



Osprey couple awaits arrival of chick

A pair of osprey have settled into their new home along 10th Ave SW, near the west side of Lake Latoka near Alexandria. Now they wait until their chick hatches.

The osprey began building their nest at the end of April and REA became aware of the building project after responding to an outage caused by the osprey dropping large sticks onto the power line. "It appeared the osprey were dropping sticks on the pole hoping enough would accumulate to form a nest," said REA Manager of Operations & Engineering Al Haman. "As the sticks accumulated on the cross arm above a bank of breakers, it was clear something needed to be done to protect the determined birds, to prevent a fire, and reduce the chance of power outages."

Despite serving an area abundant with lakes and rivers, REA has not faced this situation before. "This is the first time REA has experienced an osprey building a nest on our infrastructure," explains REA CEO Kristin Dolan. "To keep the ospreys safe, and prevent power outages for our members, REA quickly evaluated our options at this location. Because osprey are a protected migratory bird, we elected to reroute the power away from the utility pole and leave the pole in place for their nest. There was no room for a nesting platform at this location. Our mission is to serve our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. We also want to be a responsible steward to our beautiful and diverse local natural environment."



Osprey are a protected migratory bird

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Engaged with you and our communities

Kristin Dolan, CEO, Runestone Electric Association



Kristin Dolan, CEO

What a busy spring at REA for community involvement! Our linecrews and farmers wish they could declare this same statement with the late spring we experienced this year. With planting season winding down and farming-related activities at full speed, it's good time to remind everyone again to always look up and look out for electric poles, equipment, and overhead wire. Always look up also applies to homeowners working outside with

ladders or folks on a lake with a sailboat.

Our linecrews are busy at work with our construction projects. REA employees take great pride in taking care of your utility system. This spring has been tough waiting for gravel roads to harden up and the frost to leave the ground. While they waited for the construction season, they were busy conducting line patrol, proactively evaluating the electric distribution system for needed replacements.

We have a busy construction season planned to maintain the reliability of your electric system. The 2018 schedule includes \$1,900,000 in line replacement, \$870,000 in needed equipment change outs, and \$200,000 in substation improvements. Also, we will replace failing underground line, replace end-of-life utility poles, and construct new services for our members.

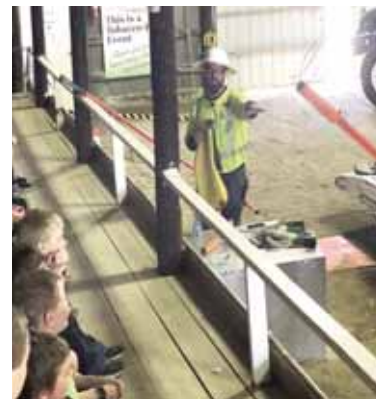
Community involvement

We have been extremely busy with our member community this spring. We have engaged with you in a variety of ways to keep you informed. First and foremost we began with safety education events, held our annual meeting, and in early May hosted member events on electric vehicles and renewable energy.

In April we hosted a safety demonstration for our area emergency responders. Unfortunately, following this important safety training, first responders had to put their fresh training into action. REA's system experienced two separate vehicle accidents that involved our equipment. One vehicle collided with a utility pole. In a second crash, the car ran into a cabinet containing high voltage equipment for underground service, coming to a final rest on top of the cabinet. With the second accident, the vehicle started on fire and I'm happy to report the driver is okay. Unless it is unsafe, it is critical you stay in

your vehicle when exposed to energized lines or services. If you need to exit your vehicle, don't step away from it, but rather hop or shuffle keeping your feet close together at all times for at least 30 feet. Electricity always seeks the easiest path, and unfortunately, you make a great conduit when walking.

Safety is our number one priority at REA – the safety of our employees, our members, and the general public. Every year we conduct a safety demonstration for over 500 of our area fifth grade students at the annual Safety First Day Camp. The demonstration is a live interactive event, as we show the students what happens when you come into contact with energized power lines. Hopefully, the students also carried those messages home to their families when it comes to safety around power lines and energized equipment.



Lineman Josh McGrane presented electrical safety to 5th graders at the annual Safety First Day Camp in May

In early May we hosted a fun electric vehicle test drive event and had a great turnout on a Saturday morning. The crowd heard how to purchase, operate, charge and maintain an electric vehicle. We had several vehicles on hand to take a close look at and a variety to test drive, including hybrids and all-electric vehicles. The ownership of an electric vehicle is an easy reality today.

Ryan Rooney, REA's Manager of Energy Services and Business Development, conducted an informative session on Exploring Your Renewable Energy Options. The members heard how they can increase their participation in renewable energy. There are several options available at various costs. Programs include REA's existing generation portfolio mix which is comprised of 40% renewable resources; REA's Wellspring Wind or Solar program; community solar; or self-generation.

Carlos Creek Winery – 100% renewable energy

A shout out to Carlos Creek Winery! By participating in our renewable energy Wellspring Wind program, Carlos Creek Winery has achieved operating their business with 100% renewable energy!

It is an exciting time in our industry, we here at REA are proud to provide our members with choice for their electric energy needs.

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - April 2018

- Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for March 2018, noting the YTD margin is ahead of budget. A main driver of this is a strong gross margin from kWh sales being above average for the 1st quarter. Mrs. Nelson also provided a quarterly summary of the Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program (REDLG) program.
- Approved Policy M-18 Energy Service Loan Program. The Energy Service Loan Program will provide loans to qualified members for REA program purchases.
- CEO Dolan provided an update on Heartland Security (a subsidiary of REA). CEO Dolan attended Heartland's quarterly board meeting and reported Heartland is successfully growing through acquisitions.
- Approved the following members to serve on the Member Advisory Council: Gene & Joan Serba, District 2; Andy Lopez, District 2; Dan & Terri Thompson, District 5; Kathy & Robert Jacobs, District 6; Karen Sinotte, District 6; and Tom & Jen Hayes, District 7.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be on June 26, 2018.

May Heating Degree Days

2018 149 (estimate)	2016 264
2017 307	2015 305

Why we replace utility poles

Replacing poles provides reliable electricity

Utility poles are the backbone of our distribution network. They ensure a reliable electric system, which is why we routinely have the poles on our system inspected. REA contracts with STAR Energy Services for pole inspections. STAR is based in Alexandria and owned by REA and seven other electric cooperatives. Throughout the year, poles are checked for decay caused by exposure to the elements. Typically, a standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last more than 50 years.

Occasionally, poles are replaced for other reasons besides decay and old age. Weather disasters, power line relocation, and car crashes are potential causes for immediate replacement.

Here is a quick breakdown of how crews replace a utility pole:

Replacing a pole begins with crews digging a hole, typically next to the pole being replaced. The depth of the hole must be at least six feet deep. Next, the new pole is fitted with bolts, cross arms, insulators, ground wires and arm braces – all of the necessary parts for delivering safe and reliable electricity. Then, crews safely detach the power lines from the old pole. The new pole is raised and guided carefully into position, and the lines are attached, leaving the new pole to do its job.

Recently, REA crews replaced a pole in Lien Township. You'll find photos of the process to the right.



Lineman Troy Pederson augers the hole in preparation for the new pole installation



Linemen Troy Pederson and Luke Gilbertson fill the hole surrounding the new pole with rock



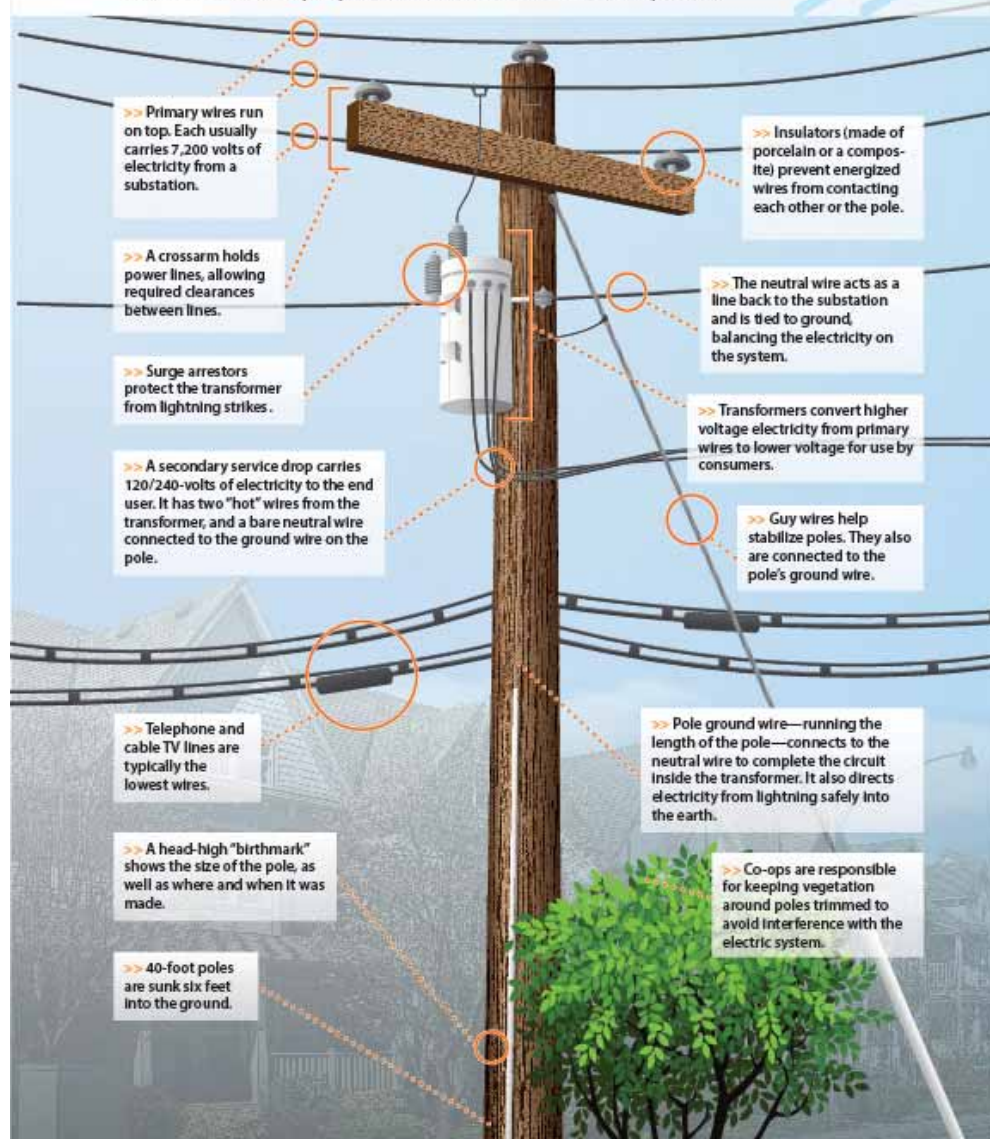
Lineman Joe Friedrich drives a lag into the crows foot



Lineman Joe Friedrich crimps the bail to the phase wire

>> What's on that pole?

This illustration shows basic equipment found on electric power distribution poles. Not all poles have all this equipment on them. They vary according to location and the service they provide.



Don't wait for a disaster, consider installing a generator

5 common reasons why people say they purchase standby generators:

- 1 "Keeping our fridge and freezer running during a storm has saved us a lot of money and wasted food."
- 2 "We travel often in the winter months and worry about the pipes freezing if the power is out and house has no heat; not the kind of surprise we want when we come home."
- 3 "I often travel on business and need to know that if the power goes out, my family and home are safe and secure when I'm not there."
- 4 "We have a well and without electricity we have no water - no drinking water, no flushable toilets and no showers."



5 "I did not want to hassle with my tractor-driven PTO generator any more. I wanted a generator that would start automatically, whether I was home or not. I did not want my wife worrying about how to get the tractor started and hooked up if I was on the road."

There are many good reasons to install an automatic Briggs & Stratton generator that can power the entire house or farm. REA offers this turn-key installation and maintenance service. Call REA for more information **800-473-1722** or visit www.runestoneelectric.com.

Plan ahead for new services

If you plan upgrades or new services, especially if large fans for drying are involved, please contact REA as soon as possible. This is helpful because the delivery time for large transformers can be lengthy. In addition, line crews already have a number of projects planned and the schedule gets especially tight later in the summer. Please call and ask for the Operations Department.



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Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts and programs are subject to change without notice.

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In case of a power outage

- 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.

▶ (651)454-0002 ▶ (800)252-1166

Click or Call Before You Dig!



Gopher State locates utility-owned underground facilities. REA will locate wires to the main meter. Wires from the meter to home and out buildings are private property and need to be located by a private contractor. **Private locators list:**
<http://www.gopherstateonecall.org/private-facility-locators>

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