

ElectricEye

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative

July 2024

MVEC's member satisfaction is strong

CEO Update from Marvin Denzer

Thank you for recognizing our hard work!

We all have expectations about something. I bet everyone reading this article has different expectations for their family, work, health, schooling, customer service and much, much more.



At Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative, **our vision is to be a trusted energy partner loyal to the community — now and for future generations.**

Did you know MVEC is dedicated to putting members first? Our team includes 100 team members across various departments, all working together with this vision in mind. While not all of us directly answer phones as frontline member service representatives, everyone at the co-op contributes to member service. Whether climbing a pole to restore power, running a calculator to create budgets that use our members' money wisely, or visiting homes and businesses to craft a personalized energy plan, we all work together with our membership in mind.

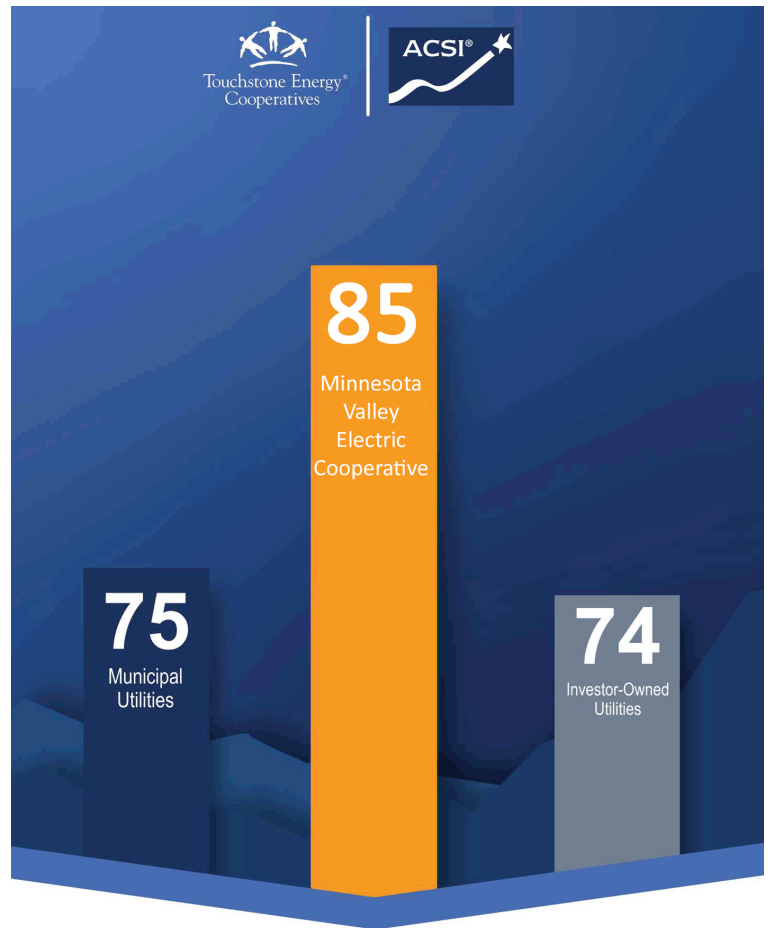
At MVEC you are not a customer, you are more than that — you are a member-owner of the cooperative, and that's the Cooperative Difference.

Because of our business philosophy, member-owners are first, and they can trust their electric cooperative. As a member-owned, member-governed cooperative, decisions about rates, bylaws, services, and much more are approved by our MVEC Board of Directors, who are also members of the cooperative.

In Quarter 1 this year, MVEC received an ACSI® score of 85, on a 100-point scale.¹

MVEC's score is higher when compared to publicly measured investor-owned and municipal utility scores reported in the syndicated 2024 ACSI Energy Utility Study and places MVEC seven points higher than the average cooperative utility score of 78, 10 points higher than the average municipal utility score of 75, as

¹Compared to publicly measured energy utilities in the ACSI® survey of customers rating their own energy utility. Results based on data provided by MVEC, collected over a one-week span in March 2024. ACSI did not regulate the survey administration or sample size. ACSI and its logo are registered trademarks of the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. For more about the ACSI, visit www.theacsi.org.



well as 11 points higher than the investor-owned utilities score of 74, per the industry ratings.

Our true priority remains in our mission statement: **creating exceptional member experiences while safely providing reliable energy at cost.** We thank YOU, our Member-Owners, for our ACSI score. We appreciate your trust and look forward to continuing to earn your satisfaction every day.

Thank you for being a valued member of the MVEC family!

Marvin

Additional resources and board meeting highlights available 24/7 at

www.mvec.net



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MVEC

MINNESOTA VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

MVEC begins overhaul of Prior Lake Substation

Nearly 50 years of powering Prior Lake was brought down in three days this month, as MVEC crews began work to replace and upgrade MVEC substation Numbers 8 and 88.

In one of the largest single projects in the co-op's 87-year history, MVEC is starting new with its Prior Lake Substation, among the busiest subs on its lines.

Located at the intersection of CR 42 and State Hwy 13, the Prior Lake facility feeds a large commercial and residential membership, with more than 6,200 meters and 24 megawatts. But the sub is aging. It was built in 1968 as MVEC's eighth substation. An addition to the south side was built in 1986.

While improvements have been made in its 56 years, the substation is now getting a major facelift.

The most obvious change will be its new building. An 80-foot "sub shack" will enclose the entire switchgear system, eliminating outdoor interference at the Prior Lake Substation. Enclosing equipment also provides a safer environment for MVEC linemen, substation technicians, and the public when improvements or outage work is needed.

The project will:

- Increase power reliability and system strength

- Prep the substation for future growth and needs
- Retire aging equipment

While this is a major infrastructure project for MVEC, members powered by the Prior Lake Substation will be temporarily switched to a nearby substation. MVEC's electrical grid gives us the ability to provide backup power from adjacent substations during construction, avoiding any power interruptions.

With deconstruction of the substation completed, MVEC crews will place equipment and ready the substation through July. Delivery of the new sub shack is set for August. Crews will then begin testing for re-energizing this fall.



Over the course of a week, MVEC crews deconstructed the Prior Lake Substation. This included working with Great River Energy crews to de-energize and take down the high-side structure, as well as crane out the on-site building — which will be used at another MVEC substation.



A member's journey to a greener home

Through EnergyWise programs and the SmartHub portal, MVEC members can find all sorts of information regarding their energy use.

But few take advantage of these tools quite like member Paul Howe. A Prior Lake resident and MVEC member for 23 years, Howe knows the ins and outs of his entire system. This includes EnergyWise programs, a solar array and a brand new Air Source Heat Pump, all of which he monitors through his SmartHub account.

"My wife and I are both data nerds, and we both have IT

backgrounds," said Howe. "We started tracking utility costs when we moved into our new home. We have a spreadsheet for gas and electrical going back to May 2001."

Embracing Solar Power

While Howe kept track of his electrical usage through the years, it was his move to solar that pushed him to start embracing savings.

Howe's ground-mount solar array is outfitted with 42 panels on three strings, generating 11.4 kilowatts at its peak.

Howe worked with an MVEC



MVEC member Paul Howe shows his solar array to Energy and Program/Product Development Specialist Michael Hinde during a recent home visit.

engineer throughout the solar process, where he discovered the co-op's net metering program. This is the process in which members with solar and MVEC compensate each other based on amount of energy sold and used.



"We oversized our solar panels and, when combined with net metering, resulted in negative electric bills," said Howe.

Plunging into heat pumps

Because the Howes were saving money through solar credits, Paul started looking at heat pumps to replace their existing HVAC system.

The efficiency of heat pumps was a large draw for Paul, but enlisting MVEC's programs made it an obvious choice.

Working with the co-op was easy. The load management program provides a substantial discount and we found that the variable output when controlled means that room temps are actually more consistent.

Your Turn to Take the Leap

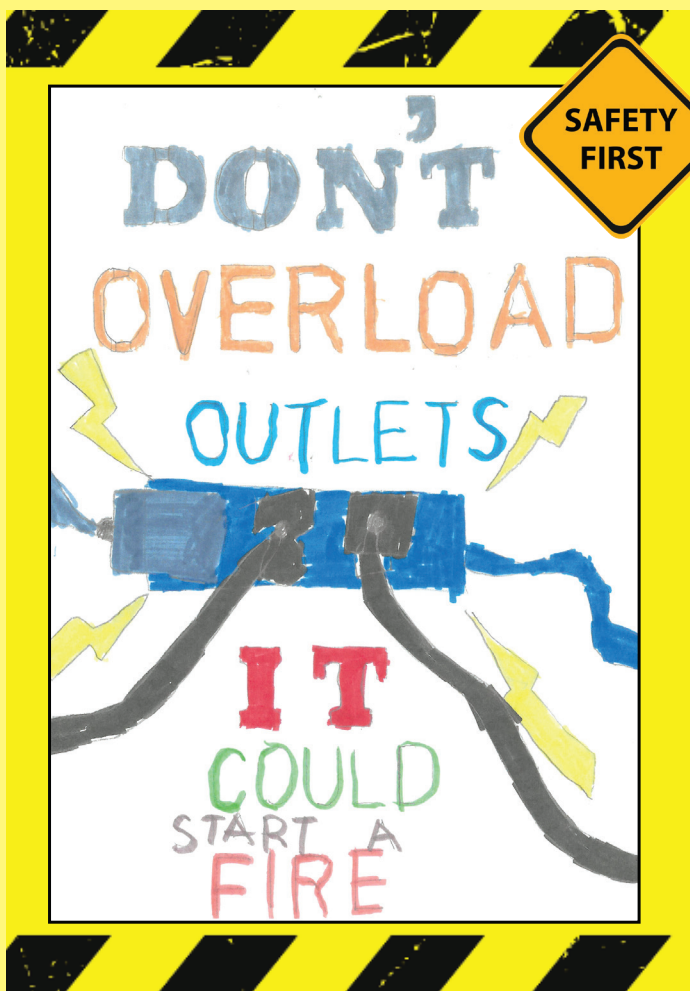
Howe's journey is a testament to the benefits of leveraging modern technology and cooperative support to create a more efficient and sustainable household through EnergyWise and SmartHub programs.

Whether you're a tech enthusiast like Paul or simply looking to save on your energy bills, MVEC offers a range of tools and programs to help you achieve your goals. Start your own journey today and discover how at www.mvec.net/residential-programs/.

"All in all, the new heat pump saved 40 percent on our heating bills year-over-year compared to our old furnace."

-Paul Howe

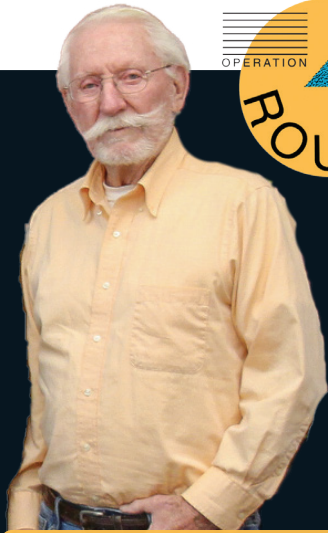
Electric Safety poster contest winner!



Safety is not just a word; it's a way of life here at MVEC. In our ongoing commitment to fostering safety awareness, we asked some of our youngest members to come up with new artwork for the co-op by creating safety posters for us to share.

This month we're featuring 11-year-old Logan's safety message for members plugging in too many fans during the summer heat.

Operation RoundUp seeks board trustee replacement



Dick Peterson of Belle Plaine has announced his retirement from MVEC's Operation RoundUp Trust Board after 17 years of service to local communities.

With nearly two decades of Operation RoundUp experience under his belt, MVEC member Dick Peterson has decided to hang it up on the co-op's charitable trust board.

"Seventeen years is long enough," said Peterson. "As a Senior citizen, it is time to let younger members of MVEC serve the community. Serving on ORU has been a rewarding experience. The Trust Board has done a wonderful job in using ORU funds with care and dedication to the purpose."

Through his time with the ORU board, Peterson helped guide the organization past several donation milestones, which now includes \$2.5 million in donated grants.

Seeking a new district 2 trustee
If you are interested in giving back to the cooperative community by volunteering

your time to serve on the Operation RoundUp Trustee board, the Trustee Board has an opening in District 2, which includes portions of Carver, Scott, and Sibley counties.

Preference will be given to those who apply by Aug. 15. This nine-person group of MVEC members helps research and decide how to distribute grant money. You must be able to attend one evening meeting per quarter (usually the third Monday of February, May, August, and November) and have time to research three or four grant requests before each meeting.

Those interested may apply at
www.mvec.net/operation-round-up/.

THREE LEVELS OF TRANSMISSION

BIG, STRONG,
SERVES THE MARKET

REGIONAL TRANSMISSION

Transports bulk electricity across the region at high voltages. Are usually supported on tall metal towers. Often 230-kV and up.



MEDIUM SIZED,
CONNECTS COMMUNITIES

LOCAL TRANSMISSION

Transmission lines that deliver electricity to the communities we serve. Generally supported by wooden poles. Often 41.6 to 115-kV.



SMALLER, CONNECTS HOMES,
FARMS AND BUSINESSES

DISTRIBUTION

Delivers lower-voltage electricity to homes, farms and businesses over a shorter distance. Generally supported by wooden poles. In certain situations, distribution lines are buried underground. Often 35-kV and under.



MVEC is a
distribution
cooperative.

Beyond the plug: The local grid

We live in an increasingly power-dependent world. Every day, we rely on electricity in a variety of ways to help us run our lives. It gives us light, keeps our refrigerator running and charges our mobile devices.

At a basic level, the electric grid is a system of interconnected wires connecting the places where energy is produced to where it is used. Great River Energy and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, the wholesale power suppliers to MVEC generate electricity and use the grid to move it to ensure reliable electric service as well as quick response times when there is an issue on the electric system.

The local grid delivers electricity from distribution substations – MVEC has 30 – to members at the end of the line like you. At substations, higher voltages are “stepped down” to lower, more usable levels. Then it is sent along smaller distribution lines to be delivered safely to neighborhoods and farms.

In residential areas, pad-mounted transformers — the big green boxes sitting on the ground in the corner of some properties — make the power safe to use. That energy then runs along lines to power homes, schools, farms and businesses.

The local grid is one important key to helping deliver the power we rely on every day.

Part one of a three-part series called “Beyond the plug”

The Electric Eye is the official publication of
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MVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer

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