



The August 22nd Member Advisory Council meeting included a demonstration of equipment used by REA linemen. Council meetings are held quarterly in the evening. Please contact REA if you are interested in serving on the Council.

Air Source Heat Pumps

Is a Heat Pump Right For You?

Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) have become a popular option for our members as they consider replacement or installation of new heating and air conditioning equipment. Recent technology advancements have made heat pumps a great option in climates with long periods of sub-freezing temperature, such as here in Minnesota.

If your old furnace has an older outdoor central AC unit, replacing it with an ASHP can produce significant year-round cost savings. You can increase your savings potential with the addition of an electric plenum heater that will work in tandem with your new efficient air source heat pump. If you are currently cooling with a window unit, a ductless mini split is a great option to discuss with your HVAC contractor.

Selecting and installing

When researching heat pumps you will see the terms HSPF and SEER. HSPF measures heating efficiency and the SEER rating measures cooling efficiency. The minimum standard heat pump is SEER 14 and HSPF 8.2. An easy way to compare options is to look for the ENERGY STAR® label. With our cold climate a higher HSPF is preferred.

Your local HVAC dealer can be very helpful in selecting the right option for your home. Runestone Electric's Energy Services Department is here to walk you through the available rebates and to help you understand the savings potential that lower rates and increased equipment efficiencies provide.

How much can a heat pump reduce your energy costs?

There are many factors that affect the payback potential of any change to your heating system. Home size, efficiency, and the number of occupants have an effect on the savings potential. We have developed a tool that considers YOUR specific factors and provides an estimate of your "ROI" Return on Investment.

Let the Energy Experts at REA help you evaluate your needs and explain special rates and rebates available.

Save Money This Winter!

An air source heat pump combined with a plenum heater is one of the most energy efficient and cost effective heating solutions for your home.

This fall, as you prepare for the heating season, consider upgrading your air conditioner for comfort all year round. Conserve energy and take advantage of off-peak electric rates and rebates up to \$630.



Air Source Heat Pump

For a specific evaluation of your home stop by REA or call us at 800-473-1722

Member engagement is valued at REA

Kristin Dolan, CEO, Runestone Electric Association



Kristin Dolan, CEO

Are you a curious person? Do you love to learn? REA has a wonderful opportunity for you! Our Member Advisory Council may be something you want to consider. A picture of our current Member Advisory Council is featured on the front page. In August members received an upfront look at our operations equipment. They were able to see our pole setting equipment in action, along with a demonstration of how we find underground line outage faults.

This group serves as an advisory group to Runestone Electric. They hear about projects we are working on along with current events. We, in turn, hear feedback from them, what their interests are and what they are curious about. This back and forth interaction allows us to best serve our member-owners. It is through this open dialogue we in turn learn and better understand how best to serve you.

The group meets in the evening quarterly and has heard presentations on a large variety of industry topics. They also have the opportunity to learn more about our area member businesses. Topics covered recently include, the large transmission project along I-94, cybersecurity, the large solar arrays we see being installed, our outage restoration process and much more. Area member-businesses that have presented include, Canary Beach, Selective TV, Country Blossom Farms, Bred and Butter Dairy and Pope-Douglas Solid Waste Management Ash Metal Recycling. If you are a business on our system and would like to present to our group, please contact our office, we would love for our members to learn more about you.

If you want to learn more about your community, your cooperative and the electric industry, I highly encourage you to consider participating in this group.

Fall safety

Tailgates – Yes it is football season once again – Go Vikes! But no, I'm not talking about our fun fall pastime of pre-game tailgating. I am talking about another pre-event activity and a rather important one. Prior to each construction job our linemen conduct a job briefing or a tailgate (duly named as in the beginning the briefings were conducted at the tailgate of the vehicle). They review the project parameters, job responsibilities and most importantly proper safety procedures. Each individual on the project

knows the plan and their responsibility in it. Our linemen work with a very dangerous product and planning is the most crucial step of any of our projects.

I encourage this similar activity on your farm this fall. As you prepare for the day or the activity, look around, anticipate what may go wrong, what hazards to look out for and how best to operate safely. Always look up and look out for electrical equipment. Please especially remember to do this when you may feel rushed. It is at that time most accidents occur.

If an accident should occur or you are around downed power lines, it is imperative you stay away until the line is de-energized. Remember to hop not walk away from an accident if you must get away quickly such as in the event of a fire. We want all of you to be safe out there and come home to your loved ones at the end of the workday – the exact same thing we want for our employees here at REA. It is hard for us not to want to rush in and help, but remember, focus on the safety of the scene and respond accordingly, wait until that scene is safe and prevent any further losses.

Speaking of Preparing...

Please contact our energy services personnel for help with your home heating needs or a standby generator before winter is upon us. We have financing available to help you make your home comfortable.

25th Annual Pancake Feed

It's hard to believe our pancake feed is already over and fall harvest will soon be gearing up. I hope you were able to join us for the festive breakfast event. I always look forward to talking to our members and a huge thank you to those who came up to visit with me about your energy needs. REA wishes all of you a beautiful fall to enjoy and a safe fall harvest.



Happy Pancake Feed goers catch a ride with REA Lineman Tyler Doherty. Over 1,500 members and their families came for breakfast.

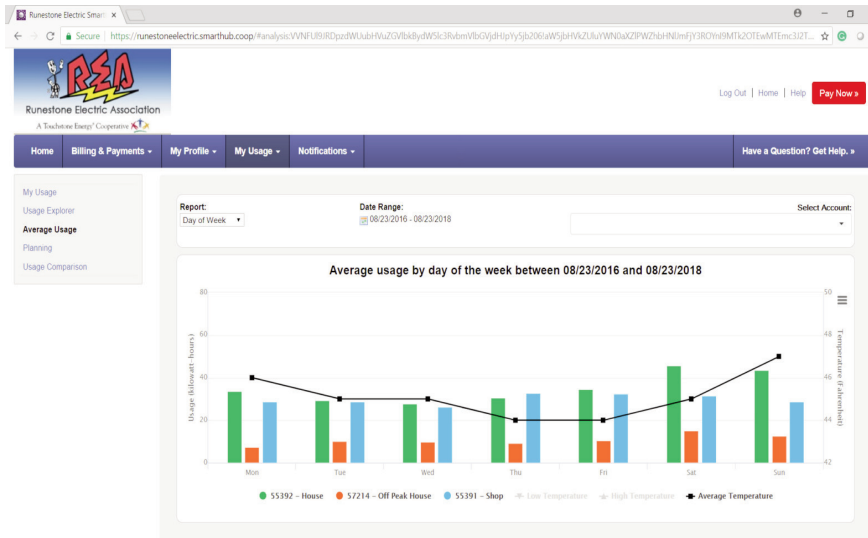
REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - July 2018

- Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for June 2018, reporting electric sales were above budget for the month of June, but with increased demand, power cost caused a loss on the gross margin. The REA margin year-to-date does remain positive and ahead of budget. Mrs. Nelson also provided a quarterly summary of the Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program (REDLG) program.
- CEO Dolan reported on a recent strategic planning session she had with the REA staff to discuss and plan for power supply, growth opportunities, rate design, diversification, operations contingency planning, legislation, and more.
- Director Hjelle gave the Great River Energy Report and reviewed highlights of the July GRE Board Meeting and recent strategic planning outcomes.
- Directors Johnson, Holm, Patrick, Loken, Anderson, and Pederson reviewed the MREA District 3 Meeting.
- Director Pederson and CEO Dolan reviewed the Star Energy Services Board Meeting. As part of his report, Director Pederson mentioned that CEO Dolan was elected secretary to the STAR Board of Directors.

The next Regular Board Meeting will be on September 27, 2018.

Track your energy usage with SmartHub

Free, secure service helps you keep tabs on your energy usage



SmartHub gives you the ability to view your electrical energy usage on a monthly, daily, or hourly interval. You can compare electrical usage, charges, and temperature differences of any two months, side-by-side, to note seasonal or behavioral changes in usage. By using energy markers, you can track your household energy use over dates where changes occurred, such as implementation of a programmable thermostat or when you have guests stay in your home. This is a great tool to help explain energy usage on your bill and assist you in making informed decisions about energy use. Follow the easy steps on the right to sign up for SmartHub.

To sign up for the free service you need to have your REA account number, an active email address, and follow the prompts through the "New User" setup screens.

To find SmartHub, visit www.runestoneelectric.com or download the free and secure app from the App Store or Google Play.

Correcting neutral-to-earth voltage conditions

As a member-owner of Runestone Electric Association, you should feel free to call us anytime with concerns related to your electrical service. One area that can be a concern, particularly for livestock farmers, is stray voltage.

Electrical supply systems delivering power to farms, homes and businesses are grounded to the earth to make them as safe as possible and to ensure their reliability. Proper grounding of these electric systems is not only essential, but a requirement of the codes that govern both home and utility practices. Because electric current is designed to be carried by the grounded conductors (neutral conductors), these wires will have a small voltage associated with them. Objects that are bonded to the neutral conductors will therefore have a voltage on them.

A consequence of the electrical system in the United States is "Stray Voltage". Stray voltage is often defined as a small voltage (less than 10 volts) that exists on grounded objects that are within close proximity to livestock. If an animal touches a grounded object, such as a metal drinking cup, while standing on an ungrounded floor or on soil a current can flow through the animal's body. If the voltage level is high enough, the resulting current may be sensed by the cow. Stray voltage can become a cow behavioral issue with the livestock operator. Hesitation to drink from a waterer, or enter a parlor can be a behavioral symptom of stray voltage.

Although stray voltage is present on all distribution systems, humans usually do not notice it. However, livestock - especially dairy cows - are particularly sensitive. The goal is to keep the voltage level low enough that it will not cause a problem on the farm. Stray voltage can also result from deteriorating and improper wiring, faulty equipment, or improper grounding. Because of high electric use, high humidity, silage acids, and manure, a dairy farm is not the ideal environment for electrical wiring.

REA offers stray voltage investigations at no charge.



The Minnesota Stray Voltage Guide outlines the steps farmers, electricians, utilities and their advisors can take to discover and resolve stray voltage concerns on livestock farms. When farmers and utility companies work together, stray voltage concerns are more likely to be satisfactorily resolved. To download the Guide, visit www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com





Unclaimed Capital Credit Checks

If you know the current address of anyone listed, please contact REA at (320) 762-1121, (800) 473-1722 or email: rea@runestoneelectric.com. The complete list is also available on our website homepage www.RunestoneElectric.com.

Continued from last month...

PEPPE ARTHUR L GLENWOOD MN
PETERSON KEITH W ROCHESTER MN
POWERS JEFFREY M ALEXANDRIA MN
RAATZ ROBERT K PERHAM MN
REDICK JOHN D SIOUX CITY IA
REHBORG ROSALYN ALEXANDRIA MN
ROBINSON CHARLES A MINNETONKA MN
ROLFSRUD BEVERLY BLOOMINGTON MN
ROONEY ANTHONY J GLENWOOD MN
RUD BECKY S EAGLE BEND MN
SATTERLIE SID JR ALEXANDRIA MN
SCHAEFER RAY ORO VALLEY AZ
SCHECKER PETER J ASHBY MN
SCHEMLING MICHAEL A LOCHBUIE CO
SCHREIBER RICK A LONSDALE MN
SCHUELER ORIN ALEXANDRIA MN
SCHUETT WAYNE B ALEXANDRIA MN
SEARS WARREN CLEAR LAKE IA
SELL JOHN D ALEXANDRIA MN
SNORTUM PETER CANBY MN
SOLAND CLARENCE FERGUS FALLS MN
STARK MARY M SARTELL MN

STEFFEN DEAN C MINNEAPOLIS MN
STEINBLOCK EDWARD A SAUK RAPIDS MN
STERN ELROY E CARLOS MN
STERNHAGEN DUANE BARRETT MN
SWENSON PAUL N MINNEAPOLIS MN
TAYLOR FORD LOWRY MN
TOEWS GARY E HANCOCK MN
TORRENS CHARLES D CHAMPLIN MN
TUSA KEVAN T ALEXANDRIA MN
VAN ORSDEL KEVIN L ALEXANDRIA MN
VLIEM NORRIS BIG LAKE MN
WALTER DONALD J ALEXANDRIA MN
WATSON DOROTHY M GLENWOOD MN
WEBER CYNTHIA ALEXANDRIA MN
WEISER FLORIAN H SAINT CLOUD MN
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WILSON LARRY M ALEXANDRIA MN
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Audrey Hjelle, Director
Steve Pederson, Director
Mike Loken, Director

Editorial Staff

Kristin Dolan, CEO
Sue Lundeen, Editor

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.



Farm Safety

Look up for powerlines

BE AWARE.

Keep equipment clear of power lines and poles.

KNOW WHAT TO DO if you encounter a power line while operating farm machinery. It could save your life.

- **CALL FOR HELP** – Call 911 as soon as possible and keep the area clear until help arrives.
- **DRIVE TO SAFETY** – If you can do so without risking your machinery or damaging utility infrastructure, drive at least 40 feet away.
- **EMERGENCY EXIT** – If the vehicle is on fire or you must exit for other safety reasons, jump clear so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time, and land with feet together. Hop to safety in small steps to avoid electric shock by breaking the current's path.

▶ (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>

This institution is an equal opportunity provider