

# ElectricEye

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative

January 2025

## Top 10 New Year's Resolutions for 2025

CEO's Corner Marvin Denzer



Before we look at the top 10 resolutions, I'm pleased to share good news from MVEC: we anticipate no changes to 2025 electric rates. Our mission always remains the same: to create exceptional member experiences, while safely providing reliable energy at cost.

At MVEC, we are committed to helping our valued member-owners take charge of your home or business energy use. Here are our Top 10 Resolutions to help you start the year off right:

- 1. Make time for what matters most** – Spend quality time with your family and friends. As your local cooperative, we're here to power the moments that matter most.
- 2. Mark your calendar for April 8, 2025** – Join us for the MVEC Annual Meeting! It's a great chance to connect, learn about your cooperative, elect your Board of Directors, congratulate high school scholarship winners, and possibly win a bill credit.
- 3. Save money** – Visit [www.mvec.net/residential-programs](http://www.mvec.net/residential-programs) and explore our Energy Wise programs. Are you interested in managing energy use for heating, cooling, electric water heating, and electric vehicle charging costs? Choose from reduced rates or bill credit programs. Rebates are also available for many energy-efficient appliances.
- 4. Do you participate in a free payment program?** If not, sign up for one of MVEC's convenient and secure bill payment programs to simplify, organize, and automate your payments.
- 5. Create a SmartHub Account** – Manage your electric account online or with MVEC's app. Make

payments, check electric usage, receive email or text alerts, and more.

- 6. Try outage texting** – Does MVEC have your mobile phone number? Go to SmartHub, make sure your phone number is correct, and enable notifications. Then use 855-963-3830 to text OUTAGE or STATUS to stay updated if you experience a service interruption.
- 7. Visit [www.mvec.net](http://www.mvec.net)** – Check out cash back rebates, service location applications, account management, and more!
- 8. Receive energy advice** – Schedule a visit with an MVEC energy expert to identify even more ways to save on your energy use. Our team is here to help residential and business members maximize efficiency.
- 9. Make your home more efficient** – Program your thermostat, change your furnace filter monthly and watch those energy savings add up. Small changes can make a big impact on your utility bills. We have more ideas at: [www.mvec.net/energy-tips](http://www.mvec.net/energy-tips)
- 10. Charge your EV for less** – If you drive an electric vehicle, consider joining MVEC's Energy Wise program to charge your EV and save money every month. Learn more at [www.mvec.net/electric-vehicle-program](http://www.mvec.net/electric-vehicle-program)

Wishing you and your families all the best in 2025!

Marvin

Have you  
ever attended?

### Resolution No. 2:

#### Attend Annual Meeting

Mark your calendar for MVEC's 88th Annual Meeting at 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 8. Join us at Jordan High School to learn more about your cooperative and hear election results firsthand.

January is the final month to apply for MVEC's Board of Directors. The deadline for the filing period is Tuesday, Jan. 28.

Currently, there are three seats open for election, which are held by:

- **Deb Erickson of Savage (District I)**
- **Gary Haberman of Chanhassen (District II)**
- **Jim Connelly of St. Thomas (District III)**

Interested candidates can call 952.492.8242 or email [elections@mvec.net](mailto:elections@mvec.net) before Jan. 28, 2025.

Additional resources and board meeting highlights available 24/7 at [www.mvec.net](http://www.mvec.net)



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# MVEC

MINNESOTA VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Did you know:

## MVEC has an Outage Map?

MVEC's outage map is a great tool to keep you informed. The user-friendly map provides real-time updates to help you understand the scope of outages in your area and when power is expected to be restored.

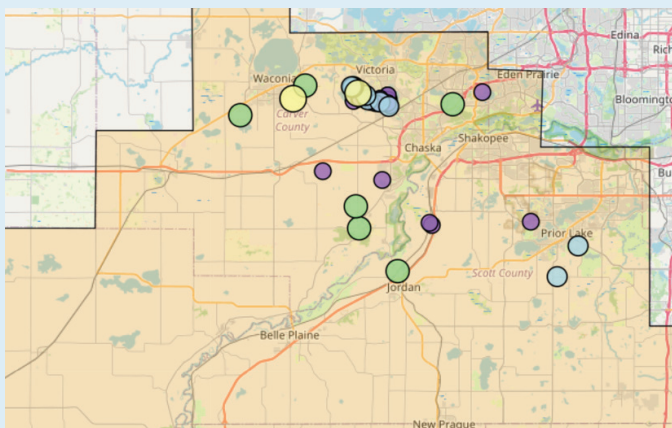
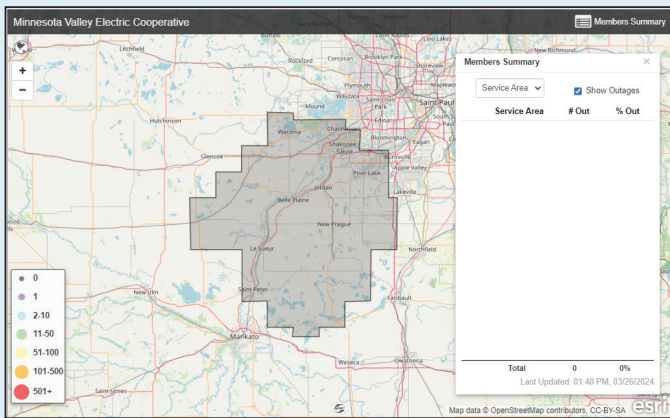
### MVEC's Outage Map displays:

- **Current Outages:** Areas experiencing power loss, shown as highlighted circles.
- **Affected Members:** The number of households or businesses without power in each area.
- **Status Updates:** Displayed above the map is further information on the cause of the outage, repair progress, and estimated restoration times.

**Understand Symbols:** Click on a dot for expanded outage information.

**Report Issues:** If your outage isn't displayed or you see downed lines, report it immediately to MVEC by calling 952-492-8255 or texting OUTAGE to 855-963-3830. (must have a SmartHub account to use)

Outage map: [www.mvec.net/outage](http://www.mvec.net/outage).



## We Deliver More

### MVEC's Commitment to Excellence in 2025

At MVEC, we're stepping into 2025 with a refreshed commitment to demonstrate "We Deliver More." This simple phrase is packed with purpose—it's a testament to our commitment to go above and beyond for our member-owners, our MVEC team, and the communities we call home.

Delivering more isn't just about keeping the lights on. It's about sparking innovation, empowering connection, fostering teamwork, and ensuring safety—all cornerstones of our co-op values. Whether bringing cutting-edge energy solutions, backing local initiatives, or enhancing your everyday experience, we're focused on exceeding expectations and lighting the way forward.

As a member-driven cooperative, you are the heartbeat of everything we do. "We Deliver More" is our pledge to bring you greater value, steadfast service, and a brighter, more resilient future.

Along with our Annual Meeting in April, watch for us at community events, on our social media channels, and in our monthly newsletter as we work together to build stronger communities, explore new possibilities, and make 2025 a year to remember. Because at MVEC, we're always here to deliver more for you.





# Thin ice and no power? MVEC linemen to the rescue

When Prior Lake's Twin Isle lost power recently, MVEC linemen needed unconventional methods to reach and restore the upper-lake's island.

For many linemen, one of the most rewarding parts of the job is the chance to work outdoors and tackle a new challenge every day. For seven MVEC linemen, a frigid December trip to Prior Lake's Twin Isle delivered exactly that — a new challenge.

## The Icy Dilemma

When residents of the Upper Prior Lake Island lost power in early December, the linemen faced a problem with no easy solution. The ice covering the lake was in that tricky in-between state: too thin to drive on, too thick to boat through, and carrying heavy tools on foot across unstable ice was far too dangerous.

MVEC Crew Supervisor Mike Otteson knew they needed a creative solution, so he called in a local expert—Jim Bendzick, an MVEC member and owner of a one-of-a-kind machine: the SHERP.

## A SHERP?

The SHERP is a Ukrainian-made all-terrain vehicle with enormous tires that can float, paddle through water, and even roll over obstacles if need be. It's also light enough to handle thin ice without crashing through. It's the Swiss Army knife of vehicles, and it was perfect for this job.

Armed with tools, cable, and climbing gear, linemen loaded up the SHERP and set off across the ice — and to their surprise, without issue. The SHERP handled the icy



New Prague's Jim Bendzick loaded up several MVEC linemen in his SHERP and crossed over thin ice on Prior Lake in order to help the co-op restore power to members on Twin Isle, an island on Upper Prior.

conditions with ease. According to Bendzick, its massive tires distribute the weight evenly and allow the SHERP to drive lighter on the ice.

Once on the island, the real work began. A pair of linemen identified the issue as a broken pole. Without quick access to a replacement pole, the linemen had to get creative, and find a solution to span the damaged area. While this job would take some time, Bendzick went and picked up some relief — additional linemen waiting on shore.

Once power was restored, Bendzick made several trips in to accommodate the linemen, eventually breaking through the ice near the landing, which proved no issue for the massive amphibious machine.



## Off-Roading

The SHERP is the latest in a long line of unique tools linemen use to access tough-to-reach lines and was a great solution to the normal summer boat ride to Twin Isle. Another helpful piece of equipment for dealing with difficult terrain was added to MVEC's arsenal in late 2023 when MVEC purchased a backyard bucket machine. The track-mount bucket is slim enough to get through most fences and helps crews in hard-to-reach urban areas.



## Pole Down? Consider it Downed & Dangerous

High winds and heavy snowfalls mean the added potential for downed power lines. Call our 24-hour outage line at 800.282.6832 to report any downed lines.

If you see a downed power line, always assume it is energized and dangerous. Avoid going near it or anything in contact with the power line.



Downed power lines can energize the ground up to **35 ft.** away – so keep your distance.



Never drive over a downed line or through water that is touching the line.



Never try to move a downed power line, even if you think the line is deenergized or if you're using a non-conductive item – this will not prevent injury or death!

## “Truly one of the most life changing experiences”

Attention high school sophomores or juniors:

Win an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. in June!



MVEC will sponsor one high school student from our service area to participate in the annual Rural Electric Youth Tour June 16-21 in Washington, D.C. The selected student will visit with congressional representatives, tour famous monuments and

museums, and make memories and friends that will last a lifetime.

Rural electric cooperatives across the nation sponsor nearly 1,800 students to participate in the annual Youth Tour to learn about how government works and about the electric cooperative business model.



### APPLY TODAY!

This contest is open to any current high school sophomore or junior whose family is a member of Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative. The deadline to apply is Friday, March 14. One MVEC alternate will be selected and either receive a \$200 cash prize or attend the Youth Tour if the winner is unexpectedly unable to attend. Students can apply at [www.mvec.net/youth-tour/](http://www.mvec.net/youth-tour/)

## Time is running out: Apply for SCHOLARSHIP opportunities today

**\$1,500 High School Scholarships** Five recipients from each of MVEC's three districts are randomly selected. Recipients must be a graduating high school senior whose parents/legal guardians are active members of MVEC.

**Five at-large scholarships** will be available in a random drawing for students attending MVEC's Annual Meeting with a parent.

**The \$1,000 Basin Scholarship** from our wholesale power provider is also available for high school seniors and college undergraduates. The recipient is chosen by Basin Electric.

*Deadline to apply is February 18, 2025.*

### See you on stage

Winners will be recognized at MVEC's 88th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at Jordan High School.

Further details and applications can be found on our website at: [www.mvec.net/high-school-scholarships/](http://www.mvec.net/high-school-scholarships/)

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