

WATTS *Current*

June 2021

For Our Members

We're Ready For Storm Season. Are You?

Like many of you, we welcome more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy the warmer weather; but summer months also make conditions right for dangerous storms like last year's Derecho. These weather events can cause destruction to our electric system, but we want you to know MVEC crews are ready to respond should power outages occur. When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines. We encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages.

Review the items below, as a starting point for storm preparedness.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, water and other essentials.
- Confirm that you have enough sanitation and hygiene supplies.
- Make sure your First Aid kit is stocked. If you have a medical condition that requires electricity (like oxygen) make a temporary relocation plan.
- Set aside basic household items, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio.
- Consider your need for a generator to protect livestock.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily found in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge, and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. If you plan to use a generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely. Listen to local news or a Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check MVEC's website or Facebook for power restoration updates. After the storm, avoid downed power lines and flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow room on your property for utility crews to safely perform their jobs. Advance planning for severe storms can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and wonderful summer.



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Annual Meeting Event Returns In August!

Members will have a chance to elect directors either via mail in August or at the in-person Annual Meeting on August 19th in Monticello. Candidates and election information will be published in the August issue of Watts Current.

Director Candidate Applications Due Soon

A nominating committee has been appointed to fill three positions on the Board of Directors, each for a three year term. If you wish to be considered for one of the positions listed below, please submit a brief biography with your qualifications to: Nominating Committee, %Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative, 109 N. Huber Street, Anamosa IA 52205 no later than June 10, 2021.

Region 1- Jones, Cedar & Linn Counties - *Jan Null*

Region 3- Dubuque County - *Charles McCullough*

Region 4- Delaware, Buchanan & Clayton Counties
- *Larry Swanson*

Looking To Get Involved?

We are searching for dedicated, passionate members who are interested in serving on the Board of Directors.



Due June 10th

Are You Interested In The Governance Of Your Cooperative?

For more information about the election process visit www.mvec.coop, or contact CEO Jeremy Richert at 800-927-6068 or jrichert@mvec.coop.

There's No Such Thing As A Free Dinner

Beware of energy claims that sound too good to be true

"Save 50% on your energy bills!"

"Stop paying your electric utility!"

Have you ever received a postcard or an email featuring one of these headlines? The postcard usually includes an invitation to a free dinner where you can learn how to "save big" on your energy bills. There's even a local phone number you can call to reserve your spot, causing you to think that this effort is organized by a reputable, local company.

It's easy to let our guard down with these incredible claims. These marketing campaigns will tout power converters for your meter, radiant

barriers for your attic and other technologies that promise to save you hundreds or thousands of dollars on your energy bills.

Invited to a free steak dinner?

Before accepting an invitation or signing anything, please research the company on the Better Business Bureau website. We also encourage you to contact our Member Advocate, Al Schilling, about the offer. As a reliable source of information you

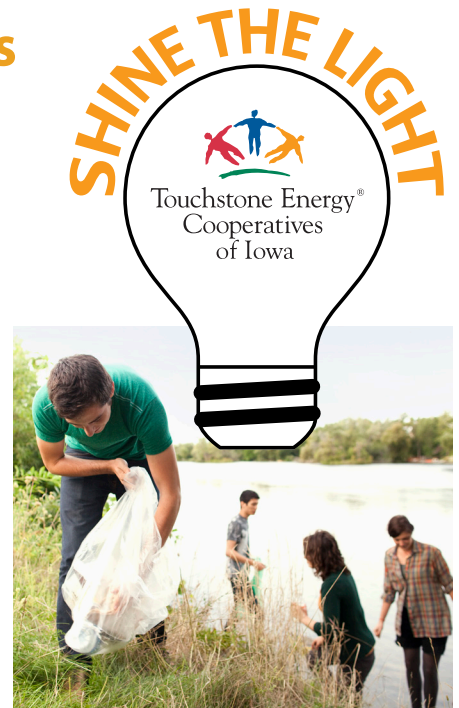
can trust, we can answer your energy efficiency questions and suggest practical ways to save energy and money on your electric bills.

Locally owned and governed by the members we serve, MVEC fully supports energy efficiency efforts. We offer several incentives that can lower your electric bill and can tell you which energy efficient products may qualify for state or federal tax credits. Be wary of exaggerated claims and overpriced products in these free dinner schemes, but if you do accept the invitation don't feel pressured to sign on the dotted line until you've done your homework and called us for advice. A reputable business would encourage you to make an informed decision, and we're here to help.



Shine The Light On Community Volunteers

Do you know someone in your community who deserves to be recognized for making a difference? Nominate them for our Shine the Light contest by June 30 and they could win \$1,500 for their local charity or nonprofit.



“We’re really excited to participate in this statewide effort to celebrate our cooperative’s commitment to community,” remarked CEO Jeremy Richert. “There are many volunteers throughout our service areas who deserve to be recognized.”

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, this new contest celebrates the people who make our communities better. Three winners will be announced during the Iowa State Fair in August and each will receive a \$1,500 donation for their charity or nonprofit. The winners will also be featured in the September issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine.

How To Nominate

Members and employees of Iowa’s electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers. If you receive electricity or internet service from MVEC, you’re a co-op member and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

A panel of judges will review all contest entries and we’ll announce the three winners during the Iowa State Fair in August.

Help us shine the light on volunteers; make a nomination by June 30!

Step 1:

Go to www.IowaShineTheLight.com from June 1-30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules.

Step 2:

As a nominator, provide your contact information and answer the following question in 500 words or less.

How has your nominee made a positive difference in the community, and why do they deserve to be recognized?





Efficient Cordless Tools For Dad

Dear MVEC: With Father's Day approaching, the kids and I are thinking of getting my husband some rechargeable power tools. Do you have any recommendations? When is the extra cost of cordless worth the investment? – *Jesse*

Dear Jesse: Great idea! If your husband enjoys tackling home projects, rechargeable tools are an excellent gift idea.

Rechargeable cordless tools are worth the investment when the corded version is the least convenient option. Quality cordless tools are usually less expensive if you buy them as part of a set instead of one tool at a time. Save money when charging tools by avoiding peak hours of 4pm-9pm.

Here are a few cordless tools that a father in your family should love!

1. Power drill - As one of the most-used power tools, a drill should be everyone's first cordless tool. Cordless drills are so easy to use, and the technology has improved so they have more power and hold a charge longer.

2. String trimmer - A string trimmer is a quick way to trim weeds and grass near walls, bricks and rocks. If your family uses an old gas trimmer around the yard, it's time for a change. Two-stroke engines pollute the air and require regular maintenance. Electric trimmers are more energy efficient and quieter.

3. Leaf blower - If the father in your family uses a gas-powered leaf blower, do him (and your neighbors!) a favor by giving him a cordless leaf blower, which is more energy efficient, much quieter and less polluting.

4. Flashlight - LED flashlights can produce 20 times as much light as the old incandescent ones.

It's worth buying a reputable brand of cordless tools so you can be confident you will be able to find a replacement battery. We hope this information helps you choose the right cordless tools.



MEET UP

AT THE JACKSON CO. FAIR

JULY 27

5-9 pm

1

FIND

We'll be in Pearson Hall - you can't miss us!

2

LEARN

...about your cooperative and our services, including MVLink!

3

WIN

Try your luck at our prize wheel!



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

Have fun and take a selfie in our booth and tag @MaquoketaValleyElectricCooperative on Facebook.



Suds And Savings

Ways to save energy in the laundry room



Your washer and dryer account for a significant portion of energy consumption, and let's face it laundry is no one's favorite chore. There are several easy ways you can save energy (and money) in the laundry room.

We recommend these tips for saving on suds:

1. Wash with cold water. Switching from warm water to cold water can cut one load's energy use by more than half, and by using a cold-water detergent, you can still achieve that brilliant clean.
2. Wash full loads when possible. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up.
3. Use the high-speed or extended spin cycle in the washer. This setting will remove more moisture before drying, reducing your drying time.
4. Use dryer balls. Dryer balls, usually wool or rubber, will help keep clothes separated for faster drying, and they can help reduce static, so you can eliminate dryer sheets.
5. Clean the lint filter after each drying cycle. If you use dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove excess buildup.
6. When it's time to purchase a new washer or dryer, look for the ENERGY STAR® label. New washers and dryers that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating use about 20% less energy than conventional models.

Editor's Note: The costs to offer energy efficiency services and incentives are collected through the monthly energy charge on your bill. In 2020, the cost to our members was \$0.0008 per kilowatt-hour used.

MVEC Receives The ESGR Patriotic Employer Support Award

MVEC was presented with the Patriotic Employer Award from the Office of the Secretary of Defense Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). We were nominated by our lineman, Matt Althoff, for our support during his National Guard duties and deployment. Thank you, Matt, for your service to our country. Althoff recently returned from Middle East deployment. During Matt's deployment we sent letters and care packages to remind him of our support.

Althoff said he nominated MVEC for the award because we have always been supportive of him. CEO Jeremy Richert said "we are all appreciative of Althoff's nomination, and always made sure Matt knew his job would be here when he returned".



From left presenting MVEC with the award was Gary Kinsinger, ESGR, Director of Operations Dan Schulte, Lineman Matt Althoff, HR Manager Suzy Gilkerson and CEO Jeremy Richert.



TECH LINK

How To Extend Your Wi-Fi Outdoors

It's great to be able to seamlessly connect to your Wi-Fi devices throughout your home, but frustration often starts the moment you try to connect your Wi-Fi network to a device outside. You can move your router as close to your yard as you can, but that won't always solve the problem.

With the increasing number of outdoor smart devices like lighting, security cameras and grills, you need to be able to extend your Wi-Fi beyond your home's exterior walls. It can be tricky, but with the right system you'll be streaming video by the pool and posting pics to social media in the yard in no time.

Our Mesh Wi-Fi units may be the answer. This technology combines a Wi-Fi router with one or more satellites, which are small wireless devices you place in different places. These satellites communicate with the router and provide you with a strong Wi-Fi signal everywhere in your home and even into your backyard.



Advantages of Mesh Wi-Fi

- Our Mesh Wi-Fi satellite units, when combined with our Wi-Fi router, will provide coverage for your home and yard.
- With the Wi-Fi router/Mesh combination MVlink's tech team is just a phone call away to access your network and remotely figure out the source of any technical issues.

In addition to solving your biggest home Wi-Fi challenges, and giving you outstanding performance, Mesh Wi-Fi is cost-effective. You can purchase a mesh unit from MVEC for a one-time charge of \$90 plus tax. The Mesh Wi-Fi unit, combined with MVlink's router, will extend your network even further than a router alone and provides a complete managed solution.

If you're ready to enjoy the superior online experience and other benefits that come with MVlink, contact us today. We'll set you up with everything you need to upgrade your current Wi-Fi network to a high-performance Mesh Wi-Fi system and provide you the support you need so you can enjoy worry-free Wi-Fi that just works. You also might want to think about upgrading your speed when you start adding more smart devices.

Now that you know how to bring your Wi-Fi outdoors, here are some smart backyard gadgets to help bring the technological comforts of your home to your backyard.

Smart Pool Cleaner -

Keeping your pool clean requires more than just scrubbing the walls and changing the filter. You need to monitor the pH levels of your water. Just toss this device in your pool and it will show you temperature, chemical levels, and even the weather.



Wi-Fi Padlock - The design makes it ideal for locking gates and sheds, especially if you need an easy, secure way to allow people in.

Outdoor Smart Plug - Outdoor Smart Plug lets you add timers and voice assistant controls to your patio light, pool filter, or anything else you plug in.

Bluetooth Speaker - You don't need to run special wires outside to have music in your yard, you can get a Bluetooth speaker. These powerful little speakers are reasonably priced and waterproof so you can keep one on the patio or near the pool.

Smart Grills - Whether you prefer to cook with electric, wood pellets, charcoal, or gas, there are now Wi-Fi grills, that make it possible to BBQ while you cut the grass, watch the game, or take a nap. Wireless contact with your grill allows you to raise and lower the temperature and receive alerts when your food is ready.

With all of these smart toys and your Wi-Fi perfectly extended outside, you should have no problems hosting the perfect summer party or barbecue, unless it rains.





Member Assistance Resources

IOWA RENT AND UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



! ELIGIBLE RENTERS

Eligible renter households must:

- Meet income qualifications.
- Demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability which may include a past due utility or rent notice or eviction notice.
- One or more individuals in the household must have qualified for unemployment benefits between March 13, 2020 and date of application -or- have experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs or experienced other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the coronavirus outbreak.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
iowahousingrecovery.com

Need assistance with past due rent and/or utilities?



HOW TO APPLY

Application is available at
IowaHousingRecovery.com

Contact the Application Support Team: 515-348-8813 or 855-300-5885

ASSISTANCE WITH RENT PAYMENTS

- **Past due payments:** Available for payments of costs incurred no earlier than March 13, 2020.

ASSISTANCE WITH UTILITY PAYMENTS

- **Past due payments:** For electricity, natural gas, propane or fuel oil, water, sewer and/or trash removal.
- Available for utility payments of costs incurred no earlier than March 13, 2020.

Payments will be made directly to landlords and utility service providers. Polk County and City of Des Moines residents are not eligible to apply for this program. Please visit impactcap.org for assistance.

This project is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award numbers ERA0184 and ERA0440 awarded to the Iowa Finance Authority by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Watts The Answer?

1. Members will have a chance to elect directors either via mail in August or at the

Annual Meeting on August 19th in Monticello.

2. Help us shine the light on volunteers; make a nomination by _____!

3. Your washer and dryer account for a significant portion of _____ consumption, and let's face it laundry is no one's favorite chore.

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 _____

April winners:

Paul Portz, Maquoketa

Greg Swift, Bellevue

EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT PROGRAM

A Federal Communications Commission program that provides a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying households.

IF YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS ELIGIBLE, YOU CAN RECEIVE:

- **Monthly Benefit:** Up to a \$50/month discount on your broadband service and associated equipment rentals
- **Enhanced Tribal Benefit:** Up to a \$75/month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands
- **One-time Device Discount:** Up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer (with a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50) where available



Only one monthly service discount and one device discount is allowed per household. The program rules recognize there may be more than one eligible household at the same address.

To learn about eligibility and application options, visit GetEmergencyBroadband.org.



EMERGENCY BROADBAND SUPPORT CENTER
(833) 511-0311 | 9 am-9 pm ET
7 DAYS PER WEEK | EBBHelp@usac.org



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

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



MVEC's office will close
at 11am on July 2nd and
remain closed thru July 5th

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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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Mailing Address:

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

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday • 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

After Hours Call Center: 800-582-8998

www.mvec.coop  

Email direct to the following departments:

Electric Billing: billing@mvec.coop

Electric Service: maintenance@mvec.coop

Internet/Phone Service: fiber@mvec.coop

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SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

May 3rd-October 1st, 2021

Monday-Thursday: 7:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Friday: 7:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

A dirty filter causes your air conditioner to work harder than necessary. Remember to change your air filter every month (or every two months) to prevent dust buildup, which can lead to even bigger problems.

Source: www.energy.gov

