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Watching out for you

Three quick tips to keep your personal info safe:

October is National Cyber-security Awareness Month. Technology breaches have become more commonplace. MVEC has data safeguards in place, and there are things you can do to protect your personal data.

- Keep your computer updated with the latest software and web browser. This ensures security patches block the latest security threats.
- Create a strong password and keep it private – it can take up to two centuries to crack a password consisting of 12 characters or more!
- Be on the lookout for emails, phone calls and other messages that try to get to secure data. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Additional resources
available 24/7 at
www.mvec.net

MVEC

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



October is National Co-op Month.

Electric co-ops are proud to power more than 20 million American homes, businesses, farms and schools in 48 states.



ElectricEye

October 2019

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative



CEO's Corner/Ryan Hentges

October brings to mind pumpkins, Halloween and beautiful fall foliage. But October is also notable as National Co-op Month, the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including MVEC, celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

In the 1930s, MVEC was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our communities. Cooperatives are still the builders of common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. MVEC's leadership team and employees live in local

communities. Our Board of Directors (who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op) live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our members have a valuable perspective. That's why we continually seek your input. Whether through your emails, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments and programs we offer.

We hope you will think of MVEC as more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports your community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from you, our members, about your priorities so that we can better serve you – because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.

Ryan Hentges

October is National Co-op Month

Cooperatives have a different sort of business model, operating by the **Seven Principles** that focus on member-based democracy, economic participation, and information, and concern for community and fellow co-ops.

We work with you to make your home (and our community) **energy efficient**

Energy efficiency is important for our local, national and global communities. There is a difference. Our **Energy Wise programs** help members save money on electric bills and energy and money on the cooperative's wholesale power bills. There are **no-cost and low-cost** heating, cooling and electric water heating. Our energy specialists work with you on **loans** and have a trusted network of HVAC and electrical contractors to get the job done. We promote **clean energy**. A recently-signed wind contract will move the co-op to its goal of **20 percent** **2020**, and members have the option to purchase additional Renewable Energy Certificates. The co-op purchased a Model 3 Tesla this year to gain **first-hand knowledge** of electric vehicles. Our vision is to be a **trusted energy partner, loyal to the community – now and for future generations**.

Everyone at the co-op is a **member service rep**, here to serve our members

When it comes to member service, where do we start? First of all, **Membership is Ownership** (Principle #3), which is returned to you in the form of **Capital Credits**. Since 1959, MVEC has been serving our members. When you call MVEC, **you speak to a live person** right away – you won't be routed through a team member to answer your call. Contacting us overnight? We have an automated email response. **We care about what you think**. We survey the membership to **learn about your preferences** and revise and improve processes. We send you monthly newsletters and provide important information at www.mvec.net, and we also keep you **updated and entertained** through social media. With SmartHub, MVEC provides you with tools to monitor usage, quickly pay your bills and more.

We take our **Annual Meeting** on the road to connect with our communities

Part of co-op membership is the ability to **elect fellow MVEC members to represent you** on your Board of Directors. This covers both Cooperative Principle #2 (Democratic Member Control) and Principle #4 (Autonomy and Independence). Each year, usually the first or second Tuesday evening in April, **members gather together** to hear about MVEC's financial health, the past year of accomplishments at the cooperative, as well as vote and **hear the results** of the annual board of director elections. From Le Center to Prior Lake, and New Prague to Chanhassen and other towns in between, **we've been bringing the Annual Meeting to you**. In 2020, make plans to join us Tuesday, April 7, in Arlington.

Speaking of **community**, we support local groups and causes

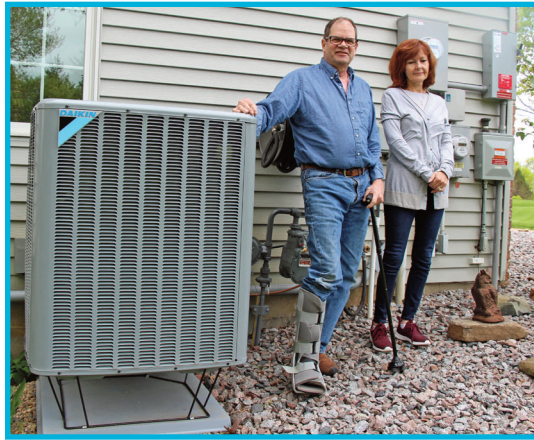
Whether it's coming to your **town celebration** parade with a bucket truck (and buckets full of support), or graduating high school seniors, MVEC is committed to **making our local communities a better place**. From dairy princesses to hometown sports, MVEC invests in community programs and encourages employees **volunteer and contribute** to their favorite charities and groups. **Many of you** have helped us reduce your electric bill through Operation Round Up as a way to contribute spare change, which



Month/It's all about community

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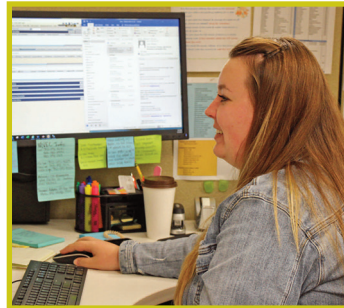


Members enjoy having energy-efficient options.



Energy specialists are here to work for you.

ership. You have a stake in the co-op (Cooperative
has returned **over \$24 million** to member-owners.
ugh a calling tree. Our receptionist will find the best
mail response to ensure nothing falls through the cracks.
ences and **listen to what you are saying** in order to
t bill messages. **Up-to-date information** is available 24/7
a. We protect your information with secure safeguards.
and report outages. **We are here for you.**



Assistance is a phone call away.



MVEC serves residential,
agricultural and
commercial members.

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The 2019 Annual Meeting was held in Le Center.



Nine members serve on your Board of Directors.

of candy) or awarding **\$1,000 scholarships** to
little brighter (besides keeping your lights on!)
events. Within the communities they live, our 90+
u **show your community support** by rounding up
ch is **collectively donated** to local organizations.
Commitment to Community is the
7th Cooperative Principle.



Photos from left:
Employees drive
vehicles and hand out
goodies in several
summer and holiday
parades, including
Jordan's Heimatfest.

Center: MVEC staff
man the phones at
Minnesota Public
TV's pledge drive.

Right: MVEC awarded
16 \$1,000 scholarships
to high school seniors
in 2019.

Hey kids! Color this page for a chance to win prizes

In honor of National Co-op Month, MVEC is holding a coloring contest for kids 12 and under!

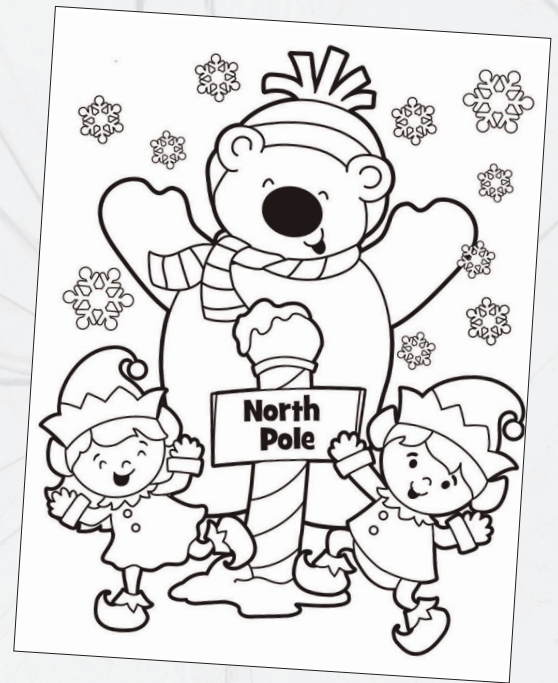


- Boys' first place prize: \$100 Target gift card
- Girls' first place prize: \$100 Target gift card
- 2 second place prizes: \$50 Target gift card
- 4 third place prizes: \$25 Target gift card

Go to www.mvec.net/coloring-contest, download and print out this sheet.

Color and return to MVEC by Nov. 15, 2019. Entries will be judged by MVEC staff on neatness and originality. Child must live in an MVEC member household to enter.

Winners will be notified by email, and the first place entries will be published in the December *Electric Eye* newsletter.



Keeping our members and employees safe is important to us.

MVEC linemen and staff conduct electrical safety demonstrations for school classes, summer safety camps and fire department open houses to teach good electrical safety habits and make our communities aware of the dangers of electrical equipment. Above, apprentice linemen Mavrick Nelson and Grant Kulzer make electric arcs and noisy pops through various safety scenarios at the Jordan Police Department's Kindergarten Safety Day.

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MVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer

