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## Reminders

**Members who drop off payments to MVEC after hours, please note:** Our dropbox is moving and will be incorporated into the co-op's front door. Signs will direct you to the new dropbox.

**Lower seasonal rates** go into effect Oct. 1. Residential general service electric rates are higher during the summer months when greater demand levels for air conditioning push up costs for generating electricity. Winter general service electric rates are billed October-May at 11.3¢/kWh, compared to the rate of 12.2¢/kWh the rest of the year.

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

# ElectricEye

September 2017

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative

## Sign up and forget about it Energy Wise programs make saving easy

"We did it from the get-go," says Kevin Lind. When he and his wife Cindy (a longtime Jordan Elementary first grade teacher) built their two-story home just north of Lydia 28 years ago, signing up for Energy Wise programs was a given.

"I just believe in the off-peak programs. Even on the hottest days when it's cycled, you don't notice a difference," he said. "But every month I see the savings on the bill."

**By letting MVEC occasionally manage their water heater and air conditioning system, the Linds save \$20 a month on water heating and around \$27 a month on air conditioning.**

That's the beauty of Energy Wise, once you sign up, the load management program does the saving for you without a noticeable change to your household's comfort level.

As a 28-year member, Lind said he also appreciates the cooperative benefit of getting yearly credits applied back to his account thanks to Capital Credits and Operation Round Up is a great program that gives back to the community.



Kevin Lind hopes his company's latest product, lightweight metal quilt squares, leads to a trail of barn quilts around Scott County.

### From ledgers to rivets

How does a guy go from managing financial services at GE Capital to creating replicas of grain storage bins, water towers and light houses?

For Lind, retirement seven years ago turned out to be for the birds. "I was bored and needed something to do – something far different from Corporate America," said Lind.

**See Energy Wise on page 2**

## Cold weather rule in effect Oct. 15 - April 15

Members who fall behind on utility bills can avoid disconnection or be eligible for reconnection between Oct. 15 and April 15 by following the steps outlined in Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule.

Under the Cold Weather Rule, disconnection is prohibited only when it affects the primary heat source for the household and as long as these three conditions are met:

1. Members must fill out a form declaring an inability to pay.
2. Household income must meet the state guidelines used to determine fuel assistance eligibility.
3. The member and MVEC must have a mutually-agreed upon payment arrangement in place.

**MVEC**  
Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



# ORU provides funds for local organizations

With Operation Round Up (ORU), MVEC members can round up their monthly electric bills to the next whole dollar amount. The extra cents (averaging \$6 a year) from all participating members are combined and put into a special trust fund used to assist non-profit groups throughout MVEC's service area.

## 3rd Quarter ORU recipients include:

- Angel Foundation of Mendota Heights - \$2,000 for assistance to patients
- Belle Plaine Food Shelf - \$500 for food
- Green Isle Lions - \$2,000 for school supplies and community meal
- Hamburg Fire Department - \$1,500 for nozzles and hoses
- Heidelberg Athletics - \$1,500 for restroom updates
- Hope United Grief Group of Le Center - \$2,000 for grief seminar
- LeCenter Ambulance - \$2,000 for tourniquet kits
- Le Sueur Backpack Nutrition - \$500 for food
- New Options of Shakopee - \$598 for employment room
- New Prague Super Mileage Club - \$1,000 for club support
- Oak Crest Elementary of Belle Plaine - \$1,000 for kindness retreat
- P.L.A.Y. of Prior Lake - \$2,398 for defibrillator devices
- P.R.O.P. of Chanhassen - \$1,000 for food shelf delivery van
- RELATE of Minnetonka - \$1,500 for teen drug intervention
- Scott Carver CAP Agency - \$2,500 for crisis nursery training
- Scott County Historical Society - \$500 for archival tools
- Scott County SWCD - \$1,000 for outdoor education supplies
- Shakopee Area Crime Prevention - \$3,000 for recovering addict program
- Sibley County FoodShare - \$500 for food
- TreeHouse of Chaska - \$2,500 for transportation



**TOTAL THIRD QUARTER DISTRIBUTION: \$29,996**

**Since 1995, MVEC members have made a difference in local communities to the tune of \$1,660,157.20**



**New Prague Area School Nurses are ready for back to school and well-prepared with a new AED unit, thanks to generous Operation Round Up participants. The group received a \$2,100 donation last quarter to purchase the life-saving defibrillator device.**

**Please consider participating! It's easy. To add your monthly cents to the program, sign up online at [www.mvec.net/our-community](http://www.mvec.net/our-community)**

## Energy Wise continued from page 1

He found it working with his creative skills and seeking advice from skilled tradesmen.

Once he refined his work, Lind formed Cornstalk, LCC, and sells his items primarily to ag-related businesses to use as customer giveaways. Millions of TV viewers saw his unusual wood duck houses shaped like grain bins on the Ryder Cup course at Hazeltine in Chaska last summer.

Recently, Cornstalk entered into manufacturing Barn Quilts. The quilts come in three sizes 24, 36 and 48 inch with the possibility of combining multiple squares into even larger quilts. "They are unique in many ways," said Lind. "You can mount to a flat or round surface of a grain bin. They are lightweight and easy to hang, with brilliant colors that don't fade. And at a lower cost over traditional hand painted products." Customers can design their own quilts or pick from those shown on [www.cornstalkllc.com](http://www.cornstalkllc.com).

Lind says his clients enjoy his handmade creations as gifts for their clients. "Where else can you buy something with your company name that sits on a desk or is out feeding birds 24/7 and doesn't end up at Goodwill?"



**Lind displays some of his handcrafted products, including a solar powered Duluth Harbor Lighthouse, grain bin saving banks, water tower bird feeder and grain bin bird feeder. Items can be personalized and can be found at [www.cornstalkllc.com](http://www.cornstalkllc.com).**

**Lind will offer discounts to MVEC members on items for pick up.**

# Area builders feature Energy Wise homes

Do you enjoy checking out the annual Twin Cities Parade of Homes? Be sure to visit these houses within our service area, which feature energy-efficient appliances, electric water heaters, WiFi thermostats, LED lighting, efficient furnace motors and off-peak cooling systems.

MVEC energy specialist Michael Hinde works

with many area builders in implementing energy-saving features in their homes and incorporating MVEC's Energy Wise programs, so members can take advantage of additional savings.

Homes are open noon to 6 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays in the 2017 Parade of Homes, which runs September 9 - October 1.



#132

**K Michael Homes**  
9704 Oxford Lane, Elko



#134

**K A Witt Construction**  
604 Eastland Ave SE, New Prague



#138

**Eternity Homes**  
3188 Griggs St, Prior Lake



#140

**Wensmann Custom Homes**  
3612 Cove Point Circle, Prior Lake



#141

**Cuddigan Custom Homes**  
3399 Wilds Ridge NW, Prior Lake



#148

**Ron Clark Construction**  
8259 133rd St, Savage



#151

**Key Land Homes**  
15058 Idaho Ct, Savage



#152

**JMS Custom Homes**  
6717 151st St, Savage



#182

**Knoblauch Builders, LLC**  
280 Preserve Ct, Chanhassen



#192

**Country Joe Homes**  
2455 Woods Dr., Victoria



#195

**Kerber Family Homes**  
2380 Woods Dr, Victoria



#196

**Greenwood Design Build**  
2388 Woods Dr, Victoria

## Member forum to focus on democratic control statute

During the 2017 session, the Minnesota Legislature passed and Governor Dayton signed a provision that reduces duplicated regulation over electric cooperatives. This local democracy legislation ensures decisions that impact members of Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative are made by your fellow co-op members who serve on MVEC's Board of Directors.

The legislation impacts how decisions are made about distributed generation (DG). DG is when a member installs equipment to generate electricity at their home, business, or other privately-owned

property that is to be connected to the electric grid.

Currently, if there are disputes about issues related to DG, a member may take their concern to the Minnesota Public Utility Commission in St. Paul to have their issue resolved.

Adoption of this statutory authority would clarify that the MVEC Board of Directors are the regulatory body responsible for hearing such disputes.

MVEC is considering whether to adopt authority to implement Minnesota Statute 216B.164. Draft rules will be available at [www.mvec.net](http://www.mvec.net) after Sept. 25.

**What:** MVEC will hold a member forum to address adoption of Minnesota Statute 216B.164

**When:** 8:30 a.m. Monday, Oct. 30, 2017.

**Where:** MVEC Headquarters, 125 Minnesota Valley Electric Drive, Jordan.

**Why:** Members who are interested in learning how this legislation affects distributed generation are encouraged to attend. Members will have the opportunity to provide feedback.

**What else:** Submit questions or concerns to [ryanh@mvec.net](mailto:ryanh@mvec.net) or mail to MVEC, attn: Ryan Hentges, 125 Minnesota Valley Electric Drive, Jordan, MN 55352.

RSVP by Oct. 20 to [ryanh@mvec.net](mailto:ryanh@mvec.net) or 952.492.8202.

# September 17-23 is National Farm Safety Week

## Always look up and be aware of overhead lines

Those who live on a farm know that not only is it hard work, but it can be dangerous, too. Each year, farmers are electrocuted when large farm machinery comes into contact with overhead power lines.

Often, the situation occurs because a newer, bigger piece of equipment no longer clears a line the way a smaller one did. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year.

At least 10 feet is the recommended distance to stay away from power lines. The following tips will help keep farm equipment operators safe:

- ◆ Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles.
- ◆ Have ample clearance when moving large machinery such as combines, grain augers, pickers, bailers, and front-end loaders.
- ◆ Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- ◆ Store large equipment properly if near or under power lines. When planning new construction, factor in existing power lines.
- ◆ Be extra careful when working around trees and brush; they often make it difficult to see power lines.
- ◆ Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.
- ◆ Be careful not to raise other equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- ◆ Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!

It's very important that all farm workers and seasonal employees are informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.



# Farm Safety

## Look up for power lines

**BE AWARE.**  
Keep equipment  
clear of power  
lines and poles.



**KNOW WHAT TO DO** if you encounter a power line while operating farm machinery. It could save your life.

- **CALL FOR HELP** – Call 911 as soon as possible and keep the area clear until help arrives.
- **DRIVE TO SAFETY** – If you can do so without risking your machinery or damaging utility infrastructure, drive at least 40 feet away.
- **EMERGENCY EXIT** – If the vehicle is on fire or you must exit for other safety reasons, jump clear so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time, and land with feet together. Hop to safety in small steps to avoid electric shock by breaking the current's path.