



Members gathered at the Garfield Community Center on January 22 for the District 2 meeting.

Members Nominate Director Candidates

District Meetings held in preparation of the 82nd Annual Meeting - April 19

REA District Meetings are held to nominate one or more candidates for the office of director. Nomination results were as follows:

District Two: Barbara Johnson (incumbent), Miltona
Patricia Ferguson, Miltona

District Five: Bill O'Brien (incumbent), Alexandria
Mike Loken, Garfield

Members of these districts may vote for the candidates at the Annual Meeting or by using the mail ballot included with the Annual Meeting materials they will receive in early April. The REA Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 19 at Alexandria Area High School. Candidate profiles will be available in the March newsletter.

Attend the Annual Meeting and receive a \$25 gift certificate (1 per membership)



The list of participating businesses will appear in the March issue of *Newsline*



REA Annual Meeting
Alexandria Area High School
6:00 - 6:30 p.m. - Registration
6:30 p.m. - Annual Meeting
Ice cream treats to follow meeting

Worry-free water heating from REA *Beneficial Electrification, part 4*

Kristin Dolan, CEO, Runestone Electric Association



Kristin Dolan, CEO

Hot water looms large in the list of household chores. Showers, laundry, dishes – they all require hot water. If you think about it, we use a significant amount of energy to heat water. Now, utilities and manufacturers are teaming up to bring you water heaters equipped with technology that can make the electric grid smarter and more efficient.

More than 250 electric co-ops in 35 states use large capacity electric resistance water heaters that can reduce the co-op's power cost and store electricity produced by wind and hydropower. For example, when the wind blows at night – when most of us are sleeping and wholesale power is cheaper – the electricity produced can be used to heat water in our homes. The water will remain hot even if the water heater is turned off for a short period. In other words, collectively, water heaters can act like a battery, storing energy.

Electric co-ops are on the forefront of research testing new water heater technologies, including ways to improve the use of water heaters to integrate renewable energy onto the electric grid.

If your water heater was purchased through REA, congratulations! You are enjoying great benefits through our program, including cost, warranty and peace of mind. If your water heater is approaching 10 plus years of life and does not have the REA lifetime tank warranty, please visit with one of our energy management experts to explore affordable water heater replacement options. It's always better to ensure your water heating needs are met uninterrupted, we all appreciate a warm shower!

You can sleep even more peacefully at night knowing you have an REA electric water heater working smart for you. Enjoy affordable water heating through stable rates and high efficiency utilizing less energy to heat your hot water needs. Pair this along with an industry-leading lifetime warranty on the tank, and REA here to serve you, there is nothing better!

When comparing water heaters, the benefits of electric outweigh gas and propane

REA Water Heaters



1995 - 2015

2015 - Present

Call REA or visit www.runestoneelectric.com for pricing information that fits your needs

	REA ELECTRIC WATER HEATERS	NATURAL GAS WATER HEATERS	PROPANE WATER HEATERS
Lifetime Tank Warranty (Labor warranty provided by REA)	✓		
6-Year Warranty on Elements & Thermostat (Labor warranty provided by REA)	✓		
Safe - No Venting Required	✓		
Efficiency Factor Greater Than .90	✓		
Stable Rates	✓		
Rebates Available	✓	✓	✓
Combustible Fuel		✓	✓
Up to 100% Renewable Energy	✓		
Smart Grid-Capable Technology	✓		

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - December 2017

- Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for November 2017. Mrs. Nelson noted electric energy revenue was 8% over budget for the month of November. The margin for the year is currently about \$100,000 over budget, due to operating expense being under budget year-to-date.
- Mrs. Nelson presented the 2017 list of Uncollectible Accounts. Mrs. Nelson noted that efforts continue to collect on accounts even after the account has been written off.
- Mr. Haman presented the December Safety Report and the November

Operations Report. Mr. Haman reported that the outage count for 2017 is very low with an average of a little more than 30 minutes off per account.

- CEO Dolan and Mrs. Nelson presented the 2018 Budget.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be on Friday, March 2, 2018.

January Heating Degree Days

2018 1,582	2016 1,580
2017 1,483	2015 1,495

Lights flicker from frost on Jan 25

Falling frost causes powerlines to gallop

There's nothing like a beautiful, frosty January day, as was the case on January 25th. By evening, a heavy frost had developed on trees, tall grasses and powerlines.

"As the evening progressed powerlines throughout our service territory became heavier with frost causing the lines to sag," explains REA Manager of Operations & Engineering Al Haman.

When the wind came up, the frost began to drop off. "I like to describe what happens next when frost or ice falls from powerlines by using a rubber band as an example," Haman said. When you pull back on one side of a rubber band and let go, it bounces back and forth slapping the other side until it comes to a stop. This slapping action is what our members saw in their homes and business as flickering or blinking of the lights as the powerlines slapped one another. The linemen out on-call saw flashes around the countryside as they witnessed the frost falling from the powerlines."

Quite often this slapping or galloping action caused by nature can cause power outages. Unfortunately, there is not much REA can do to prevent it. Thankfully no power outages resulted from the falling frost on January 25th.



Ice and frost on powerlines can lead to flickering and blinking lights.

Tired of being sick and tired?

Be sure to use your Co-op Connection Card the next time you need to fill a prescription. You may get a pleasant surprise. Below is the list of participating pharmacies in our area that accept the discount card:

Alexandria Apothecary
Cub Foods Pharmacy, Alexandria
CVS Pharmacy (Target), Alexandria
Glacial Ridge Clinic, Glenwood
Glacial Ridge Hospital, Glenwood
Herman Clinic Pharmacy
Samuelson Drug Store, Starbuck
Shopko Pharmacy, Glenwood
Shopko Pharmacy, Morris
Thrifty White Drug, Alexandria
Thrifty White Drug, Morris
Thrifty White Drug, Osakis



Trumm Drug Downtown, Alexandria
Trumm Drug Alexandria Clinic
Trumm Drug, Glenwood
Trumm Drug, Parkers Prairie
Walgreens, Alexandria
Walmart, Alexandria

Contact REA if you need a Co-op Connection Card. We are happy to send you a new card!

Empty wire spools for giveaway

Need a big wire spool? Pick up is available Mon- Fri from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Please call REA before coming 800-473-1722.



Co-generation notice

In compliance with Minnesota Adopted Rules relating to Co-generation and Small Power Production, Chapter 7835, Runestone Electric is required to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions of a qualified facility. Runestone Electric has available and will provide free information to all interested members regarding rates and interconnection requirements. An application for interconnection is required for a qualifying facility to interconnect and operate in parallel with the cooperative's distribution system and is subject to approval by the cooperative.

For more information on co-generation, please contact:

REA Manager of Business Development & Energy Management Ryan Rooney at (800) 473-1722 or visit <http://www.runestoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/renewable-energy/>



Watch your mailbox

Capital Credit checks will be mailed the end of February.

Are my capital credits taxable?



Yes and no – depending if you use electric costs as a tax deduction. It's a good idea to consult your tax preparer for more information on claiming capital credits.



How much did you spend on electricity in 2017?

SmartHub is the easiest way to gather information during tax time.

- Go to www.RunestoneElectric.com
- Click on Access My Account
- Log into your SmartHub account or sign up to access your account
- Click on Billing & Payments
- Payment History will tell you the total dollar amount paid each month

More than one account with REA?



Options to consider:

1. All your bills on one statement
2. Separate statements mailed in one envelope

Contact REA to learn more.

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS:

New REA Scholarship Program

18 - \$1,000 scholarships available through a random drawing

Exclusive benefit for REA members

Attention high school seniors! REA is awarding eighteen \$1,000 scholarships. Applicants must be a graduating high school senior whose parents or legal guardians are members of REA. Students attending public, private, parochial or home school are eligible to apply.

These 18 scholarships will be randomly selected. The only requirement is that you are a member of Runestone Electric Association and wish to further your education.

The scholarships are funded through REA's unclaimed capital credits. This is money that would otherwise be claimed by the state of Minnesota.

The deadline to apply for the REA scholarships is March 1, 2018. Winners will be recognized at REA's Annual Meeting on April 19, 2018, at Alexandria Area High School.

Applications can be found at www.runestoneelectric.com/news or call REA for an application: 1-800-473-1722.

Choosing the right light just got easier

Today there are many lighting options, maybe too many!

The right bulb for you depends on how much light you need, what color light you want, and its costs and features.

REA can help you with your lighting decisions. Look for the Light Bulb Guide at www.runestoneelectric.com/information-resources/. Another tool that can be used from any device is rightlightapp.org.

You can also call REA at 1-800-473-1722 and we'll send you the Right Light Guide.



Lighting help is just a click away!

rightlightapp.org

Be Safe

Stay clear of downed power lines

POWERFUL STORMS can damage power lines. If you see a downed power line:

- Stay at least 50 feet away from it and assume it is energized. The ground may also be energized making the entire area extremely dangerous.
- Never touch anything that is touching a downed power line. It is as dangerous as the line itself.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle while you are in it, stay inside your vehicle until help arrives.



Never touch a downed power line!

Always assume its is energized
Call 911 immediately!

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6839 Power Lane SW
Alexandria, MN 56308
(320) 762-1121 or (800) 473-1722
Fax: (320) 763-4149
www.runestoneelectric.com
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

Barbara Johnson, President
Audrey Hjelle, Vice President
Ron Holm, Treasurer
Gary (Andy) Anderson, Secretary
Clif Patrick, Director
Steve Pederson, Director
Bill O'Brien, Director

Editorial Staff

Kristin Dolan, 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.
- Never assume we know you are without power. Always call to report an outage.

**REA is an equal opportunity
provider and employer**