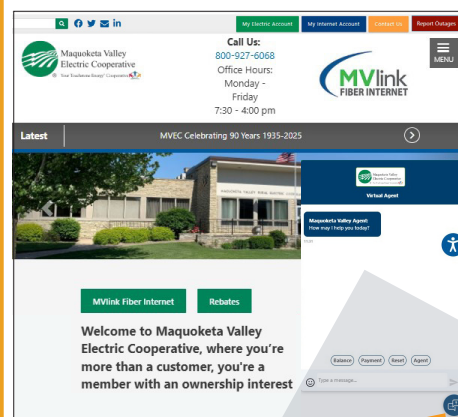
Go to www.IowaShineTheLight.com to make a nomination and to review the contest rules.

Nominate
A Local Volunteer
by **June 30th** and
they could **win \$3,000**
for their local charity or
non-profit!
3 Winners will be selected



MVEC Supports Future Leaders

Each spring, MVEC attends FFA banquets throughout our service area to present checks to FFA Chapters sending students to Washington Leadership Conference over the summer. This year, MVEC staff and Directors attended 11 banquets to support sending 20 students to WLC. WLC is a leadership opportunity that takes place in Washington DC. MVEC is pleased to support our next generation of leaders. We wish all of the students safe travels and a wonderful experience!

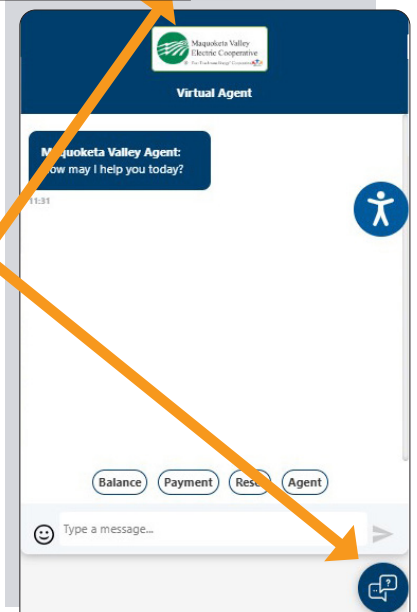


MVEC's NEW Chat Feature

Did you know that MVEC's website now has a chat feature?

It's easier than ever to stay in touch with your cooperative - look for the chat widget on any mvec.coop page.

Check your balance, make a payment or ask a question with our new convenient chat tool.





Watt's Up: Member Services

It is common for companies to have customer service or customer support. At MVEC, where you're a member and not merely a customer, we have Member Services. MVEC strives to provide superior member support, and we have an experienced, dedicated team of employees to assist you.

When you call MVEC during regular business hours more than likely, your call will be taken by our Receptionist, Melissa. The role of Receptionist at MVEC is critical—Melissa can help resolve your issue, answer your question, process payments or transfer calls to the correct department.

Depending on your question, you will get routed to the electric side or fiber internet side of the co-op. For electric members, there is a team of dedicated representatives, Kathy, Jessica, Tara and Erica, to help answer questions, assist with requests and process payments. Additionally, if you are building a new home or need service to be expanded or moved, Anna Mary will be your first point of contact to schedule with our Staking and Engineering Departments. During outages, Keith, our GIS/Dispatch Technician, works tirelessly in the Ops Center to field member reports and dispatch our crews to outages.

If you are an MVlink fiber internet or VoIP phone user, several additional friendly, knowledgeable representatives, Jackie, Kim, Sonya, Steven with IT, or Megan with construction, are available to help with your internet-related questions, requests and payments.

Another important player on the Member Services team is our Energy Advisor, Al. As Energy Advisor, Al fields member questions and concerns as they relate to energy efficiency, incentives and general energy usage. In addition to answering questions and processing rebate requests, Al conducts free energy assessments for members to help with energy saving improvements.

"I enjoy greeting our members either on the phone or in person at the front desk," said Melissa Pepmeyer, MVEC Receptionist. "It's important to me to provide personable service and I've found it rewarding to be able to help our members when they contact us."

In recent American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) surveys, MVEC's electric and MVlink's fiber internet services were rated 12 points higher than the average Investor Owned Utility and 21 points higher than the average Internet Service Provider.

There are multiple channels to reach MVEC and we are continually improving accessibility to your co-op:

• **BY PHONE:** MVEC can be reached 24x7 via our toll-free number (800-927-6068). During business hours, your calls are fielded by our in-house member services team. After hours, on weekends and holidays, member

calls are fielded by our after-hours support: CRC for electric inquiries/outages and Insite for fiber internet inquiries/outages.

• **BY EMAIL:** Contact memberservices@mvec.com to ask a question or, if you wish to reach a specific department, visit Staff | Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative and select the department.

• **VIA OUR WEBSITE:** There is a wealth of information on MVEC's website (mvec.coop): from energy efficiency resources, safety tips and incentives to how to participate in the co-op you own.

- **New! Chat:** MVEC recently added a chat feature to mvec.coop so that you can connect with the co-op at any time. The chat widget can be found on any co-op web page. Ask a question or make a payment with this convenient new tool.

- **Member Portals:** Create logins and access your electric and fiber internet account information with one click. Pay your bills online, monitor your usage and more 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Outage reporting:** View a real-time outage map and report electric outages at Report Outages | Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

• **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Follow us on our social media channels for the latest cooperative news and updates.

- **Facebook** (facebook.com/MaquoketaValleyElectricCooperative)

- **X** (formerly known as Twitter) (x.com/MVEC_IA)

- **Instagram** (Instagram.com/maquoketa_valley_electric_coop)

- **LinkedIn** (Linkedin.com/company/maquoketa-valley-rural-elec)

• **BY MAIL:** Drop us a note, mail a payment and return your director ballot in August to 109 N. Huber St. Anamosa, IA 52205.

• **VISIT US IN PERSON:** Stop by MVEC's headquarters (109 N. Huber St. Anamosa) to see us or make a payment (we have a 24x7 drop box). Melissa will be at the front desk to greet you!



Melissa,
Receptionist

Electric
& Billing
Member
Services

Fiber Member Services



TECH LINK

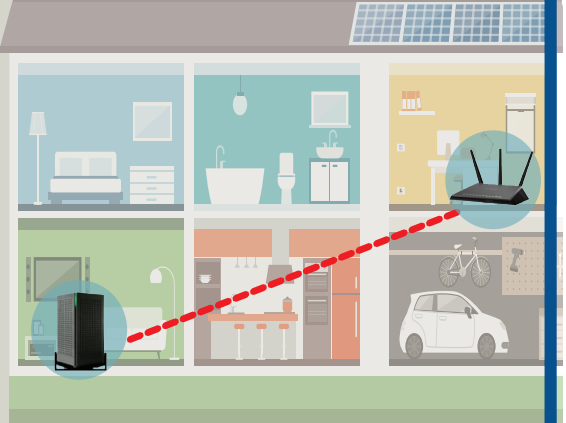
Caution When Piggybacking a Third-Party Router to Your MVlink GigaSpire

Our MVlink tech support team has noted an increase in calls related to third-party routers being connected to MVlink's GigaSpire router to act as extenders to boost Wi-Fi coverage. This "piggybacking" creates an issue when members need to re-boot the router. It seems that when the member connects the third-party router, it works initially but after a power outage or an update is pushed out to the MVlink GigaSpire or anything requiring a reboot of the system, depending on the order the routers come back online, connection issues will likely occur.

Why does this happen? The MVlink GigaSpire router is designed to be a mesh unit as well (to extend Wi-Fi coverage) and looks for other devices on the network. So, when the GigaSpire detects the third-party router, it shuts down its router functionality and goes into mesh unit mode allowing the third-party device to connect as the primary router. This causes the member to appear to be up and running, but in reality, the internet is not working because the devices are trying to use the secondary/third-party router as the pathway to get out to the internet. Unfortunately, this won't work since the MVlink network does not recognize this equipment as an entry point.

Some solutions to this issue include:

1. Disconnect the third party router or device acting like a router, then reboot the GigaSpire first, check to make sure the internet is working again, and then plug in your third-party router.
2. A second option to solve this issue is to put the third-party router into Access Point Mode—this would prevent it from attempting to be the pathway out to the internet. Most routers have this option.
3. A third option to eliminate this issue would be to go with the MVlink Mesh Unit. **Visit mvec.coop/mesh-Wi-Fi for more information.**
4. The last option would be to purchase your own routers and not use those supplied by MVlink. **However, our tech support team would like to note that for troubleshooting purposes, *it's ideal to have MVlink equipment. MVlink techs cannot remote into third-party routers to help resolve issues.***



Underground Utility Line Locates

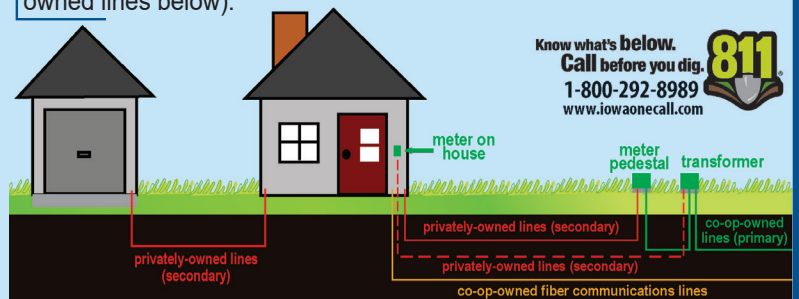
Each spring and fall, we remind members to **'Call Before You Dig'** because it's the safe thing to do and it's the law. Iowa law requires that you notify the Iowa One Call system at least 48 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) prior to engaging in any type of digging or excavating. However, it is important to remember that not everything gets marked by Iowa One Call. Some lines are privately-owned by you and must be located using private, secondary locate services. See to the right for a graphic that illustrates what is co-op owned vs. what is privately-owned and thus requiring private, secondary locate services. When in doubt, contact a professional electrician to assist you. Visit mvec.coop/call-you-dig for more information and for a larger graphic.

MVEC/MVlink Responsibility

MVEC/MVlink will locate primary underground electric and fiber lines at no charge to the property owner when the request is made through **Iowa One Call** as required by Iowa law. MVEC/MVlink maintains underground electric lines from the primary line up to the meter pedestal, or the transformer (in cases where the meter is on a house or building). MVEC/MVlink also maintains the underground fiber line from the electric pole up to the house/building. (Refer to **GREEN & ORANGE** lines below).

Property Owner Responsibility

The property owner is responsible for locating all privately-owned (secondary) electric wires, also all other privately-owned buried lines, wires, utilities and equipment on the property. (Refer to **RED** privately-owned lines below).





1970s at MVEC

The 1970s brought disco, bell bottoms and political turmoil to America and these milestones to MVEC:

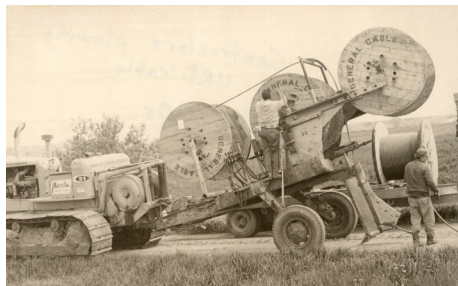
- MVEC's original manager, Edgar Beach, passed away on March 8, 1970. In his memorial in the newsletter, it was said *continued successful operation of MVEC would be a fitting memorial to his dedication to the cooperative*. We hope that we have continued to honor his legacy.
- Electric baseboard or ceiling cable heat was considered a new technology.
- In early 1972, MVEC acquired a new billing machine (computer) resulting in a new meter card and billing efficiencies at the co-op.
- The blizzard of April 1973 blanketed MVEC's service territory requiring MVEC maintenance personnel to be dispatched to outages via snowmobiles and even via a helicopter!
- In the mid-70s, MVEC began to see new electric appliances and equipment such as microwave ovens and electric lawnmowers.
- In February 1975, the Duane Arnold Nuclear Plant was brought online to become Iowa's largest, cleanest and most economical power source large enough to provide power for an entire city the size of Kansas City, Mo.
- MVEC's second Manager, George T. Hall retired in January 1975 with John Parham replacing him as the third Manager of the co-op.
- To continue to meet growing demand, MVEC received a \$1.2M loan from the REA in 1975. This funding was used to build 27 miles of distribution line and two new substations.
- Spring 1975 brought yet another crippling storm—taking 11 of MVEC's 26 substations offline resulting in nearly half of the membership without power. After restoration was complete in MVEC's service territory and in true cooperative fashion, MVEC sent crews to Rockwell City, IA, to assist with storm repairs.
- In 1976, MVEC crews were busy burying 40+ miles of underground service.



Carol Tjaden running the new billing machine



Duane Arnold Nuclear Plant, Palo, Ia.



Plow for installing underground cable

Watts The Answer?

1. As a member-owner of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, you are

to participate in the business of the co-op you own.

2. There are _____ channels to reach MVEC and we are continually improving accessibility to your co-op:

3. The MVlink GigaSpire _____ is designed to be a mesh unit as well (to extend Wi-Fi coverage) and looks for other devices on the network.

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:

Vicki Ruppert, Maquoketa
Garry Beaman, Hopkinton

COUNTDOWN TO

ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

SAVE THE DATE

08
MONTH

14
DAY

25
YEAR

PEOSTA COMMUNITY CENTRE
7896 BURDS RD. PEOSTA



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

Take advantage of the warmer weather to reduce home energy use. Avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for additional air conditioning. You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. Get creative in the kitchen and explore new ways to save energy!

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.

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

Summer Office Hours (May 5-September 26, 2025)

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

Electric Service: maintenance@mvec.coop

Internet/Phone Service: fiber@mvec.coop

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Printed by Julin Printing Company
Monticello, IA

