

YOU'RE INVITED!

Join us in person in Arlington 85th Annual Meeting is April 5

Learn more about how your cooperative works and your part in it by attending MVEC's 85th Annual Meeting 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 5, at the Arlington Community Center, 204 Shamrock Drive.

The hour-long business meeting will include the annual cooperative update from CEO Ryan Hentges. CFO Joanne Kolb will present a report outlining 2021 financials. There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the conclusion of the meeting.

All three districts have a seat open on the Board of Directors. In District I, candidates are incumbent Deb Erickson of Savage and Daniel Fleischhacker of Savage.

In District II and District III, incumbents Gary Haberman of Chanhassen and Jim Connelly of St. Thomas are unopposed.

Ballots for the District 1 race will be mailed to voting members' homes or businesses early March. Use the postage-paid envelope to mail ballots back to MVEC by Tuesday, April 5.

MVEC's 2022 scholarship winners and Youth Tour participant will also be introduced.



Here are the basics of how the board and co-op staff work together for you:

1. Member-owners elect board directors, and election results are announced at the annual meeting.
2. The CEO and executive team interpret the board's expectations and create a plan.
3. Staff develop and oversee programs to accomplish projects and tasks.
4. The CEO shares results with the board.
5. The board reflects on member needs and policies, making updates as needed.

2022 Director Election

Candidates for one 3-year term by district:

District I

- Deb Erickson, Savage (*incumbent*)
- Daniel Fleischhacker, Savage

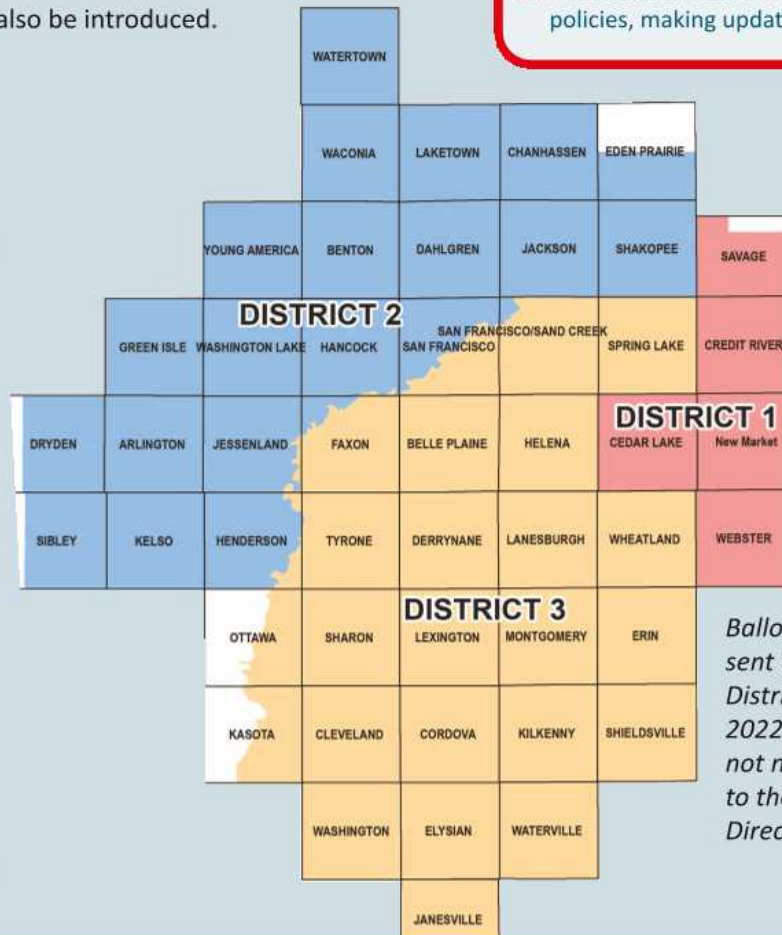
District II

- Gary Haberman, Chanhassen (*incumbent*)

District III

- Jim Connelly, St. Thomas (*incumbent*)

As of 1/25/2022 no other candidates had filed.



Due to the race involving two candidates in District 1, only members in this district will receive ballots.

Ballots will not be sent to members in Districts 2 and 3 in 2022 as balloting is not necessary due to the uncontested Director seats.

Additional resources and board meeting highlights available 24/7 at www.mvec.net



Inside this issue:

Board approves budget; rates remain stable/[page 2](#)

2022 construction work plan/[page 3](#)

Energy tips for working at home/[page 4](#)

Apply now for 2022 Youth Tour trip/[page 4](#)



MINNESOTA VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Board approves 2022 budget Good news - electric rates remain stable

At the end of December 2021, your Board of Directors approved the 2022 budget. The cooperative's budget provides the necessary investments for the coming year and forecasts the cost of the power we purchase on your behalf. We are happy to report the 2022 budget contains no rate increase. The last time our legacy general service rate increased was six years ago, in 2016.

The cooperative's budget is a balance between making the appropriate investments, while managing the cost of the electricity you use. Our budget seeks to align with our mission statement: to create exceptional member experiences, while safely providing reliable energy at cost.

Highlights of MVEC's 2022 budget include the following:

- **Investments in safety equipment and training** to ensure our team has the resources to work within a culture of safety. It also accounts for cyber-security infrastructure and the necessary staff and training to keep our grid and data secure.
- **Short-term and long-term grid investments** are included to provide members the reliability they've come to expect, while also making continuous improvements to reduce the number and duration of outages. These investments include significant expenditures on grid maintenance and construction, as well as automation and tree-trimming to reduce outages. On page 3, you'll see where 2022 construction expenses are allocated.

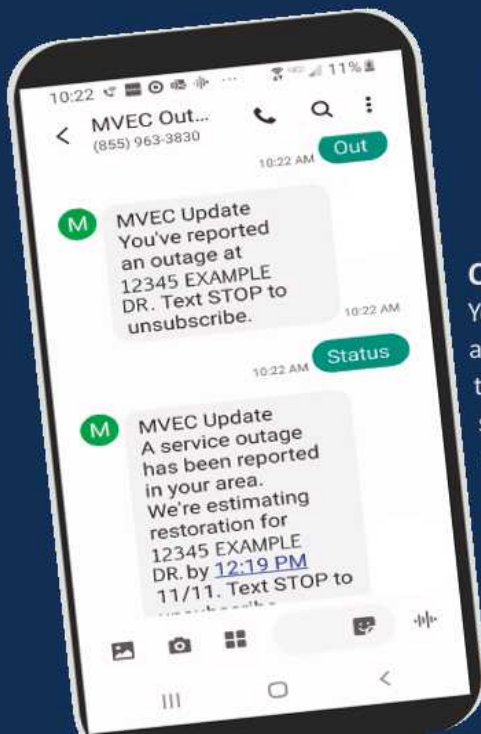
- **A forecast of costs for the power we purchase on your behalf.** Energy costs around the world increased significantly in 2021; however, MVEC's diversified power supply portfolio was able to absorb the impact without passing on an increase to your electric bill. The 2022 forecast assumes a similar dynamic. We are carefully watching domestic and global energy markets and making power supply decisions to effectively manage cost, risk, and sustainability.

- **Investments in staffing** to ensure we are able to carry out our mission and achieve the objectives mentioned above. MVEC's staff is focused on serving you, our members, and dedicated to understanding your needs and providing answers and solutions to your energy questions.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, all investments are made with the understanding that they can have impacts to our members' monthly bills. We understand you are managing your own budgets, either personal or business, and electric rates can have an impact on your budgets. We seek to make wise investments over time that deliver the quality and service you deserve, while maintaining the affordability you expect.

On behalf of the MVEC team, thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

Update your member account options



Membership means you have options when it comes to your MVEC account. Update your information or sign up for a new program using our convenient online forms.

Outage Texting

You can now report an outage and request status updates by text. You just need to make sure the phone number you have listed in your free SmartHub account is enabled to receive notifications.

Learn more at:
www.mvec.net/report-an-outage/

Find the form you need online!

For your convenience, most MVEC forms are available for electronic submission. Topics:

- ✓ Update Account Information
- ✓ Update Bank Information
- ✓ Sales Tax Exemption
- ✓ Energy Efficiency Rebates
- ✓ Request Capital Credit Senior Distribution

Sign up for:

- ✓ Green Choice Carbon-Friendly Options
- ✓ Automatic Bill Pay
- ✓ Recurring Credit Card
- ✓ Budget Billing
- ✓ Pay as you Go
- ✓ Operation Round Up
- ✓ and more!

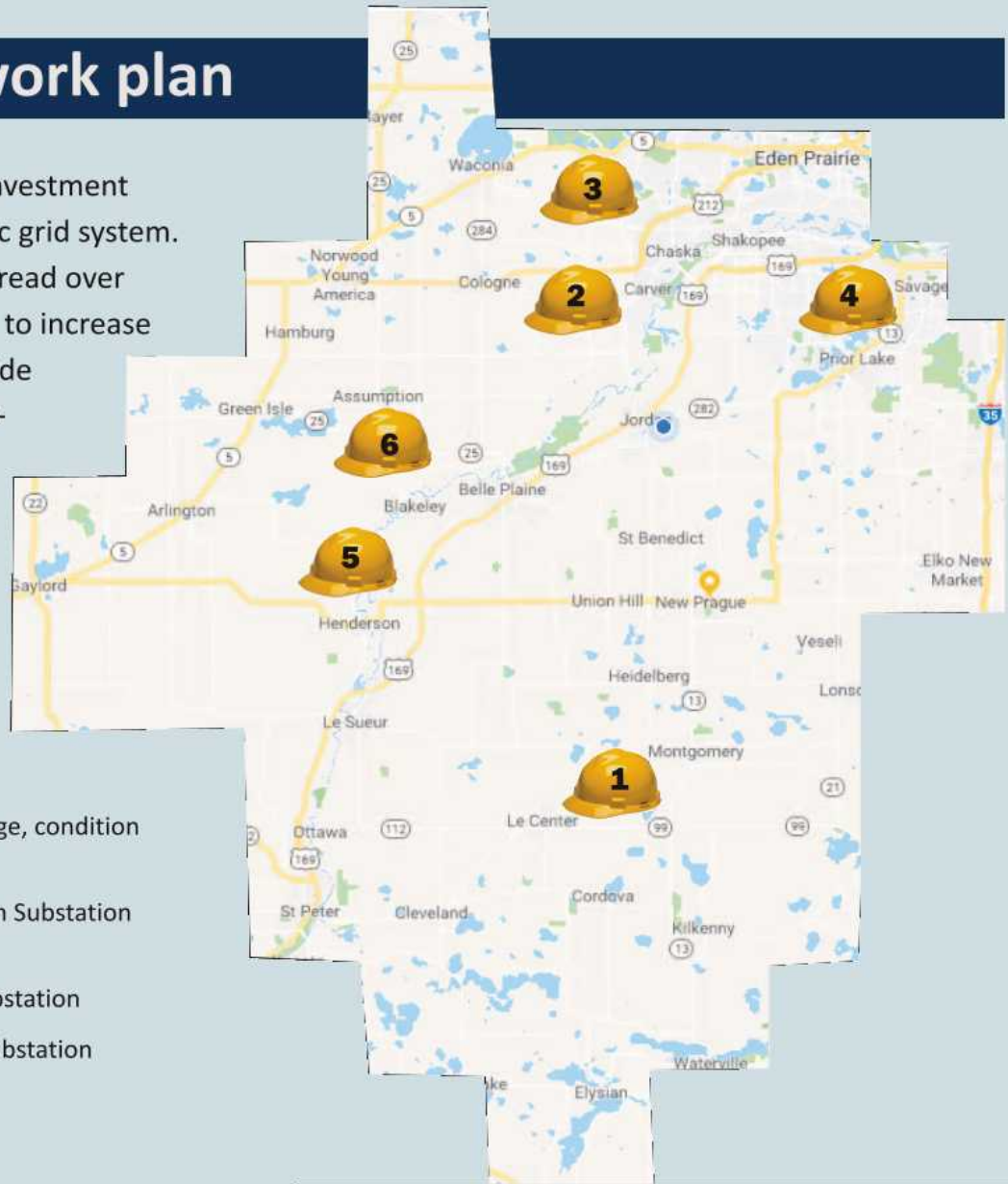
See the entire list of forms at
www.mvec.net/stay-informed/find-a-form/

2022 construction work plan

In 2022, your cooperative will make an investment of over **\$15.3 million** in MVEC's electric grid system. These construction budget dollars are spread over the co-op's 968-square-mile service area to increase reliability and power quality and to provide general maintenance for MVEC's 44,000+ members in portions of nine counties.

Here are some of the larger projects:

1. **Rebuild 11 miles of line** between Le Center and Montgomery for reliability
2. **Relocate power line** along Highway 212 due to a road move
3. **Rebuild 2 miles of line** near Victoria due to age, condition and reliability
4. **Rebuild half a mile of line** north of the Zinran Substation in Savage for age and condition
5. **Upgrade of equipment** at the Jessenland Substation
6. **Upgrade of equipment** at the Assumption Substation



Construction budget by category:



Total 2022 construction budget = \$15,383,688



**PLEASE
SLOW
DOWN**

Give them room! Now that you know some of the places our crews will be working this year, keep an eye out for them. When you see MVEC or other utility crews working in your neighborhood or along the road, slow down and move over. Minnesota State law says: *"When traveling on a road with two or more lanes, drivers must keep over one full lane away from stopped emergency vehicles with flashing lights activated — ambulance, fire, law enforcement, maintenance, construction vehicles and tow trucks."* MVEC wants everyone to be safe and go home to their families unharmed at the end of the work day.

Five ways to save energy when working from home

More people are working from home than ever before. More time at home means more energy used throughout the day.

If you're punching the clock from home, there are small steps you can take to reduce your energy use and save on electric bills.

1. Use a smart power strip. Plugging in your most-used devices, like computers, monitors and routers, to a smart power strip ensures these devices aren't drawing power when they're not in use. Smart power strips also give you the option to select which devices should stay in "always on" mode.

2. Unplug your least-used equipment. If your home office includes equipment like printers and scanners, you're probably not using these electronics every day. In this case, go ahead and unplug your least-used electronics and devices, since many of these draw energy even when they're not being used.



3. Choose ENERGY STAR® office equipment. If you're looking to purchase new equipment for your workspace, look for the ENERGY STAR® label to ensure you're getting the most energy efficient features. Computers, monitors, imaging equipment and other office electronics that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating include power management features to make saving energy easy, and most are designed to run cooler and last longer.

4. Flip the switch and use natural light. It's still chilly out there, so take advantage of natural light and additional warmth from the sun. When you're working during the day, open blinds, curtains and other window coverings to let natural light in—and don't forget to turn off the lights to reduce energy use!

5. Lower the thermostat. Home heating is a significant portion of your energy bills. Turn the thermostat down a couple degrees during the day to reduce energy use and save money. Set the thermostat to 68 degrees or at your lowest comfort level during winter months. You're more likely to stay focused and alert when it's cooler in your home, so all the more reason to adjust the thermostat.

Working from home doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bills, and whether you're working remotely or not, these practical tips can help everyone reduce their energy use.

Last call for Youth Tour trip applicants

A six-day all-expenses-paid youth leadership experience is available to an outstanding high school sophomore or junior whose parent or guardian is a member of MVEC. The trip is scheduled for June 14-19, 2022.

Apply by March 15, 2022, at: www.mvec.net/youth-tour

MVEC's representative will travel with 40 other Minnesota teens sponsored by their rural electric co-ops. Along with 1,500 national delegates, you will learn how electric cooperatives help power the USA.

We will also choose a standby student to serve as an alternate and receive a \$200 prize.



Experience our Nation's Capitol.

Past trips have included Arlington National Cemetery, Capitol Hill, the Lincoln Memorial, Mount Vernon, the Smithsonian Institution, the U.S. Supreme Court, the Washington National Cathedral and more.

Being selected for Youth Tour is a unique accomplishment and a chance to add leadership skills to your college application and work resume. It's the experience of a lifetime!

The Electric Eye is the official publication of
Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative
Chief Executive Officer: Ryan Hentges

Editor: Susan Larson • Contributor: Jessica Heinz
www.mvec.net • info@mvec.net
MVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Office Hours: M - F: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
24-Hour Dispatch/Outages:
952.492.8255 or 800.232.2328

Contact Member Service:
952.492.2313 or 800.282.6832
Pay By Phone: 866.999.4504

MVEC
MINNESOTA VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

125 Minnesota Valley Electric Drive
Jordan, MN 55352