

# WATTS *Current*

July 2020

For Our Members

## Annual Meeting and Election of Directors

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic with the uncertainty surrounding large group gatherings and the need to protect the health and safety of our members and employees, the Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative Board of Directors decided to modify the format of the 2020 Annual Meeting of the Members. The in-person Annual Meeting scheduled for August 20, 2020 has been cancelled. For 2020, the business of the Annual Meeting will be handled via mail and the results will be tabulated on August 20 as part of the Board of Directors meeting. Business items that will be addressed include approval of the 2019 minutes, review of the financials, and election of directors. Members who return their Annual Meeting response card will be entered into a drawing for door prizes including a cash prize of up to \$100.

This decision did not come easy for the Board of Directors, yet this new process still allows and encourages all members to participate in the annual meeting by returning the Annual Meeting response card that will be mailed in early August.

The three positions for the Board of Directors listed below are up for election. Each position is for a three-year term. The Board of Directors has appointed a nominating committee to review and develop a list of candidates for the available positions.

- Gene Manternach, Region 1 (Jones, Cedar and Linn Counties)
- Charlie Peters, Region 2 (Jackson and Clinton Counties)
- Judy Gotto, Region 3 (Dubuque County) At-Large

If you are interested in learning the requirements for serving on the Board of Directors, please contact CEO Jeremy Richert at 800-927-6068 or via email [jrichert@mvec.coop](mailto:jrichert@mvec.coop). A packet of information will be mailed to you. If after reviewing the qualifications, you wish to be considered for one of these positions, please submit a brief biography stating your qualifications to: Nomination Committee, %Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa IA 52205, prior to July 16, 2020.



Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

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## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spending more time at home? Try an online energy audit to assess the overall efficiency of your home. Visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov), then enter "home energy yardstick" in the search box to get started.





## Summary of Annual Meeting Requirements

### Annual Meeting

Article II of the Bylaws provides that an Annual Meeting of the members shall be held between August 1 and November 1 of each year with the exact date to be set by the Board of Directors. Article VIII, Section 3 of the Articles of Incorporation indicates that the members shall be “entitled to receive ten (10) days written notice of the time and place of all meetings and of the purpose of all special meetings.”

### Directors

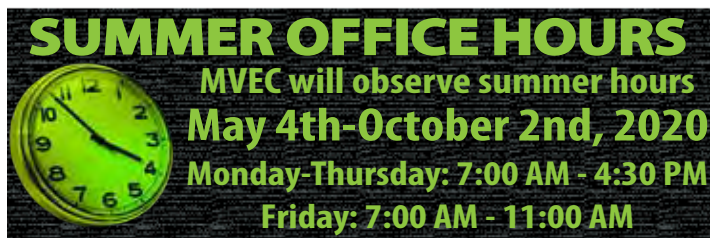
Article IX of the Articles of Incorporation provides the Board of Directors shall be made up of nine (9) members of the Cooperative. The directors serve for a three-year term. Each year the terms of three directors expire on the date of the Annual Meeting.

### Nominations and Election of Directors by the Members

Article IX of the Articles of Incorporation indicates-“The Cooperative’s service area shall be divided into four (4) numbered geographic regions. Two (2) members shall be elected from each geographic region... The remaining ninth director shall be selected from any geographic region or the geographic region determined by the Board of Directors...”

The election of directors shall be by ballot and each voting member shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for each director to be elected. Article III, Section 5 of the Bylaws states, “Candidates for election to the Board of Directors shall be nominated by a nominating committee... Any fifty (50) or more members may make other nominations in writing... not less than thirty (30) days prior to the meeting...”

Please do not hesitate to contact the Cooperative office should you have any questions concerning membership requirements or the procedure of nomination and election of directors at the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative.



**SUMMER OFFICE HOURS**  
 MVEC will observe summer hours  
**May 4th-October 2nd, 2020**  
**Monday-Thursday: 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM**  
**Friday: 7:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

## What’s Cookin’ Good Lookin’? Stay Safe While Cooking

When preparing a meal or snack, inattention and electrical appliances don’t always mix. It might seem like a good idea to start dinner on the stovetop or in the toaster oven and then tend to other things, but doing so may not always have a great result. According to the National Fire Prevention Association, 32 percent of home cooking fires cite unattended equipment as the leading factor in causing the fire.

Always stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, boiling or broiling food. Keep anything that can catch fire - including oven mitts, food wrappers and towels away from your stovetop or cooking surface.

There’s also another cooking safety hazard that’s often overlooked, using appliances that are faulty or those that have damaged cords or plugs. Make sure appliances are in good working condition and never use an appliance that is in disrepair, one that’s a hand-me-down or, one that’s already lived a full and productive life.

Small appliance lifespan depends greatly on how often you use it, how you maintain it, and its quality, but in general, the average life expectancy of most small kitchen appliances is 5 to 10 years.

To stay safe while cooking, Safe Electricity and MVEC remind you of the following additional tips:

- Make sure your appliances are plugged into a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) outlet.
- Make sure all electric cords are in good working condition: do not use appliances that have frayed, cracked, or otherwise questionable cords or plugs.
- If you use extension cords, make sure they are in good condition and that the correct type of cord is used for the job (for example, don’t use an everyday, thin extension cord for a high-powered appliance). Use as a temporary solution, not a permanent one.

Always unplug small appliances when not in use to prevent unnecessary energy consumption.

For more information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



**MEMBER**  
**MEET UP**  
**AT THE JACKSON CO. FAIR**

**JULY 28**  
**5-9 pm**

Watch for our truck in the kick-off parade starting at 6pm and see the EV Rider in the CIPCO all-electric vehicle

Take a selfie in our booth and tag [@MaquoketaValleyElectricCooperative](https://www.facebook.com/MaquoketaValleyElectricCooperative) on Facebook to win \$5 off your next electric bill

**1**  
**FIND**  
We'll be in bright green shirts - you can't miss us!

**2**  
**LEARN**  
...about your cooperative and our services, including MVlink!

**3**  
**WIN**  
Try your luck at our prize wheel!



## Electricity Brings Everyday Value

By Al Schilling, Member Advocate

Even though I work in the energy industry, like most people, I still don't think much about the electricity I use. I expect the lights to turn on when I flip the switch and the computer to work each morning. Because electricity is so abundant, we don't think much about it. Since many of our members are spending more time at home, we are using more energy. And yet, we still expect an endless supply of power with uninterrupted service 24/7. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or perhaps when the monthly bill arrives.

Given how electricity powers our modern lifestyle every day, it's a great value, especially when compared to other common services and expenses. Consider the cost of groceries, a gallon of gas, or a cup of your favorite specialty coffee from a few years back. In comparison, the cost of electricity has remained largely flat.

Like many of you, I have a cell phone to stay connected, and MVlink Fiber Internet allows some members to use their computer or stream TV. Many of us consider these necessities for modern day life. We can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

But considering what electricity does for us, it's a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the average rent increase was nearly 4% (from 2014-2019) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). The cost of medical care was increased 3% during this time, and education was not too far behind at 2.6%. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4%.

The bottom line: electricity brings everyday value. In fact, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative (MVEC) members experience fewer and shorter

outages than average as we continue to rank as one of the most reliable utilities in the State. Considering that electricity is something we all use around the clock, I'm very proud of our track record. At the same time, we are always striving to do better.

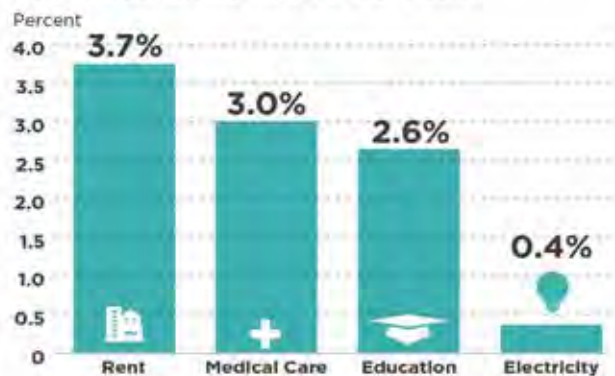
As your trusted energy advisor, we also want to help you save you energy and money. Electric rates based on time of use offer MVEC members the ability to lower their electricity costs without reducing the amount of electricity used. By performing some of your daily chores such as running the dishwasher, doing laundry or feeding livestock during the 19 off-peak hours between 9pm and 4pm (when people are using less electricity), you can see meaningful savings on your energy bills. Use your programmable thermostat to adjust the settings so that your heating and air conditioning systems sync with the off-peak rate periods. Use automatic timers to run pool pumps, water heaters, automatic feeders and appliances in the same way.

We recognize that the past few months have been challenging for many of our members and we're here to help. If you have questions about your account or are looking for ways to save energy at home, please give us a call. MVEC is your electric co-op and our sole purpose is to serve you and help keep our communities strong. That's everyday value.

### ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index



## Always Assume A Downed Power Line Is Deadly

Overhead power lines carry thousands of volts of electricity. If a line is down, always assume it is energized and dangerous, even if the power is out in your area. Touching or getting near a live power line injures and kills.

Never approach an accident scene where a line is down or damaged. If you run toward the accident to help, you too could become a victim by entering the energized area.

Power lines can come down or sag close to the ground for a few reasons: severe weather or damage due to a car accident, for instance. And a downed line isn't always visible. After severe weather, lines can lurk underneath water or debris.

Stay clear of all types of utility lines. Even if you think lines might be designated for telephone or cable service, they may have contact with damaged and energized power lines nearby. Safe Electricity and MVEC offer these safety reminders:

- Call 9-1-1 to report fallen or damaged power lines.
- Power lines do not have to be arcing or sparking or making a humming noise to be live.
- Do not attempt to move a downed line or anything it is touching with another object such as a stick or pole. Even materials that don't normally conduct electricity can do so if they are slightly wet.
- Do not step in water or walk in debris near a downed power line.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from the downed power line.
- Do not attempt to drive over a downed power line.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle while driving, do not attempt to drive away or get out. Call for help and **STAY INSIDE THE VEHICLE** until utility crews say it is safe to get out. If there is a fire or you smell gasoline, hop out without touching the vehicle at the same time and **DO NOT WALK**, but hop away to safety.
- Line properties can change: Any power line that is dead could become energized at any moment due to power restoration or back feed from backup generators.

Always consider all lines, regardless of the type, energized at deadly voltages. For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.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.

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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](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

mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

fax:

(202)690-7442; or

email:

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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# The Fiber Download

## Parental Controls: What and Why?

From young children to teenagers, kids are becoming more and more technology smart, and sometimes outpacing what their parents know about all of the high-tech gadgets and devices available today.



There are all kinds of reasons to consider setting up parental controls for Internet use in your home. They can help reduce the risk of your child viewing inappropriate content on the Internet, and limit their access to age-appropriate material. Videos can lead to porn sites and or new ways for kids to be bullied, cyberbullying for example; and chatting with predators while gaming is a real thing to worry about.

MVlink members using our GigaCenter router and the free, affiliated NetValet app have a variety of options to manage Internet access and use, including setting up parental controls to limit what can be viewed, by whom and when. In addition, the latest version of Windows and Mac OS have built-in software for parental controls, or there are programs available for purchase such as Bsafe Online or Safe Eyes.

### A few things to consider:

- Establish controls on more than just your home computer. Remember the tablet or smartphone your child uses, and even games like Nintendo, Playstation or Xbox.
- Add a password protection to the computer(s) so that you have to log your kids on when they want to use the Internet.
- Set times within the controls so that the Internet can only be used during the hours you are home to supervise their activities.
- Review Internet access rules when the kids are visiting grandparents or friends and make sure in-home nanny's know your rules.
- Remember that without parental controls, kids can hide their tracks by clearing private data from the Internet browser they are using, including the history, cache and cookies.
- Check with your cell phone carrier to see if they offer parental control software. Perhaps you want to block certain phone numbers or monitor teen's text messages.

Most importantly, talk to your kids about the dangers of new technologies, the possibility that people they chat with may not be who they seem and that things they see or read on the Internet aren't always true. Remind them to be careful about posting too much personal information about themselves or their online activities or even using screen names that don't include their real name.

## Sites to See

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

- [www.createwithplay.com](http://www.createwithplay.com)  
Can designing on your phone be better than on your desktop? This new app features some atmospheric product demos with beautifully shot hand overlays.
- [www.bored.solutions.com](http://www.bored.solutions.com)  
If you need something else to do while quarantining, you'll appreciate this site which offers a simple collection of links to watch Broadway shows, learn how to do a headstand or visit the globe.

## Glossary of Terms

**Cyberbullying:** The use of electronic communication to bully a person; typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature. It has become increasingly common among teenagers.

**Cookies:** Small data packets which web pages load on to browsers. Every time a person returns to the same URL, the computer sends back the package of information to the server to detect that the user is returning to the page. The danger lies in their ability to track an individuals' browsing history.





## Outstanding Patronage Dividend Checks

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, 109 North Huber Street, Anamosa, Iowa 52205, has abandoned property that results from patronage dividend checks issued from 2017 for the cooperative members listed below. If this property is not claimed within three years from the original check date, it will be forfeited to Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative according to Iowa law. For a complete listing of all members with abandoned property, please visit our website at: [www.mvec.coop/about-us/member-owner](http://www.mvec.coop/about-us/member-owner).

Nicholas L Steffens	Midwest Tower Partners LLC	Anthony Norby
GMG INC	Todd J Grapp	Scherrie Riniker
Rocking Windmill LTD	Heather L Daque	Adelaide West
David O Funke	Daniel/Terry Sullivan	Duncan Macrae
Mark S Ungs	James W Hogan	Justin Finn
Thomas L Funk	Phillip G/Jessica Mihalakis	Peggy Rozek
Ronald E Hansen	Reliance Trailers	Vicki Rutzebeck
Earl Siegel	Dean E/Lisa Hupp	Lawrence J Barth
Mary Cole	David M Crippes	Barbara Ludwig
Opal Kanneberg	David E Fjelstul	Claire Udelhofen
Rick Funk	Wayne K Harms	Mike Engelken
Danny McDonell	Lawrence Hefel	

## Lobby Update

Our lobby is now open to members with safety precautions

Employees meeting with members outside of the office will continue to follow social distancing guidelines and we ask our members to do the same.

### Safety Matters

Please follow these safety precautions as we re-open our lobby:



#### Stay Home

**Do NOT enter** if you have been exposed to, or are showing COVID-19 related systems



#### Social Distance

Maintain a 6-foot distance between you and others at all times



#### Transacting Business

Please use the reception window opposite where the receptionist is seated



#### Hand-Sanitizing

Please utilize the hand-sanitizer on the counter before and after your transaction

Thank you!

## Watts The Answer?

1. The in-person Annual Meeting originally scheduled for August 20, 2020 has been \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The election of directors shall be by ballot and each voting \_\_\_\_\_ shall be entitled to cast one vote for each director to be elected.
3. We recognize that the past few months have been challenging for many of our members and we're here to \_\_\_\_\_.

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

May winners:

William Fleming, Monticello  
Jason Heisler, Dyersville



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

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



**Happy  
4th of  
JULY**

MVEC's office will close  
at 11am on July 2nd  
and remain closed  
thru July 3rd

in Observance Of  
Independence Day.



**Watts Current by Email**  
If you would prefer to have the  
Watts Current emailed to you,  
please sign up by emailing  
[efletcher@mvec.coop](mailto:efletcher@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.*

**Watts Current**  
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Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative.

Mailing Address:  
109 North Huber Street • Anamosa, IA 52205  
319-462-3542 or 800-927-6068

Summer Office Hours (May 4-October 2, 2020)  
Monday-Thursday • 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Friday • 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

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**After Hours Call Center: 800-582-8998**

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Like Us On       Follow Us On 

Email direct to the following departments:

Billing Questions	<a href="mailto:billing@mvec.coop">billing@mvec.coop</a>
Fiber Questions	<a href="mailto:fiber@mvec.coop">fiber@mvec.coop</a>
Product or Service Questions	<a href="mailto:memberservices@mvec.coop">memberservices@mvec.coop</a>
Maintenance Issues	<a href="mailto:maintenance@mvec.coop">maintenance@mvec.coop</a>
Dividend Questions	<a href="mailto:patronage@mvec.coop">patronage@mvec.coop</a>
New Service Questions	<a href="mailto:engineering@mvec.coop">engineering@mvec.coop</a>
Management	<a href="mailto:management@mvec.coop">management@mvec.coop</a>

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