

## Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative

# WATTS *Current*

For Our Customers • January 2003

## NEW REBATE PROGRAM

*Effective January 1st*

To encourage the efficient use of clean, convenient and safe electric energy, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative initiated a rebate program. Over the years the number of rebate requests has steadily grown to a point where a careful review of the program seemed appropriate. Our primary focus included promoting energy efficiency, encouraging the use of electric products, and answering the needs of our members. Therefore, effective January 1, 2003, the Board of Directors has approved a new rebate program. A complete listing of the rebates available is on page 7 of this issue. Please cut it out and keep it for your reference throughout the year. Additionally, rebate information is available on our web site at [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop), click on the Info Center.

The rebates we offer on home appliances has been expanded to include refrigerators, dishwashers and the highly requested washing machine. It is important to note the appliances must be Energy Star rated. Most all appliances will come with a yellow "Energy Guide" attached to it. This Energy Guide is not an assurance the

appliance is Energy Star approved. You will find the Energy Star rating on appliances with a high energy efficiency rating. Although you may find Energy Star appliances come with a slightly higher purchase price, the rebate and the energy savings will quickly make up for the added initial expense.

In addition, applications for rebates on dishwashers and washing machines will only be accepted from homes where an electric water heater is in use.

Our farming and rural residential members will appreciate the addition of a rebate for milk pre-coolers, energy efficient premium motors and energy efficient lighting.

With rebate requests for geothermal heating systems, air conditioning and electric water heaters being the largest part of our program, we will continue offering them with a slight change to the water heater rebate for premium quality units only.

This new rebate program

applies only to products purchased after January 1, 2003. For a very limited time, we will honor our old rebate program for products purchased in the last quarter of 2002. Please save the rebate listings on page 7 or email questions to [memberservice@mvec.com](mailto:memberservice@mvec.com) or call Gary Weber or Patty Manuel at 800-927-6068 with questions.



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## MODEL HOME NEARING COMPLETION

The all electric model home we have been featuring the past few months is nearing completion. The October issue of Watts Current referenced the drilling of four vertical wells to accommodate the geothermal loops. The final phase of the Weber's heating system involved the installation of a hydro-heat geothermal unit with an on-demand desuperheater. Kraus Plumbing & Heating of Monticello installed the unit which not only heats the home but utilizes the desuperheater to provide heat for hot water. The Weber's will realize considerable cost savings as the desuperheater captures excess heat energy from the heat pump. In the summer months, when the heat pump is not in use, heat collected from the home will be used to heat the water.



Because the home features all electric heat with no back-up gas or wood heating systems, the Weber's qualify for MVEC's Heat Plus Program. This program allows the electric heat portion of their monthly electric bill to be billed at a rate of \$0.0295 per kWh. The geothermal unit is 300% efficient and, combined with this rate, provides faster payback on the installation costs. Charts and figures will be available at the Open House to show actual energy usages and costs.



Watch the February issue of Watts Current for Open House dates.

*Top: Hydro Heat Pump*

*Bottom: Reservoir pump pack with water heater and desuperheater*

## LACK OF GROUNDING CAN KILL

A Central Wisconsin dairyman was killed in a tragic accident while working in his barn. He was electrocuted by a fault from his milking equipment. An investigation revealed all of the secondary grounding conductors had been cut or removed. Code compliance would have likely saved his life.

While fatalities are unusual, it is not unusual to find dairy farms where secondary and even primary grounds have been cut. There are a number of unqualified individuals who readily provide advice to dairy farmers on how to improve production. Rather than focus on farm management, their primary concern is to encourage hostility and litigation over phantom electrical issues.

If you are a farmer working with a stray voltage consultant, you would be wise to check into that person's qualifications. Intentional electric code violations that put your life at risk should not be tolerated.



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## MVEC COMPLETES MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative recently studied the results of a confidential, random sample survey of its membership. The survey included new members as well as long-time members from all age groups and throughout the entire service area in an effort to learn what we are doing well and what areas need improvement. Survey questions centered around member perceptions, service quality, communications and services offered.

A significant finding illustrates we need to continue promoting the cooperative way of doing business as evidenced by the following responses:

My electric cooperative is a not-for-profit organization 60% Agree  
*We are a not-for-profit organization.*

I am an owner of the Cooperative 71% Agree  
*Yes, we are owned by those we serve.*

I feel I have a voice in my electric cooperative's operation 46% Agree  
*You do have a voice with us; you are an owner.*

Being part of a cooperative business is important to me 93% Agree  
*Is this number reflecting the recent turmoil in investor-owned businesses?*

It is very important to me that my electricity provider is locally owned and operated 81% Agree  
*We are pleased members recognize our local presence.*

Other findings included a general overall satisfaction with the Cooperative (84%), a need to offer more energy efficiency information and programs (73%) and the importance of continuing to improve our reliable service to increase the '85% Agree' numbers.

Members who wrote in comments should be aware the survey was strictly confidential and therefore responding to comments such as the following are impossible: "...Is there a way to determine specific usage of a certain appliance or area of home?" If you ever have a question, please don't hesitate to call us. Remember, we work for you and we are happy to do so!

Special thanks to the members who took the time to complete the survey. Your answers truly help us in providing you the best possible services at the lowest possible costs.





## RECOLLECTIONS OF RECs BEGINNINGS

*Grace Zimmerman, Anamosa*

Do you realize a county agent, Carl Smith, has had a profound effect on your life if you were ever a REC member? As Don Meeks recalls, your rural electric cooperative was Mr. Smith's brainchild. "In the 1930's he promoted a meeting of 16 men, one from each Jones County township. They met in the Farm Bureau office on Main Street, Anamosa, located on the corner of Booth and Main Street." (Which later became the Easterly Hotel.) In the answer to my question as to why the connection between the Farm Bureau, Don replied, "When the Jones County Farm Bureau was organized in 1916, it's main objective was to sponsor the work of the county agent. I remember the names of J.W. Oscar Kinler, A. Parke Ogden, Oliver Furst, C.W. James as well as my dad, W.B. Meeks as representatives of the townships." Other township representatives included Frank Kulhavy, A.B. White, D.J. Wasson, A.G. Bohlken, T.F. Supple, Alva Larkey, C.M. Holst, John L. Hein, Will Lubben, James Peet and Fred Berlin.

Smith gave each farmer the task of contacting their neighbors to join them in 'throwing in \$10.00' to start a Jones County rural electric cooperative. The idea was that if they each got enough members, the group could get a loan from the Rural Electrification Administration. County Agent Smith had heard of a bill signed by Executive Order of President Franklin Roosevelt in May of

1935. Carl Smith worked diligently to assist farmers in forming their own REA cooperative. A lawyer, Mr. Wisdom, from Des Moines, was hired to assist in forming the cooperative. It became a reality in 1935."

As with most consumer cooperatives, there was open membership, democratic control (one vote per member), limited returns on share capital and net earnings divided among members in proportion to patronage. There was a regular provision for building up

reserves, funds were set aside for promotion, sales at current market price and to provide high quality of maintenance of lines, etc.

Don further recalls, "It was hard to get farmers to sign up after the depression. Cattle were selling for \$15 and hogs for \$9. Some were hesitant until they saw the posts being set up. Sixteen directors were elected. In April, 1936, Edgar Beach was hired as the first manager with his office in the corner of the Farm Bureau office. Edgar was a singer. He sang at funerals. He was the one

who saw to it that the new corporation got their loans from the United States Government and filed for incorporation. The membership fees of \$10 were the chief assets which paid Beach's small salary. Beach motivated volunteers who cut trees and brush to clear the right-of-way prior to setting up the lines. Some volunteers granted easements so that electric lines could go on the shortest, most economical, route."

"The REC was the answer for farms which were not near the IE highlines which were designed from town to town. IE probably never visualized the amount of electrical equipment which would be used by farmers, thinking only of lights", adds Meeks. "In 1937, when my dad was elected as



*Above: Scenes such as this were repeated on thousands of farms as the lines were staked and built. Shown is the late E.R. Bowen, Engineer who was responsible for the field engineering starting in late 1938.*



the first president of the REC, they got wind of it in Jackson County, wanting to join with Jones County. Fence lines were where the poles were set in Jackson County. The government loaned money to the Maquoketa Municipal plant to build a generator. So that's where the power came from and the name was later changed to Maquoketa Valley Rural Electric Cooperative. In 1938, the first twelve farms lit up were by Nashville, Iowa, just west of Maquoketa because the first line had to be built from the source of power which was in Maquoketa."

As a personal note, Don continued, "My brother Merle and I learned how to do wiring. We wired five farms. We had to solder wires, wrap them with rubber tape and then friction tape. An REC inspector would check the wiring. REC also contracted with a company to dig post holes. I think it was a firm from Marshalltown. The REC officials decided on better, safer poles with a stand-up arrangement going away from the cross-arms which took the pressure off the poles. There are still some of the poles set in 1939 in use in our neighborhood because they were creosoted all the way down. I think the first rates were six cents per kilowatt. We were hooked up in 1939."

"But there were problems", Meeks added. "They had to shut off the electricity when new members were hooked up. The farm elevators had been gas powered. When they put the electric motors on, they had to shut off the power. When milking machines were all running on the various farms, low voltage was a problem. When the 'missus' was getting supper, and the milking machines were working, the radio wouldn't work."

Thanks to Don Meeks for his recollections.

Other research and speaking with John Parham, Sr., REC manager from 1975 through 1987, yielded more information. I wondered where the REC office was located prior to moving to its present location on North Huber Street in 1950. Parham told me it was still connected with the Farm Bureau, as its office was in the front and the REC office was in the back of the building at the corner of Main and North Huber Street. He recalls Alice Winchip as the office secretary and the small railing separating the Farm Bureau and the REC.

The first annual meetings were held in the Anamosa High School gym and later a big tent was rented and set up at the high school. Are there any who still remember when



Above: Don meeks, Martelle

Ed Beach was the manager and he used the opening statement, "They said it couldn't be done, but here it is", as he stretched out his lanky arms as if he was encircling the entire electrified area served by REC from Martelle up to Strawberry Point, over to North Buena Vista, down to Sabula and back to Martelle?"

These recollections really only touch the surface of the organization of the Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative. When you stop to realize the history and that the \$10 membership fee is now \$0, aren't you glad you're served by the REC?

Editor's Note: The nine original incorporators who wrote the Articles of Incorporation, and the years they served, are as follows:

James Peet	Anamosa	1935-38
A.B. White	Anamosa	1935-41
C.W. James	Center Junction	1935-37
D. J. Wasson	Onslow	1935-42
A. G. Bohlken	Monticello	1935-37
A. Parke Ogden	Anamosa	1935-60
T. F. Supple	Cascade	1935-37
C. M. Holst	Center Junction	1935-38
John L. Hein	Monticello	1935-37





**Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative**

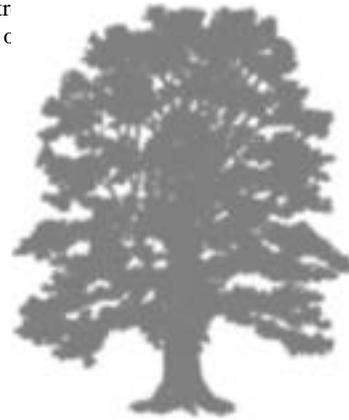
*Our Energy Working For*

## **REDUCING POWER OUTAGES THROUGH TREE TRIMMING**

In a review of MVEC's power outages from 1999-2001 it was determined that trees were the third most common cause of outages in terms of the number of consumers affected and the number of hours the outages lasted.

Please notify us at 800-927-6068 if you believe a tree is too close to the line (within 10 feet). A properly trained MVEC employee will trim trees that are near Cooperative lines leading up to your meter. Electrical lines you own, that lead from the meter to your house or farm, are your responsibility to maintain.

If a MVEC employee notices a tree in or near an electric line, the tree will be trimmed or cut to remove the hazard. We realize this may not always agree with your home landscaping plans, however safety and uninterrupted power must be our first priorities.



## **EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**



**John White**

John began employment with MVEC in 1989. He is currently a Journeyman Lineman working with Dallas Paustian to service members in Jones, Cedar and Linn Counties. John is following in the footsteps of his father, Jim, who members probably knew very well over his many years with the Cooperative.

John and his dog, Jess, a Brittany, reside in Anamosa. John's hobbies include camping and hunting. He is a member of the Izaak Walton League and is currently Vice President of Twin Rivers Pheasants Forever.



**Chuck Neuhaus**

Safety Director and Meter Technician, Chuck Neuhaus, is a 26 year employee of MVEC. Chuck's duties include all aspects of safety within the Cooperative including training and inspections. Additional duties include reading and testing the variety of meters in use.

Chuck and his wife Mary live in Farley with their 13-year old daughter Beth and 10-year old daughter Anna. Chuck's hobbies include family camping trips and gardening.

An active member of the Farley community, Chuck serves on the Planning and Zoning Board, is a member of St. Joseph's Parish Council and an active Legion Post member.



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**MVEC 2003 REBATE PROGRAM**

EQUIPMENT/INSTALLATION	REBATE	SPECIFICATIONS/REGULATIONS
Residential Geothermal Heat Pump (New)	Closed Loop \$400/Ton Open Loop \$250/Ton	Maximum \$6000; Must be ARI Listed; Sized to allow compressor to supply at least 85% of heating requirements at design heat loss conditions without exceeding 200% of cooling load
Geothermal Replacement Units Only	\$150/Ton	Energy Star Only; Minimum 13 SEER Rating; ARI Listed
Air Source Heat Pump	\$100/Ton	Electric Resistance or Geothermal
Compressor Change-Out Geothermal/Air-Source (Replacement)	Metering Equipment	All appliances/equipment must be Energy Star Rated
Heat Plus Program	\$250	Air Filtration/Radon/Heat Recovery
All Star Home Program	\$75	Minimum efficiency rating of 13 SEER; Subject to control agreement; Limit 2 per household
Indoor Air Quality	\$200	Energy factor of .90 or above; Subject to control agreement
Central Air Conditioner	\$50	Must be Energy Star rated
<b>Electric Water Heaters:</b>	\$25	Home must have electric water heater to qualify for Dishwasher or Washing Machine rebate
Electric Water Heater (Premium Quality; 50 Gallon)	\$300	Contact office for complete details; Pre-approval over \$2,000 or 500 units
Electric Water Heater (Premium Quality; 80 Gallon)	\$250	Contact office for complete details; Pre-approval over \$300 or 25 units
Electric Heat Pump Water Heater (50 Gallon)	Variable	Up to 200 hp; contact office for complete details; Pre-approval over \$1,000 or 20 units.
<b>Energy Star Appliances:</b>	Variable	
Refrigerator	\$50	
Dishwasher	\$25	
Washing Machine	\$75	
Room Air Conditioner	\$25	
Energy Efficient Lighting (Compact Fluorescent)	Variable	
Outdoor Lighting (Dusk to Dawn)	Variable	
Dairy –Milk Pre-Cooler	\$3/Cow	
Energy Efficient Premium Motors	Variable	

- Request rebate application form from office and return with copy of sales receipt. (Forms may also be downloaded from [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop). Click on "Info Center")
- Rebate shall not exceed purchase price
- Commercial Rebates available, contact office for details
- Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative reserves the right to discontinue the Rebate Program at any time. No rebates will be paid for a temporary or seasonal application.

# AUTOMATED BILL PAYMENT PLAN AVAILABLE

Call the Member Support Department to request a sign-up form or email your request to [billing@mvec.com](mailto:billing@mvec.com). Once you are signed up, you can call in your meter reading 24 hours a day at 800-927-6068 or email it to the above address.



*Visit our Web Site*

at [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop) or  
Email direct to the following departments:

- Billing questions: [billing@mvec.com](mailto:billing@mvec.com)
- Product or service questions: [memberservice@mvec.com](mailto:memberservice@mvec.com)
- Maintenance issues: [maintenance@mvec.com](mailto:maintenance@mvec.com)



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## *Watts Current...*

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109 North Huber Street  
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319-462-3541 or 800-927-6068

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday thru Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Web Site: [www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop)  
e-mail: [mvec@mvec.com](mailto:mvec@mvec.com)

## *After Hours Call Center*

800-582-8998

After hours you may also call the service person in your area to report outages or trouble on the line.

Anamosa, Dallas Paustian.....	319-462-4848
Cascade, Pete Boffeli .....	563-852-3180
Dubuque, Rick Olsem.....	563-582-3668
Farley, Jim Lehman.....	563-744-3005
LaMotte, Vernon Konrardy.....	563-773-2309
Manchester, Dan Petersen.....	563-927-6491
Maquoketa, Jerry Streeper.....	563-652-5014

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