

Newsline

January 2012



Dropped your land line? Changed your cell phone number?

Please call REA and update your contact information: 320-762-1121, 800-473-1722 or email us at rea@RunestoneElectric.com



Will there be load control today?

For up-to-date information, simply visit www.RunestoneElectric.com, scroll down the homepage to **Today's Load Control**. The Load Management Guide from Great River Energy will keep you informed. Look under "South Dual Fuel."



2012 Residential Rebates

Energy Star® Rebates:

- Replacement refrigerator**
with recycling of old unit..... \$75
- Replacement freezer**
with recycling of old unit..... \$75
- Ductless Air Source Heat Pump**..... \$150
- Electronically Commutated Motors (ECM)** . \$50

Contact REA for an appliance rebate form or visit www.RunestoneElectric.com



Electric Heating Rebates:

ETS (Electric Thermal Storage)
Space Heating & Room Storage Heating
\$50/kw up to \$2,000 - \$25/kw over 40 kw

Geothermal Heat Pumps \$200/ton

Air Source Heat Pumps

Air Source Heat Pump Quality Installation Program:

- ≥ SEER13.....\$330 ≥ SEER 14.5\$480
- ≥ SEER15.....\$580 ≥ SEER 16+\$630

Central Air Conditioning Quality Installation Program:

- ≥ SEER13.....\$30 ≥ SEER 14.5\$180
- ≥ SEER15.....\$280 ≥ SEER 16+\$330

Plenum Heater \$25/kw up to \$500 max.

Plenum heater must be designed to the heat loss of the home



Room Storage Heater



Electric Plenum Heater

Money saving energy efficiency tips



Yep, there's an app for that!

For smart phone users, a new option has been added to Touchstone

Energy's **Together We Save** website. "Tip of the Day" is a free app that provides easy to follow tips

for simple changes and home improvements that reduce energy waste and improve efficiency, helping you save money. Each tip has a link to the Together We Save blog with a full article that expands on the tip.

TogetherWeSave.com Tip of the Day

The **Together We Save - Tip of the Day** app is free and available for download on all platforms - Droid, Blackberry and Apple. Check out TogetherWeSave.com for energy-saving information.

Must be purchased/installed after 1/1/12 - Limited funds available

Board Meeting Highlights

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Runestone Electric Association was held on November 29, 2011.

- Approved two resolutions regarding Great River Energy's Spiritwood Station in North Dakota.
- Director Bill O'Brien was selected as delegate and Director Wilbur Burquest as alternate for 2012 Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) Membership Meetings.
- President Audrey Hjelle and Director Barbara Johnson recapped the Cooperative Network Annual Meeting held in November.
- CEO Banke and staff presented the 2012 preliminary budget and answered questions from the board.
- Approved refunding \$450,000 in capital credits with 1/2 going to the oldest membership allocation (1987 & 1988) and 1/2 going to the newest membership allocation (2010). Capital credit checks will be mailed in February.

The regular January Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 26.

December Heating Degree Days

2011	1,253
2010	1,659
2009	1,630
2008	1,789

November 2011 Statistics

Kilowatt-hours Sold

2011	17,940,105
2010	19,139,595

Cost of Purchased Power

2011	\$ 922,681
2010	\$1,023,639

Cost per Kilowatt-hour Purchased

2011	\$.049
2010	\$.048

Number of Accounts

2011	13,683
2010	13,614

\$500,000 mark exceeded!

by CEO Rick Banke

I hope all of you had a joyous time celebrating Christmas and ringing in the New Year. Here at REA, we are still celebrating reaching the \$500,000 mark in grants distributed by Operation Round Up®!

Since its inception in 2003, Operation Round Up has given grants to 1,052 non-profit organizations throughout REA's service territory. Grant requests fit into seven categories including community, fire departments/first responders, food shelves, senior citizen programs, scholarships and youth programs.

There are three key factors to the success of REA's Operation Round Up program. First - the board of directors that meet quarterly to review funding applications and to distribute grants. This volunteer board (pictured below) represents the seven REA districts and functions separately from the REA board. The Round Up board members take their mission very seriously and I can assure you they do an excellent job of responsibly distributing funds.

The next factor is the efficiency of the program. On average, most charitable organizations only spend 60% on charitable programs with 25 - 40% going to overhead. Here at REA, over 94% of funds collected go out in grants with less than 6% spent on overhead.

Finally, we thank you, the members of REA, for allowing Operation Round Up to make a difference in the communities we serve. Over 65% or 8,616 of REA's 13,683 members allow their bills to be rounded up to the next dollar with the average annual donation being just over \$6.00.

If you have opted out of Operation Round Up, but have decided you'd like to participate in this charitable-giving branch of your cooperative, just give us a call or send us an email. Fifty cents here and fifty cents there isn't much, but together this small change can lead to big change in the lives of many!



Rick Banke



Operation Round Up® Board of Directors

Front row, left to right: Jan Arneson, Glenwood; Carla Beem, Miltona (Sec) and Kathy Anderson, Parkers Prairie. Back row, left to right: DeWayne Bisek, Nelson (Pres); Bob Shervey, Barrett; Clif Patrick, Sauk Centre and Tim Philbrick, Farwell (VP).

CONGRATULATIONS!



\$500,000 in grants to area organizations!

**THANK YOU
REA Members!**

REA is celebrating! Operation Round Up® has distributed over **\$503,000** in 1,052 grants to community-minded groups and organizations throughout the Cooperative's service territory since its inception in 2003. **THANK YOU** to all REA members that participate in Operation Round Up!

The following thirty-one area organizations shared \$16,575 in grants from Operation Round Up during the fourth quarter distribution cycle:

Fire Departments and First Responders: Garfield First Responders (\$1000); Morris Fire Department (\$250); Alexandria Fire Department (\$500); Wendell Fire Department (\$500) and Lowry First Responders (\$1000).

Youth: Osakis Public School (\$200); Morris Area High School (\$200); Hancock Post Prom (\$200); Greater MN Children's Choir (\$275) and West Central Area Schools (\$200).

Community: Brandon History Center (\$250); West Central MN Communities Action (\$1000); Jingle Bells Foundation (\$1000); Douglas County Sheriff's Posse (\$500); Alexandria Area Uncompensated Care Program (\$1000); Urbank Lions (\$500); Miracle Horse Riders, Inc. (\$500); Evansville Community Park (\$500); Douglas County Salvation Army (\$1000); Pioneer Public Television (\$250); Prevent Child Abuse MN (\$1000); Friendship Ventures (\$250); The Village Family Service Center (\$250); Elder Network (\$1000); Habitat for Humanity Prairie Lakes-Stevens County (\$500); Love, Inc. (\$500); West Central MN Communities Action (\$250); The Windmill Project (\$500); Lakes Area Gymnastics (\$500) and Angel Tree/Prison Fellowship (\$500).

Seniors: Alexandria Senior Center (\$500).

Participation in Operation Round Up is strictly voluntary. Members that wish to participate, do nothing. Your contribution will be included on your future bills. If members want to opt-out of the program, they merely need to call REA to be removed from the rounding up of their electric bills.

Calling all non-profit organizations! Area organizations are encouraged to apply for Operation Round Up grants. The deadline for the next round of funding is February 10. Application forms are available by calling Runestone Electric at (320) 762-1121 or (800) 473-1722. Applications can be downloaded from the REA website: www.RunestoneElectric.com.



Representing some of the organizations receiving Operation Round Up® grants in December (front row from left to right): Debbie Hudspeth, Elder Network; Ruth Plaster, Brandon History, Sharolyn Sievert, Garfield First Responders; Chris Korkowski, Brandon History Center; (middle row from left to right): DeWayne Bisek and Jan Arneson, Operation Round Up; Beverly Kato, The Village Family Service Center; Candace Esterberg, Miracle Horse Riders, Inc.; Bonnie Weiler, Habitat for Humanity Prairie Lakes Stevens County; Becky Belmont, West Central Communities Action and Kaylee Esterberg, Miracle Horse Riders, Inc. (back row from left to right): Brian Perleberg, Evansville City Park; Audrey Hjelle, REA Board President; Chad Silbernack, Osakis Public School; Tammy Boushek, Love, Inc.; Dave Schultz, Douglas County Salvation Army; Judy Manusos, The Village Family Service Center; Ken Klobec, Douglas County Sheriff's Posse; Lois Scherer, West Central Communities Action and Sheila Kelly, Alexandria Area Uncompensated Care Program.

Beware when snowmobiling

Avoid power poles, guy wires and underground transformer boxes. Guy wires can seem invisible when going fast on a snowmobile. If you see a downed power line, always assume the line is energized, even if it is lying on the ground. Call 9-1-1!

Extreme cold can affect your security light

If you notice a problem with your security light this winter, such as intermittent failure or it remains dimmer than normal, you're not alone. Severe cold weather, specifically -10 degrees or colder, may affect the operation of security lights.



The problem involves the formation of a gas in the bulb, which can be hampered by the cold. Usually, when the weather warms up, the lights will return to normal operation and will not have to be replaced.

If your security light is rented from REA, we would appreciate it if you could bear with us during the coldest spells. If the light does not return to normal operation when the weather warms up, please notify our office and we will repair it for you.

Winter energy use

Why your electric bill goes up in the winter

- Most heating systems use electricity for some functions, such as operating the fan, and many run almost continuously when it's very cold.
- You may be using space heaters in your garage, basement, well pit or other unheated spaces.
- Electric blankets and heating pads feel cozy on cold nights but will add to your electric bill.
- Engine block heaters on your cars or equipment or heating wraps on exposed plumbing will increase the amount of energy you use.
- Winter brings holidays, which often means house guests, additional cooking and baking and, of course, those bright holiday lights.
- Shorter days and longer nights mean lights stay on longer both inside and out.



2012 Washington Youth Tour



Call REA for details
Applications available at
www.RunestoneElectric.com

Entry deadline is
February 15

Runestone Electric Association (REA) is seeking applicants for an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., for the 2012 Youth Tour, June 16 - 21, 2012.

This is not your ordinary sight-seeing tour. Students will see their government in action, cruise the Potomac, meet their congressional leaders, explore the Smithsonian museums, spend a day on Capitol Hill, and mingle with other teens from across the nation.

One lucky student from REA will win, but to be eligible, the student must be a high school student (age 16-18), and his or her parent/guardian must be an REA member. Applicants must complete an application and write an essay on the future of energy.

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email: REA@runestoneelectric.com

Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon - Fri

24-hour outage & emergency service

(800) 473-1722

Underground cable locations Gopher State One Call

(800) 252-1166

Board of Directors

Audrey Hjelle, President
Bryan Withers, Vice President
Barbara Johnson, Secretary
Bill O'Brien, Treasurer
Ron Holm, Director
Mike Johnson, Director
Wilbur Burquest, Director

Editorial Staff

Rick Banke, CEO
Sue Lundeen, Editor

In case of a power outage

- Make sure the problem is not on your side (Members may be billed for service calls if the problem is caused by their own equipment).
- Check your own fuses and circuit breakers in your home and by the meter pole (Call us for help if you are unsure of the location of your breakers).
- Check with your neighbors to see if their power is off and if they have reported the outage.
- If the trouble is not on your wiring, please call (800) 473-1722 for 24-hour service. Please report any tree branches in lines, twisted wires, broken poles and if your neighbors are also out of power.
- Be sure to have one corded phone in the house, because cordless phones won't work when the power is out.
- Program the number above into your cell phone for easy access.