

WATTS *Current*

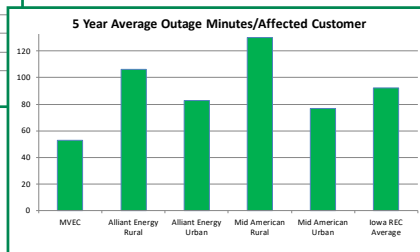
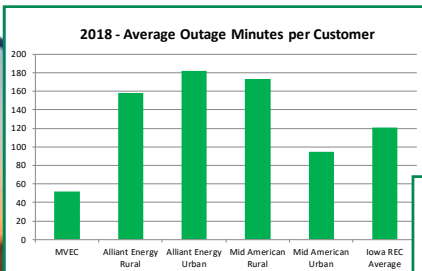
September 2019

For Our Members

Excerpts From The 2018 Annual Report Beyond Electricity

Cooperative's are unique in that they work for their members. That was true in 1935 and is still true today. What is different is that the needs of our members have drastically changed over the last 84 years. In addition to reliable and affordable energy, today's members also want high speed internet service and they want to know we are supporting their communities to help ensure a good quality of life. MVEC has stepped up to meet these needs.

Our members often remind us how different Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative really is from other energy companies. As an electric cooperative, we are led by members like you who understand and are in tune with the community you live in. We don't answer to outside investors who are interested in using us as only an investment; and this key difference has been part of the plan from our beginning.

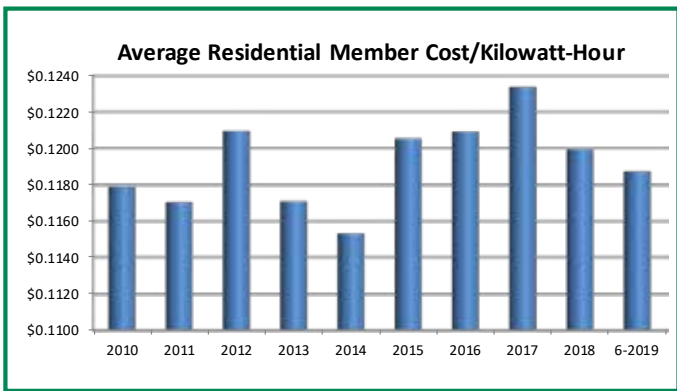
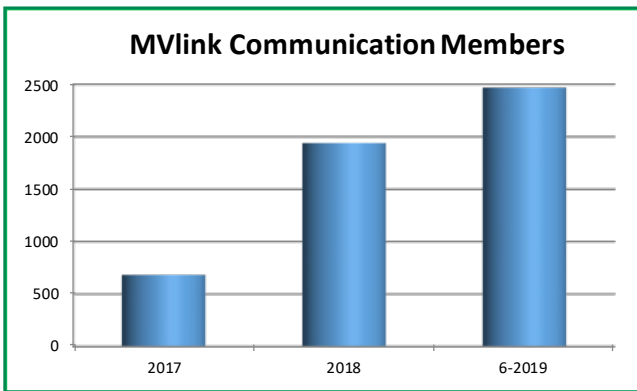


An **"Apple A Day"** With
Diane Gravert & Laura Larabee
Gravert's Apple Basket Orchard
5475 Hwy 52 Sabula, IA.
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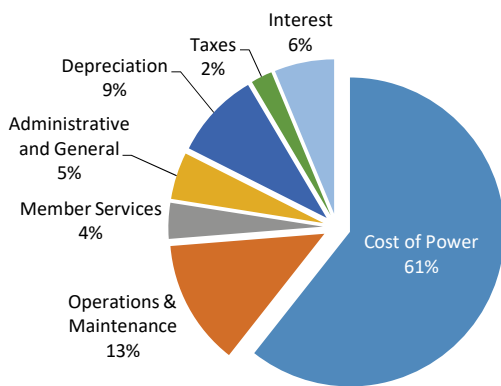
Executive Message from the 2018 Annual Report

continued from front page

Operating Statistics

	2018	2017	2016
Electric & Communication Members	13,081	12,883	12,774
Meters Connected (at year-end)	16,259	16,120	15,982
New Electric Services Connected	239	212	214
Distribution Miles Energized (at year-end)	3,267	3,264	3,252
Average Meters per Mile	4.97	4.94	4.91
kWh Sold	291,814,755	278,811,011	282,520,006
Average Residential kWh Usage per Month	1,108	1,035	1,066
Wholesale Power Cost per kWh Sold	0.0645	0.0670	0.0688
Average Revenue per kWh Sold (Total)	0.1113	0.1135	0.1127
Average Patronage Dividend Payment	\$22.65	\$24.66	\$54.74
Full-time Employees (at year-end)	74	71	63
Outages - Severe Storm (Minutes/Member)	2.16	13.7	15.0
Outages - Power Supplier (Minutes/Member)	4.3	0.8	2.3
Outages - Total	52.3	76.5	77.7

Your 2018 Dollars at Work



Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative was built by the communities we serve from day one, which means we have been shaped to go beyond electricity as we meet the specific needs of you, your neighbors and the people who live here with us. Collectively, we have a long-term interest in seeing our communities thrive.



Ron Thielen
President



Jeremy Richert
CEO

Put Energy-Efficient DIY Projects to Work for You

Do you hear the term “DIY” and cringe? Or perhaps you are a DIY extraordinaire, looking for the next project to complete.

Along with crafty DIY projects, there are some energy efficient ones that can help you save money. Before digging in, however, make sure the project fits both your budget and your DIY wheelhouse.

DIY projects can add up, but in a good way. According to Energy.gov, sealing uncontrolled air leaks can save from \$83 to \$166 a year. Weather stripping double-hung windows can save \$42 to \$86 annually. And insulating your electric water heater tank can save \$20 to \$45 a year.

Easy-to-do projects that could save you money include:

- Insulating your hot water pipes to help reduce heat loss and raise your water’s temperature.
- Insulating and reducing air leaks in floors over garages. You can seal air leaks and add insulation to make the living space more comfortable and make that part of your home more energy efficient.
- Depending on how well your attic is insulated, consider adding more insulation. There are several types of insulation and the R-value that you will need depends on several variables. Energy.gov and Energystar.gov publish maps that outline recommended R-values.
- Here is an easy one: applying frosted contact paper to the windows in or by your front door. Not only can you increase privacy, but you will decrease heat transfer.
- Consider installing a programmable thermostat or a smart thermostat. Either improvement can make a difference on your energy bill, especially if you select a higher temperature in the summer and lower temperature in the winter when you won’t be there.

For more information on energy-efficient DIY projects, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Watts Current by Email
If you would prefer to have the Watts Current emailed to you, please sign up by emailing efletcher@mvec.coop



Farmers: Remember Electrical Safety This Harvest Season

In 2017, farmers ranked eighth in the list of the most dangerous jobs (civilian jobs with highest fatality rates) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics/U.S. Dept. of Labor. Unfortunately, farmers and other agricultural managers rank right below other hazardous jobs such as logging, roofing, and steel work.



Tractor snags electric line in Delaware County

It is no wonder farmers make that list. As agriculturists are well-aware, many dangers are present in their long and arduous workdays.

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity remind farmers that accidents related to power and electricity are also possible but in most cases they can be prevented. Especially during the busy harvest season, take the following steps to decrease the chances of an electrical-related incident:

- **Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.**
- **Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.**
- **Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines at all times, in all directions.**
- **Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.**
- **Always lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.**
- **Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.**
- **If a power line is sagging or low, call us right away. 800-927-6068**

- **If your equipment does hit a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.**

Although harvest season is a time filled with tight deadlines and heightened work stress, take the time to consider electrical safety. It could save your life or the lives of others.

For more information on electrical farm safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Tractor hits electric pole in Dubuque County

HARVEST SAFETY TIPS FOR FARMWORKERS

- **Maintain a 10-foot clearance** around all utility equipment in all directions.
- **Use a spotter and deployed flags** to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.
- **If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately** by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab, without touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety.
- **Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle.** Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Source: Safe Electricity



An Apple A Day

Patty Manuel, MVEC Director of Public Relations

An “Apple a Day” may or may not keep the doctor away, but it can be good for the soul to take a pleasant drive on scenic byways to Gravert’s Apple Orchard, 54757 Hwy 52, Sabula.



Diane Gravert and Laura Larabee

Diane Gravert, her daughter Laura Larabee, and many of their family members, friends and employees, ensure a worthwhile experience in their quaint shop and expansive orchards. Visitors can choose from at least 10 varieties of apples on any given day during the season. A full gift shop

offers a variety of locally-produced products such as honey, maple syrup, pickles, jams, jellies, apple butter, cider and of course caramel apples. Make it a family affair and let the children pick their own apple and pet a few animals including a horse, a donkey and a couple of friendly goats. Or, if you are a teacher, consider a busload of youngsters for a day at the orchard. The Gravert’s Orchard is one of a very few that allow visitors to pick their own apples for no extra charge, but of course bags of chilled apples are already fresh-picked and sorted for those not inclined to wander the orchards.



Gravert’s Apple Orchard offers a gift shop including locally-produced products

Back in 1987, Diane’s husband Gene planted around 600 apple trees and was able to share a limited crop just one year before suddenly passing away. Their daughter, Laura, decided to step up to see if she and her mother could keep the orchard going, and you must stop by to see their successes! With over 700 trees today, the Gravert’s raise 40 different varieties including heritage apples the older generation recognizes (Snow, Wealthy and Gravenstein for example), the common Yellow or Red Delicious that you can easily find in the grocery store to the brand new hybrid Ever Crisp apple that will need another year or two before ready to pick.

Laura credits their membership in the Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association and help from ISU Extension for their orchard education. From planting to harvesting, understanding pests and grafting, there is a lot of behind-the-scenes work that goes into producing and selling apples. For those interested in picking their own apples, the Gravert’s developed a row by row chart of the orchard, highlighting rows that are ready to eat. All of the orchard staff is also trained in how to help the customers determine which varieties work best for their needs.

Gravert’s Apple Orchard is open daily from 9am to 6pm starting August 24th until the end of October, and then weekends into November. Each time you visit you will find different varieties available for sale. The early-season apples are good for baking and making apple sauce, Bonnie’s Best apples in October are great for pies and the last to ripen Braeburns are just plain good eating apples.



Inside their beautiful store

Visit www.gravertorchard.com for more details, or give Diane a call at 563-687-2298. If you go for a drive, expect to see people from Chicago and the Quad Cities as well as your Jackson County neighbors who all know where to go for fresh, delicious locally-produced treats in a peaceful, beautiful country-setting.



Grace Zimmerman

Thank You, Grace

Twenty-two years. 185 member stories. Four counties. As a freelance writer for the Cooperative's Watts Current newsletter, Grace told the stories our members related to. Grace, and MVEC, often heard from members on how much they enjoyed

learning about home-based businesses right in their own back-yards; and the businesses enjoyed increased exposure as our readers purchased their wares.

Visiting with Grace, we learned her first story for the REC's was an article she wrote for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's Iowa REC News magazine in the Spring of 1997 entitled "Confessions of a Mushroom Hunter". From there, a MVEC employee asked her to consider writing for MVEC's newsletter. Grace's first MVEC story in the August 1997 issue featured Hardscrabble School; a fitting start as Grace was born near the school, attended Kindergarten there, and still considers Hardscrabble her 'stomping grounds'. Her last story, submitted at 90 years of age for the April 2019 issue, featured Carroll Brother Designs near Ryan.

Grace's interesting life includes teaching for 31 years, mostly within the Midland School District, serving as Jones County Treasurer for 12 years, freelance writing for multiple publications including The Iowan and Our Iowa magazines, doing "Lena Mit Out 'Ole" comedy skits for her winter Texan friends, participating in many Starlighters Theater plays and continuing her love of dancing even to this day.

We will miss Grace's smile and wit each time she stopped in with her story and we will be forever grateful for the memories she has created for MVEC, our membership, and our communities.

Thank you, Grace!

Reduce Energy Use During Peak Hours

MVEC purchases the power that is distributed to our member's homes, farms and businesses and the cost of that power is higher during times of peak demand in our region. The Cooperative saves money on purchased power costs when members use less electricity during our peak hours of 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.; and you save money on your electric bill by using power outside of these peak hours. Here's how you can help during peak hours:

- Shift household chores and activities away from peak periods. Wait to run your dishwasher overnight.
- Use the most energy-efficient appliances you have. Your microwave oven, for example, uses considerably less energy than your stove or cooktop.
- If you're buying a new appliance, make sure you get a highly efficient one. Look for ENERGY STAR labels when you're evaluating different models.
- Be aware of your energy consumption, and try to get in the habit of using energy efficiently year-round.

Use the energy you need, but use it wisely! You'll help your cooperative avoid building expensive new power plants—and that, in turn, will help keep your electric rates stable.

SAVE UP TO 50% ON FILTERS

When's The Last Time You Changed Your Air Filter?
Breathe easy & lower your energy bill.
New filters to your door fast and easy.

Go to mvec.coop or FilterChange.coop and **Order Filters Now**

FilterChange.coop FREE SHIPPING



The Fiber Download

VoIP Telephone Service Through Fiber Internet

The U.S. VoIP market is strong and it's growing. VoIP subscriptions have grown 32% since 2013, increasing at a compound annual growth rate of 10%. And interconnected VoIP subscribers outnumber wireline switched access lines for the first time ever in the FCC's biannual status report.



In December 2016, there were 58 million end-user switched access lines in service and 63 million interconnected VoIP subscriptions, making VoIP 52% of wireline total. It's taken around twenty years since the advent of IP-based phone for VoIP to reach the majority of subscriptions. And there's still growth ahead with tens of millions of customers that can shift from legacy to VoIP solutions.

What does VoIP phone mean?

A VoIP phone is a hardware- or software-based telephone designed to use voice over Internet Protocol (IP) technology to send and receive phone calls over an IP network.

What are the benefits of a VoIP phone?

Advantages. The initial setup and ongoing costs are generally less for operating a VoIP system than a more traditional phone system. You only need to deal with one account, one bill, for both internet and phone.

Is VoIP better than landline?

In terms of features, landlines are no match against VoIP. If you prefer having more control over your calling experience, VoIP telephones are your best bet. With VoIP, you can use your mobile phone, computer, or desk phone to make phone calls; the device only needs a stable internet connection.

Can you use a VoIP phone as a regular phone?

Anything a regular phone can do, a VoIP phone can do too. It has a handset, rings, makes and receives calls, and is dialled in the same way.

Can I keep my phone number if I switch to VoIP?

Generally, yes you can bring your existing number over with you to the VoIP service.

Do cordless phones work with VoIP?

Cordless phones in VoIP work the same way as a regular cordless phone with standard phone connection.

Does VoIP slow down Internet?

It all depends on your broadband connection. If you have a very fast connection then VoIP won't affect it too much. In fact, talking on a VoIP call for an hour uses less bandwidth than surfing the net for an hour so it won't significantly affect your bandwidth.

Sites to See

Watch this section for new or popular internet sites you may want to explore.

- supercook.com
Here's how it works: You tell it which ingredients you have in stock in your home, and it'll give you a big list of recipes you can make using just those ingredients.
- energy.gov
The Energy Saver Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Savings Projects offer easy, step-by-step instructions to home energy efficiency improvements that will save you energy and money.

Testimonial

From Kendra in Durango: *MVEC is amazing and their fiber is excellent! My non-rural friends are jealous of the reliability and speed.*

Connection Speeds Glossary of Terms

TDM: The main application of TDM (Time Division Multiplexing) is to transmit or receive different data and signals using a common single transmission line. TDM is used to transmit and receive a huge amount of independent data over a single line.

POTS: Short for plain old telephone service, which refers to the standard telephone service that most homes use. In contrast, telephone services based on high-speed, digital communications lines.

VOIP: Voice over Internet Protocol

PSTN: Public Switched Telephone Network

The Value of Home Phone...

Safety & Security A landline is the best way to call 911. Even if you can't speak, the dispatcher knows your address and can quickly send help.	Dependability You won't fight cellular dead zones and areas with spotty reception. Plus, you don't have to worry about whether your battery is charged or not.	Convenience It's great to have another way to reach your family - especially if they forget to turn their cell phone off vibrate or silent.	Privacy Many people don't want to give their cell phone number out to just anyone. A landline is a great alternative number that could be used instead of giving out your cell number.	Value Discount when you bundle your home phone with internet. How about those kids that aren't ready for a cellular phone yet?



Back-To-School Is Here

Do you have enough bandwidth for all the devices you and your children will be using? For instance, low bandwidth might speedily display a basic web page that just consists of text, but would struggle to carry enough large data at once to support an online class or online video game. That leads to issues like lag, where your internet speed is too slow to show you what is happening in real-time, or causing a TV show you're streaming to stall.



Thank You

We would like to thank all firemen, first responders and cooperative employees who work 24/7 to keep our members and their communities safe. This years **141st Annual Iowa Firefighter Association Convention** will be held in Manchester.



Cooperative employees and volunteer firemen
Andrew Recker, Landen Morris and Cody Koppes

TIME TO UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

Please fill out the following information: Send with your payment, call 1-800-927-6068 or email us at info@mvec.coop

Name _____

Address _____

Current **EMAIL** _____

Preferred **PHONE NUMBER** _____

This information helps with faster outage reporting.

Watts The Answer?

1. Keep equipment and extensions at least _____ feet away from power lines in all directions.
2. According to Energy.gov, sealing uncontrolled air leaks can save from _____ to _____ a year.
3. What dose VoIP stand for?

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

August winners:

Tom Kintzle, Greeley

Penny Medinger, Bellevue



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

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CONTACT US TODAY!

MVLINK.COOP | 800-927-6068
OR EMAIL FIBER@MVEC.COOP



*Some restrictions apply. Phone services limited to lower 48 states or Continental US.

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Dividend Questions	patronage@mvec.coop
New Service Questions	engineering@mvec.coop
Management	management@mvec.coop

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.

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