

WATTS *Current*

February 2021

For Our Members

The Power Of Human Connections

Everything about MVEC from our mission statement, principles and values, to our long-standing Touchstone Energy membership, speaks to the importance of our local communities and the quality of life they provide for our members. That's why we chose to promote Touchstone Energy's #WhoPowersYou initiative this past fall. We encouraged our members to nominate someone who is making a difference in their community; a difference that ultimately helps our co-op members.

Nominees from across the nation were scored by a panel of judges who awarded cash prizes to just four winners. With such a large pool of nominees, MVEC was proud to see two nominees from right here in Eastern Iowa!

It's clear from the nominations that these two individuals continue to make a positive impact in Jackson County and beyond and for that we are honored to recognize their contributions and thank them for their efforts to make our communities stronger.

Greg Bopes, Maquoketa



- Maquoketa FFA Alumni member who spearheaded efforts to plan and fundraise for the new \$1.2 million Ag Learning Center at Maquoketa High School and then helped his organization raise and donate \$350,000 to the cause
- Fire Prevention Officer for the Maquoketa Fire Department; Organizer of the Fire Ball event
- Active volunteer with his family in Church, school and community

Skott Gent, Monmouth



- Jackson County Fair Association Member who helped with fundraising for a new state-of-the-art building on the fairgrounds
- Helped develop Farm Safety Day for area 3rd graders
- Ten-year member of the Perkins Grant Committee that aids trade courses at the high school
- Maquoketa FFA Alumni officer team member who helped raise funds for the new Ag Learning Center (working with Bopes as above)
- Volunteer for many other area activities and organizations including Farm Bureau and the Pork Producers
- Recent nominee for KCRG-TV's 9 Who Care award

You can view all nominations, and the winners, by clicking on the WhoPowersYou story on the home page at www.mvec.coop. And it's not too early to start thinking about who you can nominate when we announce the 2021 timelines later this year.

A third nominee, MVEC employee Tony Sheridan, was not eligible for the prizes, but we think it's pretty awesome one of our members thinks so highly of this lineman. Tony was nominated for his willingness to work tirelessly for long 18-hour days with all MVEC linemen to restore power for MVEC and neighboring Linn County REC as they recovered from the Derecho damage. Tony is also one of our military veteran heroes, too.

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Connected To Your Community

By Patty Manuel, Director of Public Relations

Economic development in the traditional sense means retaining and building business within a community and in-turn creating jobs. This often includes developing a business park and recruiting new business while also working with existing businesses to ensure their success and continued commitment to a community. Fast forward to 2021 where our businesses need employees, and employees are looking for ‘livable’ communities.



New business attraction in Anamosa Commercial Park

So what makes a livable community? Today’s workforce demands strong broadband connectivity, affordable childcare and housing, excellent schools, safe neighborhoods and fun things to see and do. Economic development is evolving to community and regional development and our area development and community organizations are stepping up to the plate. The Grant Wood Loop (www.gwloop.com) is an excellent snapshot of all things fun in Dubuque, Jackson and Jones Counties. Delaware County boasts Lake Delhi, Manchester’s Whitewater Park and the Edgewood Rodeo, along with a barn quilt trail, many of which were hung with the help of our linemen.

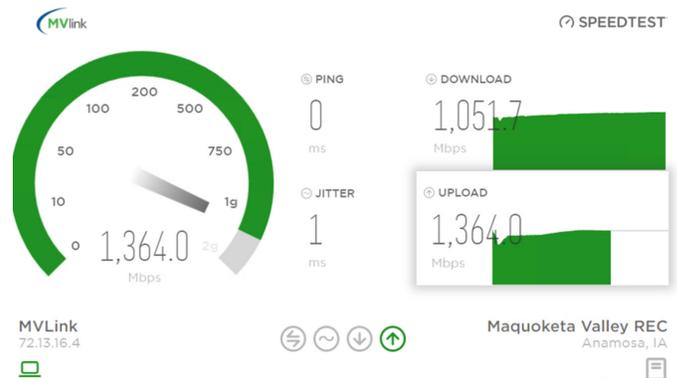
I can attend an economic development meeting in any one of our communities and see people hard at work



West Brook housing development, Manchester

ensuring their community has the right housing options, sufficient access to childcare and a variety of local shopping and service businesses to ensure people want to live and work there. At the same time, vital work continues for business retention and growth and employee recruitment.

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative plays a significant role, sometimes behind the scenes, in supporting community development that is so important to the quality of life our members deserve. Certainly our MVlink fiber internet service to almost 5,000 members has been a game changer for many households with the improved broadband connectivity they need to work and live here. Our revolving loan fund (created through the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant program) has loaned over \$3 million to 25 area businesses, in turn creating or retaining more than 250 jobs. Through our Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge, employees are logging their community volunteer hours with area fire departments, schools, ball teams, foundations, Churches and more. In turn, those hours are converted to cash donations to numerous area non-profits.



Speeds up to 1 GB with a direct fiber connection

The value of Cooperative membership, combined with engaged members and employees, ensures we remain connected to each other and to our vibrant communities long into the future.



GIVE YOUR HOME AN INTERNET MAKEOVER

HOME is everything these days. It's a workplace, a school, a library, a movie theater, a gym, a shopping center, and the backdrop for virtual gatherings with family and friends. However, your home can also be a frustration zone if your internet is too slow to handle all the activity.

The solution is to upgrade your internet with faster speeds. We offer a range of plans with speeds up to 1 GB — all featuring excellent reliability and backed by local support.

Call 800-927-6068 to transform your internet experience!



Maquoketa Valley
Electric Cooperative



www.mvec.coop

Service availability will depend on location. Contact us for details.

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.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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 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:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410:
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.



How To Breathe Easy About Your Home's Air Quality

By Pat Keegan And Brad Thiessen

Sealing air leaks is one of the best ways to make your home more energy efficient. It's also essential to ensure your home has an adequate amount of healthy, fresh air.

The average home loses about half its air volume every hour, so it can be effectively sealed (often at a low cost) and still have more than enough healthy air.

Pollutants are the leading cause of poor indoor air quality, and the most dangerous pollutant is carbon monoxide (CO). It can come from furnaces, water heaters or stoves that burn natural gas, propane or wood. The problem usually occurs in devices that are old, in need of repair or installed or operated in a manner that prevents clear, unobstructed supply and exhaust of combustion air.



Excessive moisture in the air can also be considered an indoor pollutant because mold and dust mites thrive when relative humidity is above 60%. One sign your home is sealed too tight is window condensation, which can happen if moist air doesn't exit the home at an adequate rate.

Pollutants can cause physical reactions, such as coughing or sneezing. However, carbon monoxide causes more severe reactions, such as headaches, dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision or loss of consciousness.

Three steps to ensure healthy indoor air

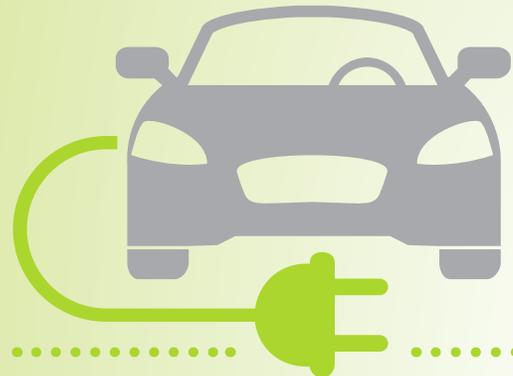
STEP 1: Eliminate or reduce pollution.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the first strategy is to eliminate or reduce the source of pollution. And the first pollutant to eliminate is carbon monoxide. If you have a combustion furnace, it should be inspected and serviced regularly by a professional. If you have any combustion appliances, CO detectors must be installed and replaced every five to seven years.

If you live in an area with radon, keep it out of your home because it is the second leading cause of lung cancer. To determine if radon is in your area, check out EPA's radon map (www.epa.gov/radon/epa-map-radon-zones). Radon tests are not expensive, and your local health authorities can provide more information. If radon levels are too high, you'll need to hire a professional to install a system that will divert radon gas to the outside of your home.

continued to page 5

EV sales represented less than 2% of new car sales in America in 2019



But total sales were up more than 80% over 2018.



According to a report this year by the Boston Consulting Group.

EV sales are expected to increase to more than 20% of the new car market in 2030.





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Consider these additional pollutant reduction measures:

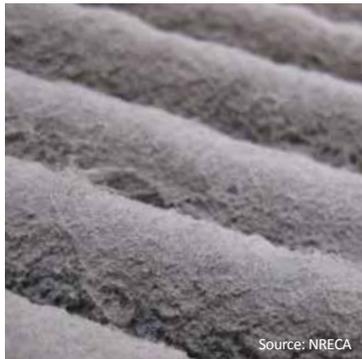
- Never smoke tobacco inside.
- Run the exhaust fans in bathrooms and kitchens
- Store toxic products outside.
- Never idle a vehicle in an attached garage.

STEP 2: Have adequate ventilation

The second strategy is ventilation. Your home probably has more than enough natural ventilation from outside air leaking into the home. If you suspect this isn't adequate, the best way to know for sure is to hire an energy auditor to conduct a blower door test.

Many experts recommend sealing the home as tight as possible and using mechanical ventilation to ensure a consistent and adequate supply of outside air. The most energy-efficient ventilation system is a heat recovery ventilator (HRV), which pulls in fresh air from outside and captures the heat from indoor air before it is exhausted to the outside.

STEP 3: Clean the air
The third and final strategy is to clean the air. The easiest step is simply changing your furnace filter at least once every three months and keeping your furnace supply and return air registers free of obstructions. If any rooms



do not have an air return, keep the doors open. There are several home air cleaning systems available – some are effective, and some are not. The EPA offers a handy online guide: www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/air-cleaners-and-air-filters-home.

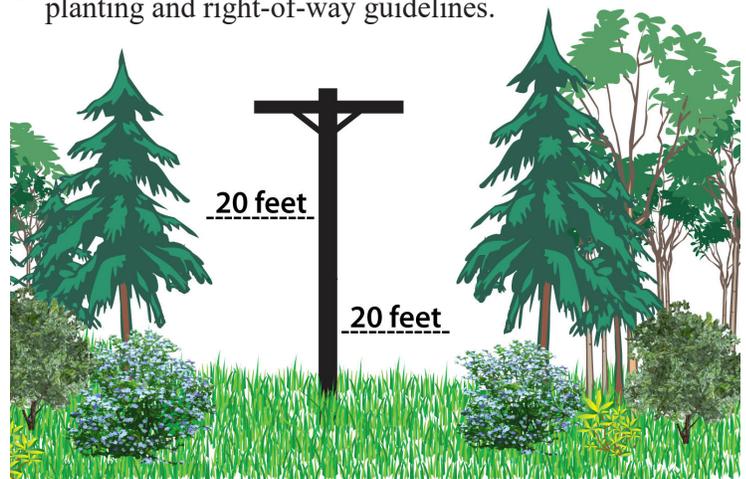
As you seal air leaks in your home, enjoy breathing in fresh, healthy indoor air!

Tree, Underbrush And Reliable Service

Tree trimming around power lines helps keep people safe and can increase the reliability of service when storms hit. To provide electric reliability and personal safety, it is important that crews for Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative periodically trim trees and underbrush around power lines in your neighborhood. Tree limbs and power lines are a bad combination, especially with storms involving high winds, lightning or ice. Trees are one of the most common causes of electric service outages and time spent clearing trees from power lines can result in extended periods of outage time. Clearing underbrush is equally important for efficient power restoral when power lines are on the ground.

Tree limbs and branches that extend into power lines can pose a significant risk to public safety during any kind of weather. Anyone in close contact or trying to trim or climb such trees could be seriously injured.

Trained crews usually trim trees and underbrush around primary transmission and distribution lines every few years. Franchise and easement agreements with cooperative members allow us to trim affected areas on private property. Many factors are considered when trimming, such as the effect of ice on the limbs, how fast-growing the tree or underbrush is and how many repeat trips will be needed. Fast-growing trees may need to be trimmed back more than slow-growing trees. The goal is to trim no more than what is necessary (generally 20 feet on either side of the power line) for public safety and electric service reliability. (Refer to the diagram). Trimming a tree near a power line will require a professional tree trimmer and you should contact MVEC at 800-927-6068. Visit mvec.coop/tree-trimming for safe planting and right-of-way guidelines.





TECH LINK

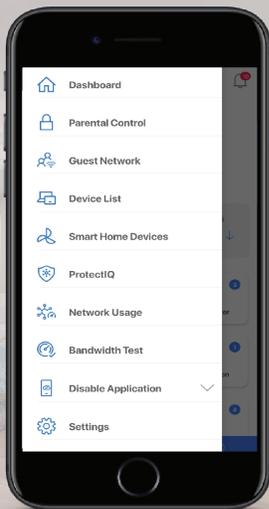
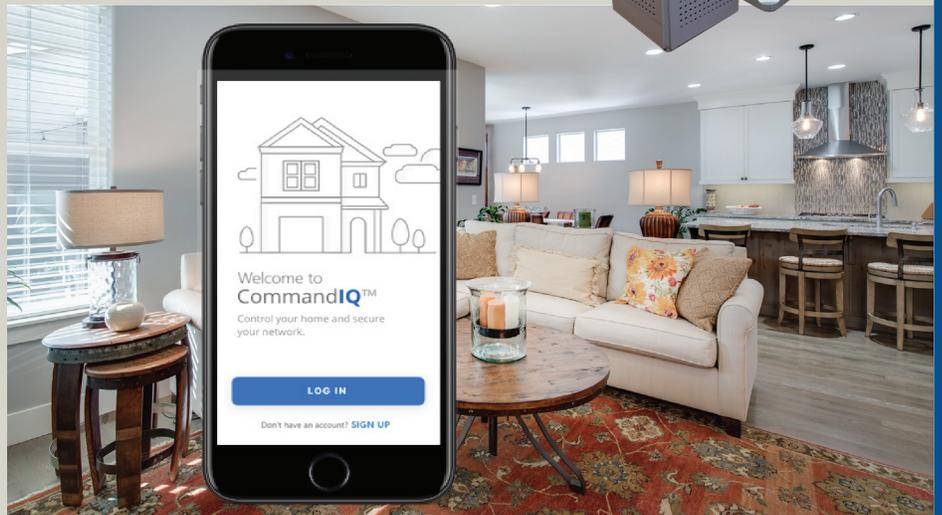
MVlink WiFi Experience

MVlink offers a whole home (or small business) WiFi for an additional \$4.95 per month. Your WiFi can be managed by downloading a free smartphone app, CommandIQ, through the Apple App Store, or Google Play Store. (Note: CommandIQ replaces the NetValet app)



Taking Home Network Performance and Control To Another Level

CommandIQ™ gives you easy access to a snapshot view of your home or small business network. Through the app you can view all the connected devices on your network, set up parental controls or a guest network, change your SSID and password, and more. **CommandIQ** puts you in charge!



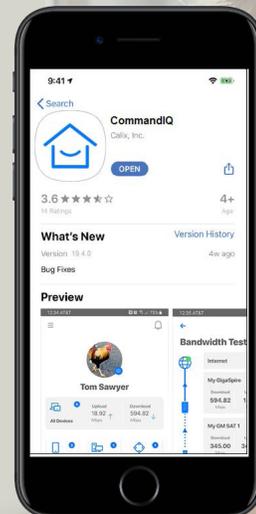
Main Menu

- CommandIQ™ provides a layer of functionality
- Parental Control
- Guest Network
- Device List
- Network Usage
- Settings

CommandIQ

One app to rule them all!

Welcome to the future! Begin by downloading the **CommandIQ** app and then follow the step-by-step setup guidelines at www.mvec.coop/WiFi Router.





Please Cash 2020 Dividend Checks!

Dividend checks were issued to Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative members on October 16, 2020, and automatically become void on February 13, 2021. If you have not cashed your check, please do so soon. Dividend checks not cashed by February 13, 2021, will be retained by the Cooperative and redistributed next year when dividends are paid. Please call the office at 800-927-6068 and talk to Jan if you have any questions. As a reminder, if your dividend was under \$5, it is being held until the accumulated amount in the future is over \$5.

WINTER ENERGY-SAVINGS WORD SEARCH

This winter, you can pitch in at home to help save energy!

Read the energy-saving tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.



WORD BANK:

- Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow **sunlight** in to warm your home.
- Instead of turning up the thermostat, add more layers of **clothing** to keep your body warm.
- If you have a **fireplace**, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is not burning.
- Unplug **chargers** when they're not in use. They consume energy even when they're not charging phones and other devices.
- Ask an adult to check the **air filter** for your home's heating and cooling system. Filters should be replaced regularly to help the system run more efficiently.
- Always turn off **lights** when you leave a room.



Watts The Answer?

1. And it's not too early to start thinking about who you can

when we announce the 2021 timelines later this year.

2. Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative plays a significant role, sometimes behind the scenes, in supporting _____

_____ that is so important to the quality of life our members deserve.

3. _____ crews usually trim trees and underbrush around primary transmission and distribution lines every few years.

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 _____

December winners:

Denise Wubbena, Manchester
 Brian Suthers, Martelle



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

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



**Our Office Will Be Closed
Monday, February 15
In Observance Of President's Day**

**Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month**

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

Source: www.energy.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.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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www.mvec.coop  

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Electric Service: maintenance@mvec.coop
Internet/Phone Service: fiber@mvec.coop

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