

WATTS *Current*

April 2019

For Our Members

MVlink Fiber Internet is Helping Members Work from Home

For those of you still contemplating the MVlink fiber internet, here are just a few of the many testimonials we are receiving from MVlink users.

Laurie Skattum, Graf

When I first learned that Graf was in the first area to have fiber built and installed, I was ecstatic, to say the least. I may have called MVEC's office several times asking when install would be occurring. I could not wait for all the benefits that were to come! I was looking forward to fiber internet for so many reasons: ability to work from home, being able to cut the cable cord, and reliable, affordable internet service.

I had been working in an office in Dubuque because satellite internet was not compatible with the internet needs required for my line of work. Since MVlink has been installed in my home, I have transitioned to working remotely from home full-time. I no longer have a commute to Dubuque, which gave me an extra hour in my day! (Continued on page 2)



Woodworking and Finishing Touches

"Come to me with an idea and we will work together to make it fit your needs."

Nathan Carroll, Ryan
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Padmount transformers should always be locked and have warning signs visible.



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MEMBER APPRECIATION NIGHTS

April 16
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Legionnaire Ballroom
Oxford Junction, IA

April 23
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Ryan Gym
Ryan, IA



BUCKET RIDES
(WEATHER PERMITTING)

FOOD!

FAMILY!

FUN!



ARCADE GAMES



FACE PAINTING



BALLOON SCULPTING



MVlink Fiber Internet is Helping Members Work from Home

Continued from front page

The service from MVlink has been phenomenal! I have been working from home full-time for 18 months, and not once have I lost my internet connection. Being in a rural area, I think this is a great testament to MVEC's commitment to its members, providing reliable service. I have co-workers in larger communities who regularly have their internet cut out. Not me!

We have also been able to cut the cable cord and now stream all our TV and video needs online. Previously, we would lose TV (satellite) when it was raining, snowing, cloudy, and (what felt like) even if it were sunny!

My husband is an educator, so with all the snow days this winter, we really put MVlink to the test: me working from home, him streaming TV/video/music and doing his own work all day. We were both able to work and be entertained all day with ZERO problems at all!

I am so grateful for the investment MVEC made to bring fiber internet to its members. It is very affordable (compared to what I had been paying – higher price with a data cap!) and reliable. I am so happy that I can work from home and have not had to venture out on treacherous roads this winter for work. If you are patiently waiting for the install to happen, I promise it will be worth it the wait! It has been for me!

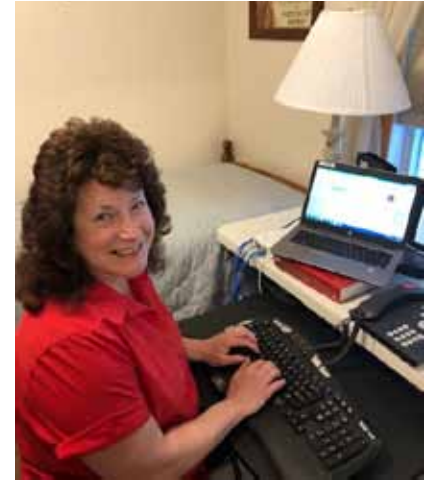
Mary Curtis, Anamosa

During the eight years I'd been remote working for my employer, my upload and download speeds were .9 and 1.2 mbps. Dismal! Everything took forever. Images would scroll in one line at a time. It took a long time to save my documents, which made doing my work very challenging.

When my daughter came home at the end of the school day, I knew the moment she walked in the

house with her phone and was using our home internet. Every single word I typed plodded along.

MVlink fiber optic internet changed my life! Wow, what a difference. Now, I can work, my husband can watch a woodworking video on YouTube and our daughter can do homework online, all at the same time, all very fast.



MVlink fiber optic internet allows Mary Curtis the ability to work from her home.

We are so grateful that fiber optic internet was brought to our area. We are also grateful for the excellent customer service provided by MVEC. The few times we have had a concern, MVEC staff resolved it quickly, efficiently and courteously. Thank you, MVEC!

Jason Pellymonter, Durango

Some of my co-workers mentioned they struggle with their cable/broadband service in Dubuque area. They experience frequent outages, plus deal with major slowdowns during peak-use periods in the evenings. These are issues you just don't see with MVlink's fiber service. It's no surprise customers who are looking for new service want it 'yesterday'.

If you have any questions regarding MVlink, please give us a call at 800-927-6068, or email fiber@mvec.coop. If you have not signed-up expressing your interest, please do so at www.mvlink.coop. Signing up doesn't commit you to service, but rather helps us prioritize construction areas.

Editor's Note: Launching MVlink is history-making for MVEC and eastern Iowa. If you would like to share your MVlink experience with us, please send an email to erobertson@mvec.coop and we will retain with our documentation of this project. Thank you.



Stay Safe During Planting Season

Planting season is a physically and mentally draining time for farmers, and in the rush to get the seed in the ground, focus on safety can fade to the background. Overhead power lines present a life-threatening risk for those working with large machinery. Safe Electricity encourages farmers to sow seeds of safety this season and take recommended safety precautions.

Before beginning work in a field, take time to note the location of power lines and equipment. Before getting out of the cab, look up and double check the area around your machinery to make sure it is not in contact with overhead lines. Always be aware of how close tractors, loaders, antennas, extended arms, and other equipment are to electrical lines.

Even if using an auto-guidance system, stay focused on the location of the tractor and its equipment, and be ready to take action yourself if necessary. Do not simply rely on a GPS system, but also consider using a spotter to alert you if you come close



to making contact. A spotter can see sagging wires that would not be visible on a GPS and provide additional verification that you can pass safely.

Your machinery does not have to touch electrical lines for

electrocution to occur, so keep at least 10 feet of space between machinery and overhead lines. Always remember to lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads. Assume that all lines are energized, and if you come across a downed pole or wire, never attempt to move it yourself.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911 to have MVEC notified. Warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power. Never try to disentangle equipment on your own.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is very rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

RECCare

RECCare is a voluntary energy assistance program established to help low income families weatherize and heat their homes. Funds collected are distributed by local community action agencies. The money stays in the area; it is a program of members helping members!

One Time Pledge \$ _____

Payable to:

Maquoketa Valley
Electric Cooperative

Monthly Pledge:

\$1.00 _____ \$2.00 _____

\$3.00 _____ \$5.00 _____

Other \$ _____

I hereby authorize MVEC to add this monthly pledge to my electric bill.

I understand I can cancel my monthly pledge at any time by notifying MVEC in writing.

Account # _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____



Maquoketa Valley
Electric Cooperative

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

109 N. Huber Street 800-927-6068

Anamosa, IA 52205 www.mvec.coop





Woodworking and Finishing Touches

Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa, Iowa

I headed to the Ryan area and there I met with Nathan Carroll, Owner and Craftsman of Carroll Brother Designs, a woodworking and cabinetry business he founded in 2015. As usual, my first



Nathan Carroll

question for Nathan was, ‘How did you get involved?’ He shared he and his brother, Scott, began with woodworking as a hobby, which eventually led to larger projects for various clients. Nathan has an eye for design and enjoys creating new and innovative pieces. This, coupled with Scott’s skills in construction engineering, helped get the business off the ground.

Nathan attended Iowa State University where he majored in Dairy Science. After graduation, he began working in sales for GEA Farm Technologies in the Chicago area. “I traveled nearly 100% of the time. It was a great opportunity and I got to see a lot of the U.S. and Canada, but my roots are here and the travel really wore

on me after a while.” When he was back home, Nathan spent his time working on projects in his shop at his parent’s farm. “This first big project I did was an entertainment center for my parents. After finishing that,

I really discovered how much I enjoy woodworking and the satisfaction of completing a project.”

As I inquired about several items around the room and shelves covering most of one wall, Nathan

shared most of the wall was constructed from an old corn crib. There was also a dining room table crafted from the same corn crib lumber, and the floor was made from an old oats bin. There were also smaller pieces such as signs and home decor items. His ingenuity and creativity was evident.

Nathan started out borrowing tools from his father and brother. Over time he has been able to purchase his own tools and larger equipment



A view inside of the woodshop.

including a table saw, shaper, and planer. The woodshop is also fitted with a dust collection system to help keep the environment clean and safe.

As Nathan and I were visiting, he told me he likes to be creative and design projects to meet a customer’s requests. “Come to me with an idea and we will work together to make it fit your needs.” He also pointed out an entire grouping of wooden items, drawers, etc. “This is the start of a bar I’m working on,” said Nathan. As I opened and closed the sliding drawer of the bar, it was evident it was well-built.

In addition to his woodworking, Nathan also farms with his wife, Brittney, and his in-laws, Dan & Shelley Zumbach. “My passion is in agriculture and I’m glad Brittney and I are a part of our family farm. The woodworking allows me the flexibility I need in the spring and fall when things are busy at the farm.”

If you would like to contact Carroll Brother Designs or would like more information, Nathan can be reached by phone at 563-608-4407, or by sending an email to carrollbrotherdesigns@gmail.com. You can also find them on Facebook and Instagram.



A unique hutch with a lot of room for storage built for a customer’s cabin.

More photos on page 5.



Quarter sawn oak kitchen cabinets.



A sliding door constructed from reclaimed barn boards.



A kitchen island with storage and built-in trash and pop can bins.



Map of Iowa home decor.



BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM STRIKES

In the event of a power outage, be prepared by keeping the following items in an easy-to-find emergency supply kit.



■ WATER

Three-day supply, one gallon per person per day.



■ TOOLS

Flashlight, extra batteries, manual can opener, battery-powered or hand-crank radio, NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.



■ FIRST AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS

First aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications for the family.

Learn more at www.ready.gov



Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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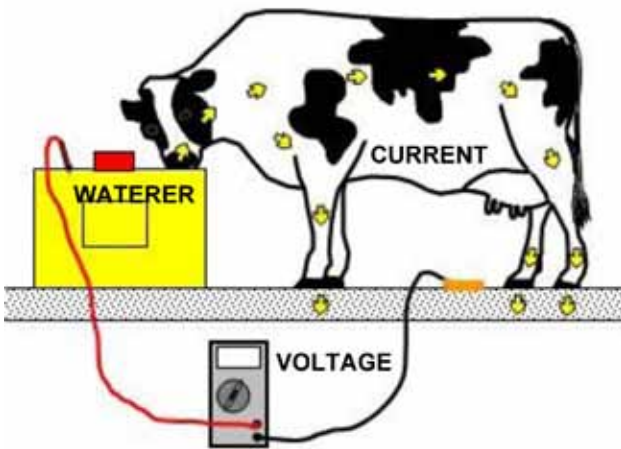
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Stray Voltage Concerns?

Electrical systems are grounded to the earth to make them as safe as possible and ensure their reliability. As a result there is usually a small amount of current flow through the earth. Stray voltage is an electrical voltage measured between two points an animal may touch at the same time. If a voltage is present, current may flow through the animal between these contact points. The amount of current depends on the voltage and total resistance of the circuit that involves the animal. Animals respond to the resulting current flow, and not to the voltage.



Stray voltage is a complex issue and often believed to be the cause of a variety of issues members may experience on their farms. There are many firms and products in the marketplace offering cures for stray voltage. However, with a little investigation and some corrective action, stray voltage issues can be resolved if they are found to be the true source of the problems being experienced.

As a member of MVEC, if you believe you are experiencing issues due to stray voltage we will come to your location and complete a stray voltage investigation at no cost to you. After the investigation is complete you will get a report outlining what was found.

Below are a few ideas that will help prevent stray voltage issues.

1. Have a qualified electrician inspect the whole farmstead for electrical problems, and correct them in accordance with the National Electric Code.
2. Balance **ALL** 120-volt loads as much as possible in an effort to reduce neutral currents.
3. Size service wires according to the electrical load they are serving.
4. Install an equipotential grounding plane in the floor for all new livestock buildings.
5. Install ground rods and insulated wire to all electric fences/cow trainers.

If you have further questions or concerns on stray voltage, please call MVEC at 800-927-6068, or visit www.mvec.coop for more information.

How do livestock respond to stray voltage and current?

Voltage Level (1)	Perception (2)	Behavior Response (3)	Production Loss (4)	Current Flow
0.5 volt	less than 1 in 50 animals	none	none	0.001 ampere (1 milliamperere)
1 volt	less than 1 in 10 animals	none	none	0.002 ampere (2 milliamperere)
2 volt	majority of animals	short-term changes with some animals	none	0.004 ampere (4 milliamperere)

(1) These voltage levels represent a worst-case condition for a voltage between two points that an animal touches. An example would be an animal standing on a sloppy wet floor or earth and touching a grounded metal watering device with it's nose. A more typical farm condition, with an animal standing on concrete, would require voltages that are about twice as high to get the same current level.

(2) Perception is an animal's first awareness of current.

(3) Behavior response is a change in behavior, usually observed as an animal avoiding an object or area.

(4) Production loss is a drop in expected performance, often associated with a decrease in water or feed consumption for a sustained period of time.

The table above is for 60 cycle electricity as used on farms.

Source: Michigan Agricultural Electric Council



Watts Current by Email
 If you would prefer to have the Watts Current emailed to you, please sign up by sending an email to erobertson@mvec.coop

Bylaws Available
 Copies of the Bylaws of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative are available at the Cooperative's office. If you would like a copy of the Bylaws, please pick one up, or contact us to have one mailed to you.



Please Make Room for Roadside Crews

When the power goes out, so do Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative's line crews. Lineworkers are the first to respond after an outage occurs, and they work tirelessly to restore power to the communities we serve.

If you're traveling and see our crews on the side of the road, we kindly ask that you move over if possible and give them a little extra space to work. We deeply care about the safety of all, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

If you approach a crew while traveling on a two-lane road, moving over to the next lane might not be an option. In this case, we simply ask that you slow down when approaching roadside crews. If you approach a crew while traveling on a four-lane road, and safety and traffic conditions allow, we ask that you move over into the far lane.

Here in Iowa, it's the law. Move over or slow down to keep everyone safe. Utility crews aren't the only ones who could use the extra space. Emergency responders, such as police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians, often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. We ask that you follow the same procedures mentioned above to help keep these crews safe.

There's plenty of room for all. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on our local roadways.



WE PAY YOU TO PULL THE PLUG

Recycle your old appliances through the Pull the Plug program. Call CLEAResult at 855-838-7817 to schedule your pickup.

Appliances in working condition (runs and cools) will qualify for the following rewards:

Refrigerators: \$35
Freezers: \$25
Window Air Conditioners: \$25

Limited to three appliances per year.

Watts The Answer?

1. Member Appreciation Nights will be held April ____ at the Legionnaire Ballroom in Oxford Junction and April ____ at the Ryan Gym in Ryan.

2. Always be aware of how close _____, loaders, antennas, extended arms, and other equipment are to electrical lines.

3. _____ voltage is an electrical voltage measured between two points an animal may touch at the same time.

Mail your answers in with your energy bill, or email them to erobertson@mvec.coop.

Two winners will each receive a \$10.00 credit on their energy bills.

Please complete the following:

Name

Address

February winners:

Ken Behnke, Durango

Elizabeth DeGroff, Peosta



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

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



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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319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068

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