

WATTS Current

August 2020

For Our Members

Annual Meeting Of The Members

Historically the annual membership meeting of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is held in person with several hundred members enjoying a meal and prizes while participating in the business of the Cooperative. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Directors has elected to cancel the normal in-person annual meeting and will instead limit the quorum in attendance to ten members, and obtain the balance of quorum through receipt of mail-in votes. The meeting will be held as part of a Board of Directors meeting on August 20, 2020 with the Cooperative's attorney present to validate the ballot counting.

In early August, all approved members will receive an envelope labeled "Annual Meeting Details Enclosed". The packet will include the 2019 Annual Report, a ballot for directors and the ability to approve the 2019 Minutes and 2019 Treasurer's Report, along with a postage-paid envelope to return the ballot. The Annual Report will include the official notice of the meeting and list the directors whose terms expire, along with the members who have been nominated for election to the board. Your vote matters! Please take a few minutes to learn about the candidates running for election or re-election, review the minutes and the Treasurer's report, and mark your ballot according to the Secretary's instructions on the reverse side of the ballot. The ballot must be received in our office at 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa, by 4:00 pm on August 18, 2020 to be valid.

The election results and 2020 Annual Meeting minutes will be posted on the Cooperative's website at www.mvec.coop following the meeting.

IN PERSON ANNUAL MEETING AUGUST 20, 2020

WILL NOT BE HELD

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Installing a smart power strip is a quick and easy way to start saving money while making your home more energy efficient. Smart power strips can actually cut power off to save energy since they are able to detect when a device is in standby mode.

Source: energy.gov

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Sample A. Sample
123 Any Street
Anytown, Iowa 12345

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 55 ANAMOSA IA
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

Attn: Secretary
Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative
109 North Huber Street

OFFICIAL BALLOT

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Notice of Annual Meeting of Members
The Annual Meeting of the Members of Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative will be held at its Headquarters at 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa Iowa, on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. Due to COVID-19 health recommendations, the meeting will be limited to a quorum of ten members obtained through mail-in votes received. During the meeting, the following matters will be presented for the members' consideration and they will take action upon the following matters:

Official Annual Meeting Ballot
The Secretary's instructions on reverse side must be followed for ballot to be valid.

I approve the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting Yes No
I approve the Treasurer's Report Yes No

Three to be elected for three year terms; Vote for only one from each region.

Region 1	Region 2	Region 3

Secretary's Instructions for Voting
Due to COVID-19 recommendations regarding public gatherings, the Cooperative will not hold the traditional in person annual meeting on August 20, 2020. We urge you to participate in the meeting by voting and returning this ballot to the Secretary of the Members, and the Treasurer of the Cooperative, at the address below. Your ballot must be received by the Secretary and Treasurer by 4:00 p.m. on August 18, 2020 to be valid. The Cooperative's attorney during the meeting will validate the ballot counting and allows your vote to be counted.

YOUR VOTE MATTERS! - ANNUAL MEETING DETAILS ENCLOSED

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

Sample A. Sample
123 Any Street
Anytown, Iowa 12345

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

MVlink FIBER INTERNET



Executive Message

The last 12 months have been like no other for your Cooperative as we began to wind down the initial construction phase of our MVlink fiber smart grid network and settle into our normal operating mode as a provider of not only reliable electric service but also internet and telephone services. Add in the COVID-19 pandemic and the result is a very busy year under some very abnormal circumstances. One thing that has become clear is that the services we provide are essential not just to the members we serve but also to the communities our members live and work in.

The COVID-19 virus has not affected the level of services we provide our membership, but it has drastically changed the way we are currently providing those services. The safety of our employees and their families is of utmost importance to us and we have had to find ways to maintain the health of our employee team while also continuing to provide the services our members rely on to function on a day-to-day basis. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has also impacted our 2020 Annual Meeting. The Board of Directors put a lot of thought into options around this year's Annual Meeting and ultimately decided we could not hold our normal in-person meeting without putting the health of our employees and members at risk. In an effort to be transparent with our membership while not being able to meet in person, we have chosen to handle this year's business meeting via mail. This packet contains information that is typically presented at our Annual Meeting and the Annual Meeting ballot card will allow you to fully participate in the governance of your Cooperative, and maybe even win a cash prize for returning your card on time.

MVlink continues to be a success for our membership. We currently have over 2,000 miles of fiber constructed and are approaching 4,500 members who have signed up for internet and phone services. The Cooperative is also gathering data from substations, meters, and line equipment on the fiber network across the majority of our electric grid. This system information is extremely valuable in allowing us to monitor the system on a real time basis while also helping to better implement our maintenance programs. In addition to providing the previously unavailable service of high-speed internet to the majority of our service area, MVlink is providing the expected financial benefit to the membership.

The additional revenue stream will contribute to the financial health of all members for years to come.

In addition to all the activity around the MVlink project, we are still very focused on maintaining the electric grid in order to provide needed electric services in a safe, reliable, and affordable manner. We continue to work on system upgrade projects that will allow our electric system to grow with the needs of the communities we serve. There are also many reliability programs in place that focus on keeping our system in a good operating condition. We are pleased to report that our distribution system continues to be one of the most reliable in the state. Outage time for our members is 51% lower than the average outage time experienced across Iowa.

In closing, we would like to thank our employees as they are critical to the Cooperative being able to meet the needs of our members and the communities we support. We are extremely proud of their efforts in recent months to adapt to the impact of COVID-19 while keeping their focus on meeting the needs of you, our members.

Ron Thielen, President

Jeremy Richert, CEO




COMMUNITY-FOCUSED
Electric cooperatives are different than other types of energy providers.

- We are led by consumer-members just like you.
- We were built by the community we serve.
- We still belong to the community.

That's the cooperative difference!



MVlink Fiber Update

By Jeff Geistkemper, Fiber Plant Manager

Normally we would give a quick update on the MVlink fiber project at the annual meeting. As you all know, there has been nothing “normal” in 2020! MVlink is continuing to be a welcome success for both our members, and your Cooperative. At press time, over 3,700 members are connected to MVlink and those numbers are growing daily.

I LOVE MVlink! No more slow satellite internet and data caps! It's allowed me to work from home full time and cut the cable cord. Streaming video was not an option for us before MVlink. For those patiently waiting, it's worth the wait! **-Laurie from Durango**

Due to COVID-19, we had a seven week window in early spring where we could not meet our members for pre-drop meetings and we suspended installation of all new services. By late spring, we resumed both the meetings and installs with extra precautions to ensure the safety of our members and employees. We are still working through the backlog of members to meet and we do apologize for that delay!

During the initial COVID-19 lock-down, MVEC doubled the internet speeds for connected members for no additional cost. We realized that with all the things our members could be worried about such as working from home, on-line learning, and entertainment for the family, they shouldn't need to worry about their internet provider's speed and quality of service. Our members loved the faster speeds and in late spring we announced new pricing to make the high-speed packages even more affordable for our members.

The MVEC fiber network is also starting to mature. Many of the redundancy rings we envisioned for the network early in construction are finally starting to come on line. What does that mean for you? The network has redundant, isolated paths to key hubs and field equipment. This allows our network to automatically react to a fiber cut in a ring-protected area, in turn keeping more of our members connected when we do have damage. In most cases, you will not even realize there has been a fiber cut as the network will simply automatically reroute the data! If we need to manually reroute a network path around a cut, we can reduce what would be a 24-hour outage to

a matter of hours. Being a highly reliable electricity provider has taught us that redundancy to key equipment is vital so we are proud to have built that into our fiber network, too.

While designing the network, it became clear some locations within our service territory have an incumbent internet service provider that seems to meet the internet needs of members in those areas. We simply do not see a significant number of members signing up for service like they have in the underserved areas within our service territory. We ultimately made the difficult decision to remove these areas from our initial build-out plans.

We will continue to market and promote the benefits of MVlink to all members. In the coming weeks some members will receive a letter informing them of the status of the network construction in their neighborhood. For members in those areas it is important that you contact the office and “express interest”. The MVlink fiber team uses that information to determine what areas have enough interest to justify construction. MVEC will continue building to the electrical equipment that we need to communicate with and if you live along those core lines you will have access to the MVlink internet services once that core network is built and ready for service.

We would like to thank all the members, employees, contractors and consultants, and City, State and Federal officials that have worked with us along the way on this impactful and historical project. We are proud to say that we are successfully helping to bridge the digital divide with significantly improved internet service to our mostly rural members. MVEC members now have better access than some urban areas!

THANK YOU so much for the fiber internet! It has made it possible for our children to do their schooling, zoom meetings and stream shows during this time. We wouldn't have been able to do this a year ago. Thank you again for your commitment to provide rural Iowa with high speed internet! I would recommend you to anyone! **-Rhonda from Manchester**



Understanding Your Energy Bill

As our members spend more time at home, with air conditioning and dehumidifiers running, or as farmers try to keep their livestock cool, electric bills could provide some sticker shock. Your cooperative wants to sell you reliable electricity, but only as much as you need. We're here to help you understand how you use energy, how you can save energy and how to read your energy bill.

The key components of understanding your bill, and those that you have the most control over, are in the first two or three lines of the detail section (as noted below). The first line indicates all of the kilowatt-hours (kWhs) that are used during the on-peak hours of 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The second and third lines indicate the kilowatt-hours that are used the other nineteen hours of the day from 9:01 pm to 3:59 pm. This section takes two lines to demonstrate calculations because the first 750 kWhs are billed at a different rate than the remaining off-peak kWhs. Some members may only see two lines of calculations in this section if they do not exceed 750 kilowatt-hours during the off-peak hours.

As you can see in the graphic, the on-peak energy is billed at a rate of \$0.16/kilowatt-hour (kWh); the first 750 kWhs of the off-peak energy is billed at \$0.08/kWh and any off-peak usage over 750 kWh is billed at \$0.649/kWh.

The next line on the bill labeled as Power Cost Adjustment is applied to all kilowatt-hours used. This charge reflects the difference between the actual cost of

power and the amount included in the base energy rates noted above.

The Basic Service Charge is applied to every account. Single phase accounts are charged \$33.25 and three phase accounts are charged \$68.25. The Basic Service Charge on the second meter for Heat Plus accounts is \$3.50. These charges represent the costs of bringing service to your property and are applied whether or not you use any electricity at all.

When you look at those first two or three lines, it's easy to see why you would want to shave energy costs during the higher peak hours of 4:00 to 9:00 pm. Make it easy on yourself and use a programmable thermostat. During these warm summer months, setting the thermostat just one degree higher can save money. Some loads of laundry can be washed in cold water, cutting that load's energy cost in half, and save even more by doing laundry during the off-peak hours and washing only full loads. Farms using automatic livestock feeders could program them to operate during off-peak hours and all those batteries being charged could also be unplugged during the higher-cost times.

We're always here to help you get the most value from your energy dollar. Using our metering system, we can help you see day to day fluctuations in your energy use and work together to determine options for saving energy. We can also offer payment plans such as level pay (budget billing). Our energy is always working for you.

Account Number		Account Name		Service Address		Meter No.	Bill Date	
XXXXXXX		XXXXXXXXXX		XXXXXXXXXXXX		XXXXXX	06/08/20	
Meter Reading		Mult	KWH Usage	Read Type	Read Type 2 = AMI Read 3 = Cooperative Read 8 = Estimate	Charges		
Previous	Present							
12965	13003	10	380	2	X	0.16	ON PEAK	\$60.80
16272	16396		750		X	0.08	OFF PEAK	\$60.00
			490		X	0.0649		\$31.80
			1620		X	-0.00264		-\$4.27
POWER COST ADJUSTMENT								\$33.25
BASIC SERVICE CHARGE								\$10.89
STATE TAX								\$1.82
OPTION TAX								\$194.29
CURRENT ELECTRIC CHARGES								\$230.05
PREVIOUS AMOUNT DUE								\$230.05
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PAYMENT								-\$230.05
See reverse side of your bill for explanation of these charges								
ON PEAK Energy Used 4pm-9pm								
OFF PEAK Energy Used 9pm-4pm								
Additional OFF PEAK Energy Used After 750 kWhs								
Total kWhs Used								
Cost per kWh used								

Your Electricity Use Over The Last 13 Months Averaged 1972 kWhs Monthly		Cycle	Total Due Now	
		210	Due Date	06/28/20
		Rate	After Due Date Pay	\$197.20
		101	Bill Is Delinquent After Due Date	



Tips For Reducing Dehumidifier Cost

How much it costs to run a dehumidifier depends on the size of the unit. Most dehumidifiers - apart from mini-models - will cost you around \$100 or more a year. However, as the dehumidifier grows in size, so do the bills. Luckily, there are ways to help your dehumidifier and lower the cost.

Choose the Right Size

We mean the capacity of the dehumidifier - also referred to as pints per day (ppd) and room coverage.

These are crucial points to get right in order for your dehumidifier to work optimally. Choosing a unit that can only cover 250 square feet and placing it in a large basement won't help your bills. As a result, the dehumidifier is likely to run for 24 hours each day, pushing air through without dehumidifying it properly.

Therefore, before buying a dehumidifier, consider where it will be used. If you're planning on moving it from room to room, consider how large the biggest room is. Thus, you can find a suitable dehumidifier that can easily cover each room efficiently.

Now, when it comes to capacity, you might think that it's best to choose a small 30-pint due to lower costs. But this isn't the case.

If you were to run a 50-pint and 30-pint dehumidifier in two equally-sized rooms, which one do you think would finish first? The 50-pint dehumidifier will move more air, thus dehumidifying the room quicker - which means you get to turn it off sooner.

Improve Air Circulation Naturally

By improving the air circulation within your home, you can lessen the need for the dehumidifier. If you have a few standing fans or ceiling fans, let them run a few moments each day. One of the main causes of a humid indoor environment is because moisture has nowhere to escape. By opening a few windows and running a fan, you can effectively exchange the water vapor for some crisp outdoor air.

Go for Energy-Efficient Dehumidifiers

If you have yet to purchase a dehumidifier, we highly recommend you look for energy-efficient models. These are generally Energy Star rated, which means

they use up to 20 percent less energy. In addition, Energy Star rated dehumidifiers cost the same as regular models, so you don't have to worry about the initial price.

Reduce Humidity

A dehumidifier's sole purpose is to lower humidity. However, that doesn't mean we can't help it where possible. Here are a few ways you can reduce humidity within your home to save energy:

Improve drainage: It's not only things inside the house that can raise the humidity; the outside surroundings also play a part. Therefore, you should avoid over-watering plants near the house. You should also keep your gutters clean and clear. In addition, try to extend the downspouts away from your house to avoid water pooling by the foundation

Repair leaks: If there's a leak somewhere in your house, humidity levels will be on the rise. Before setting your dehumidifier to work, fix the leak to stop the source of moisture.

Consider how you dry your clothes: If you use a clothes dryer in your home, ensure it's vented outdoors. On the other hand, if you don't have a dryer, hang your clothes outside to dry if possible.



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



The Fiber Download

Internet Outages

No one likes outages, not you, not us. For over 80 years MVEC has managed electricity outages, always striving to reduce their frequency to a point where we are ranked as one of the most reliable utilities in the State. However, now we are also managing a few internet outages and learning more about our backhaul providers and their impact on our service. While we can't guarantee uninterrupted electric or internet service, or control Mother Nature, we can share ideas to help you if an internet outage does occur.

When the electricity goes out, most likely your internet service does as well, especially if you do not use a battery back-up. Sometimes the internet service does not re-start once electric power is restored so we want to share some helpful tips.

First, know your equipment. Upon taking MVlink service, members receive a modem. The type of modem depends on whether or not a member chooses to use their own router or use the MVlink Gigacenter. The Gigacenter unit is actually a combined modem and router. Because of this, our fiber team can troubleshoot it. There is a monthly charge of \$4.95 for this unit. There is no additional charge if a member uses their own router with our modem, but we are unable to troubleshoot privately-owned routers. Know what you have and how it may impact your service.

Troubleshooting tips from our fiber team:

- Allow several minutes for the modem or Gigacenter to reboot
- Look at the lights on your modem or Gigacenter. If the unit has re-started, the power and broadband lights should be solid green
- The service light should be green and may blink occasionally
- If you are using WiFi, the Gigacenter lights for WiFi 2.4Ghz and WiFi 5Ghz should be blinking green
- If you have an internet cable plugged in to the unit (typically referred to as Ethernet), that light will also be blinking green
- If any of these lights are off, orange or red, unplug the power cable and wait about one minute; then plug it back in and wait for it to fully re-start. If the lights are still not green as noted above, then you have a service issue that needs to be reported to us
- If you are using your privately-owned router, we recommend you unplug all of your devices and then work your way back from the source to plug in each device. As an example, first plug in the MVlink modem, wait about a minute and then plug in the power to your router. This process gives the MVlink modem time to reboot so that your own router can then get the settings it needs to operate
 - o If you are still having issues, you may want to plug your computer directly into the MVlink-supplied modem to see if you have internet service; this can tell you if there may be an issue with your personal router
- Once you are comfortable the modem/router devices are operating then you may need to restart your computer once or twice
- Last, any repeaters or extenders in your home should be unplugged and then plugged back in so they can also reboot with the information they need from the MVlink modem
- Please, do not touch the 'Reset' button on the MVlink-supplied devices. This can erase the device's memory and you will definitely need a service call.

Glossary of Terms

Router: A router is a box that lets all of your wired and wireless devices use that Internet connection at once and also allows them to talk to one another without having to do so over the Internet.

Modem: A modem is a device that connects your home, usually through a coax cable connection, to your Internet service provider (ISP), like MVlink.

Sites to See

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

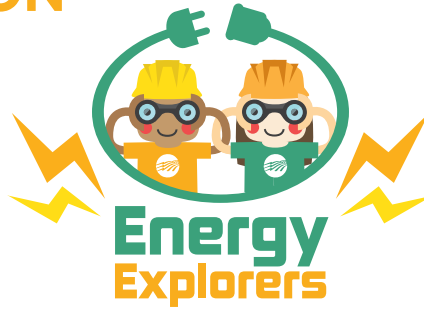
- www.geoguessr.com
This game is beyond fascinating. It drops you somewhere in the world on Google Street View and you have to guess where you are. The closer you pinpoint your location on the map, the more points you get.
- www.asoftmurmur.com
Just play around with the sliders to achieve your perfectly calming background noise. It's impossible not to try every one and each has its own unique charm.



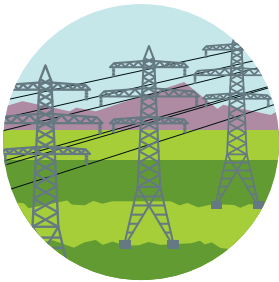


POWER RESTORATION FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

When the power goes out, line crews work hard to restore service as quickly and safely as possible. Complete the fill-in-the-blank activity below to learn about the steps of power restoration. Use the word bank if you need help, and check your work in the answer key.

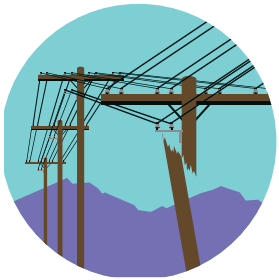
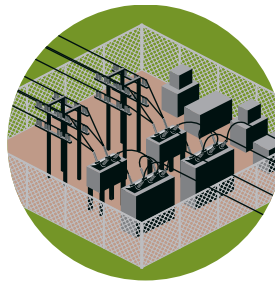


Word Bank:	transformer	transmission
distribution	substations	pads



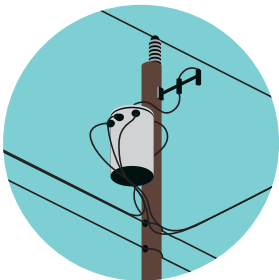
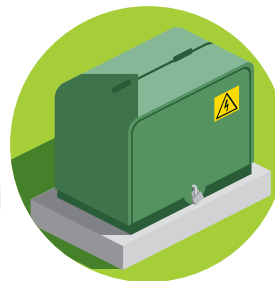
1. High-voltage _____ lines are the large towers and cables that supply power to the greatest number of consumer-members. They rarely fail, but if they do, they have to be repaired first.

2. Next, crews inspect distribution _____ for damage. They determine if the problem stems from the lines feeding into the equipment itself, or if the problem is further down the line.



3. If the problem still can't be pinpointed, _____ power lines are inspected. These are the lines you typically see on the side of the road that deliver power to communities.

4. If the power outage persists, supply lines (also known as tap lines) are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers that are either mounted on poles or placed on _____ for underground electric service.



5. If your home remains without power, the service line between the _____ and your home may need repairs.

Watts The Answer?

1. The ballot must be received in our office at 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa, by 4:00 pm on _____, 2020 to be valid.
2. Our members loved the faster speeds and in late spring we announced new _____ to make the high-speed packages even more affordable for our members.
3. When you look at those first two or three lines, it's easy to see why you would want to shave _____ costs during the higher peak hours of 4:00 to 9:00 pm.

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

June winners:

Gerald Driscoll, Bernard
Jeremy Burds, Holy Cross



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

PRSRT STD
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**MVEC will be closed
Monday, September 7
in observance of Labor Day**

**HAPPY
LABOR
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

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.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
After Hours Call Center: 800-582-8998
Visit Our Websites
www.mvec.coop www.mvlink.coop
Like Us On  Follow Us On 
Email direct to the following departments:
Billing Questions billing@mvec.coop
Fiber Questions fiber@mvec.coop
Product or Service Questions memberservices@mvec.coop
Maintenance Issues maintenance@mvec.coop
Dividend Questions patronage@mvec.coop
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