

Safety First is guiding principle behind everything MVEC does

At MVEC, we know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our co-op crews to you, the member-owners we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety. CEO Marvin Denzer and Director of Safety Chad Briese discuss the importance of safety at our cooperative.

Chad: Marvin, I've known you for years now, and I want to congratulate you on becoming our new CEO. Right off the bat, I'm going to ask: What is your overall safety philosophy for MVEC?



Denzer



Briese

Marvin: To me, safety is more than a catchphrase. As CEO, it's my responsibility to keep our co-op Team Members, member-owners and public safe. Over time, MVEC has created a culture of safety by adopting the philosophy of Safety First. Safety is included in the co-op's mission statement: To create exceptional member experiences, while safely providing reliable energy at cost.

We want to make sure each Team Member goes home safely at the end of the workday to their loved ones. This

requires ongoing focus, dedication, and vigilance. We are fortunate to have a Board of Directors that are supportive and will invest in safety at MVEC.

Marvin: One of our core cooperative values centers on safety. What is your outlook on promoting a culture of safety with all team members?

Chad: Safety impacts all areas of the cooperative and starts internally. All team members have an annual corporate goal of attending at least four

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IT'S ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

The month of May is home to many things. It's a sign of summer right around the corner with the school year ending. Flowers begin to bloom, boats are taken out of storage, and the sun shines brighter and longer each day.

But most importantly, May is National Electrical Safety Month.

In the home

Electrical safety in the home is important, as it revolves around the appliances and tools we use every day. Below are a few tips to keep an eye out for:

- **DO** ensure you're using the correct wattage in all light fixtures
- **DON'T** place flammable items like potholders, napkins or dish towels near the stove while cooking
- **DO** keep electrical devices away from water to prevent electric shock
- **DON'T** overload electrical outlets with more devices than the circuit can handle
- **DO** replace power cords if they become frayed or cut
- **DO** label circuit breakers to understand the circuits in your home

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A Safe, Happy House

Four Easy Ways to Boost Electrical Safety at Home



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

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training sessions that relate to work and personal safety. We also ask that everyone reports a near-miss incident that they have experienced, whether at work, home, or on the road. This promotes awareness that safety issues are always around us. We stress personal accountability and looking out for fellow team members as well as community members.

Marvin: Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for line workers. What protocols do the crews follow under your direction?

Chad: We established and follow internal and industry safety protocols. We take the time to train and keep our workers up to date and familiar with the equipment they use. Our line workers wear special clothing, gloves and personal protective equipment when working. We have regular “tailgate” meetings to discuss upcoming projects and each crews’ work from a safety perspective. We monitor and track near-miss incidents to understand them, share “lessons learned” and improve in the future.

Most importantly, we encourage our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving regarding safety. We examine the information from near-misses and accident reports to notice patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short.

Marvin: May is Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted because of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity, and it powers our daily lives. But we know first-hand how dangerous electricity can be because we work with it 365 days a year. What advice would you give our members to stay safe, not just this summer, but all year-round?

Chad: There are many facets to electrical safety, indoors and out. One of the biggest indoor tips is to remember every electrical device has a purpose and lifespan. It’s important to check items for signs of electrical hazards and wear and tear. Outdoors, be aware of your surroundings. Look up for power lines when using large equipment or ladders. Remember to call before you dig. And be sure to stress to your kids the importance of staying away from power lines, substations, and transformers – also known as the big green electrical boxes in your neighborhood. Interfering with this high voltage equipment is deadly.

From a public safety perspective, MVEC offers free safety hotline demonstrations for school groups, fire department open houses and other events. We partner with local first responders and contractors for safety and hazard recognition training. How to deal with electric vehicle fires has been a relatively new training topic we partnered with Great River Energy to offer. These are all ways to keep our members and the public safe.

Looking for more information? Visit www.mvec.net/safety for safety tips for outdoors, home, farm, tree trimming, weather and more.

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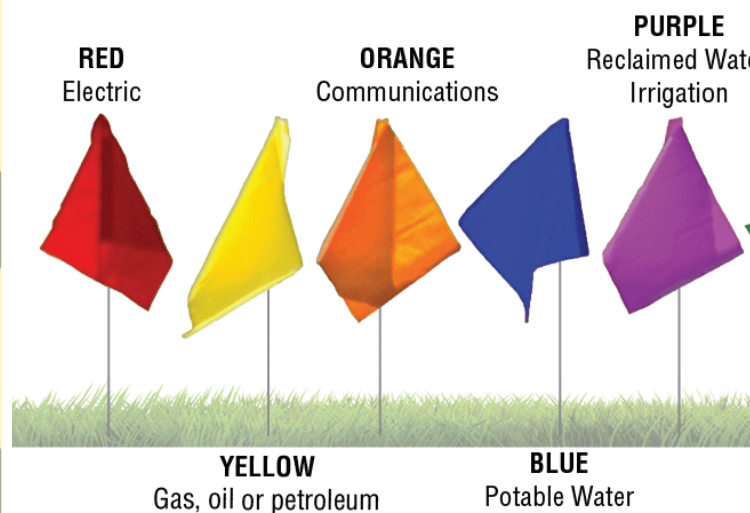
In the yard

As the old saying goes, ‘April showers bring May flowers.’ If that’s the case this year, it may also bring out the green thumb in all of us.

If you’re looking at perhaps planting a new garden this spring or getting around to some summer projects around the house, don’t forget to Call Before You Dig.

If you are planning a project that requires digging, remember to dial “811” first to find out if the area you will be working in is clear of underground power lines.

Ever wonder what all the flagged colors mean? Check the graphic below to find out which color represents which type of utility.



Electrify your spring

Spring is just around the corner, and you can practically smell the freshly-cut grass. If you’re in the market to upgrade your lawn care equipment, you may want to consider electric (or battery-powered) options. Here are three ways you can electrify your lawn care this spring.

Electric Lawn Mowers

Electric lawn mowers have come a long way over the last few years. Early models required corded connections, which were tricky to manage—but the cord has been cut. Newer cordless electric mowers are certainly more expensive than gas-powered mowers, but much of the upfront cost can be recovered since electricity is a less expensive fuel than gas, and electric engines generally require less maintenance than gas engines. Electric mowers are suitable for most lawn care needs, with batteries that typically require about one to two hours to fully charge, and most batteries can run for a full hour.

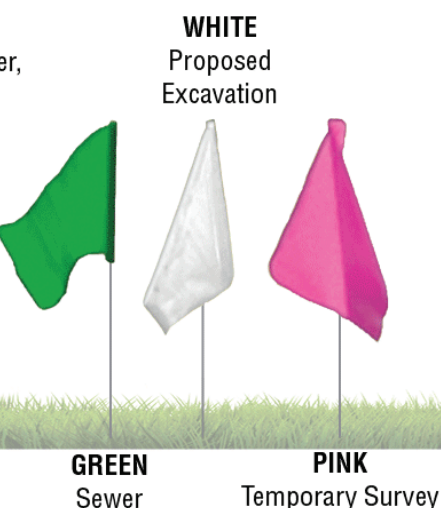
Electric Trimmers

Cordless electric string trimmers are a great option for most lawns.

If you're avoiding work around the house this summer and looking to explore the great outdoors, don't forget these safety tips as well:

- **Children should never climb trees near power lines** – always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote-controlled airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines.
- **Planning to take a dip in the pool?** Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.
- **Speaking of thunder, summer storms can be dangerous if you're caught in the wrong place at the wrong time.**

If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, move toward suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.



In the field

While we at MVEC are committed 24/7 to the safety of our team members and community members, we need your help, too. With construction season fast underway, the co-op kindly asks



that if you see utility or emergency crews working on the side of the road, remain alert and move over whenever possible. Whether MVEC crews are out restoring power outages or preventing future ones, we want our lineworkers focus to be on the possibly dangerous task at hand. So if you're traveling and see one of our line crews, please give them extra space to work. We care about everyone's safety, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

This caution remains true for emergency responders, police officers and firefighters as well, who often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. Likewise, other utility contractors and construction workers are often performing their work along roadways and we ask that you follow similar procedures to keep these crews safe, too.

projects by choosing eco equipment

Cordless electric trimmers are much quieter and easier to use, but most batteries last about 30 to 45 minutes. So, if you have a lot of space to trim, you may want to consider a back-up battery or plan to work in short bursts. If you're interested in purchasing an electric trimmer, the main factors to consider are the battery's life, charge time and power.



Electric Leaf Blowers

After cutting and trimming your lawn, you'll need to clear off those walkways and patios for the finishing touch. Cordless electric leaf blowers are lightweight and easy to maneuver, but they don't offer quite as much power as gas-powered and corded blowers. If your leaf blowing

and clearing needs are minimal, a cordless electric leaf blower can get the job done.

If you're looking to electrify your lawn care equipment, be sure to do your homework. Additionally, check your tool cabinet for which brands and batteries you might already own. Interchangeable tool batteries are designed to be compatible with multiple tools from the same manufacturer or brand. Search online for the latest reviews and check trusted websites like [ConsumerReports.org](https://www.ConsumerReports.org). With a little research, you'll be well on your way to Lawn of the Month – with less maintenance, hassle and noise (and your neighbors will thank you!)



Operation Round Up enhances local organizations

In the first quarter of 2023, MVEC's Operation Round Up Trust Board gifted \$28,674 in grants throughout the service area, including St. John the Baptist Catholic School of Jordan, which paid transportation costs for a field trip so K-3 students could enjoy the play "Corduroy" at the Minnesota Children's Theatre.

To date, MVEC's generous members who "round-up" their monthly electric bills have donated more than \$2.2 million to hundreds of local organizations.

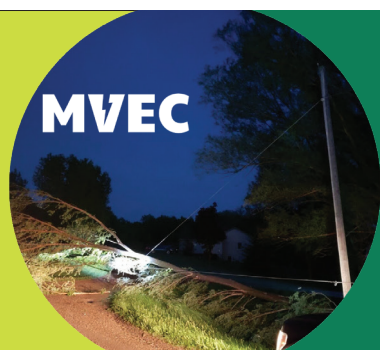


ORU gives back to local groups

Other 1st quarter grants include:

- **Belle Plaine Baseball Assn:** \$3,500 for Tiger Park improvements
- **Belle Plaine Public Schools:** \$1,000 for cyber robotics team
- **Brainpower in a Backpack (Burnsville High):** \$500 for food
- **Camp Fire Minnesota:** \$2,500 for camp scholarships
- **Conservation Club (Waconia High):** \$300 for field trip
- **Green Isle Lions Club:** \$1,000 for food and school supplies
- **Jordan Area Food Shelf:** \$500 for food
- **Le Sueur Co. 4-H:** \$2,000 for interstate exchange program
- **Le Sueur Food Shelf:** \$500 for food
- **Minnesota Fire Initiative:** \$2,500 for firefighter risk study
- **Most Holy Redeemer Catholic School:** \$1,120 for field trip
- **New Prague HS Send-Off Committee:** \$200 for Backyard Bonfire

- **New Prague Softball Boosters:** \$1,000 for new pitching machine
- **Peace Center Food Shelf:** \$500 for food
- **Prior Lake HS Senior Celebration:** \$200 for Valleyfair event
- **ProAct, Inc.:** \$564 for sensory room
- **Rice County Historical Society:** \$1,000 for videographer contract
- **Rotary Club of Le Sueur:** \$500 for backpack program
- **Shakopee All Night Grad Party:** \$200 for supplies
- **Shakopee Area Catholic School:** \$500 for Camp Widjiwagan
- **Shakopee Community Ed.:** \$1,000 for Mi Casa Summer Camp
- **Sibley Co. Ag/Sibley Co. Fair:** \$3,000 for goat barn improvements
- **Sibley County Food Share:** \$500 for food
- **St. John the Baptist School:** \$690 for field trip
- **Tri-City United Post Prom:** \$200 for supplies
- **True Friends:** \$2,200 for upgraded furniture



REPORT AN OUTAGE BY TEXT!

Be ready for spring and summer storm season.
MVEC offers outage texting where you can report
and get status updates.

Sign up for a free SmartHub account at

<https://mvec.smarthub.coop/Login.html#registration>:

Go to Notifications and then Manage Notifications. Make sure you have your smartphone number listed. If the power goes out, text "OUT" or "STATUS" to 855-963-3830.

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Chief Executive Officer: Marvin Denzer

Editor: Dan Ring • Contributors: Jessica Heinz, Susan Larson
www.mvec.net • info@mvec.net
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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