



KILOWATTS & BRATS: *A Success!*

District One Director, Gary (Andy) Anderson, recognized District Four Director, Ron Holm, for 32 years of service on the REA Board of Directors during the District One Meeting held at the Miltona Community Center.

Members Nominate Director Candidates at District Meetings

We tried something new this year and held the District Meetings in the evening. Both meetings were well attended with approximately 40 members attending each event. Nomination results were as follows:

District One: Gary (Andy) Anderson (incumbent), Parkers Prairie

District Four: Rodney Borden, Farwell
Terry Detloff, Farwell
David Lemmon, Farwell
David Staples, Kensington

Members of Districts One and Four 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 Monday, April 22, at Alexandria Area High School. Candidate profiles will be available in the March newsletter.



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



REA Scholarships will be awarded at the Annual Meeting. Attend the Annual Meeting and receive a \$25 gift certificate (1 per membership)

Time to replace your heating system?

Energy Wise[®] Heating Rebates

ETS (Electric Thermal Storage)

Space Heating & Room Storage Heating
\$50/kw up to \$5,000 or 100kw

Geothermal Heat Pumps \$400

Quality Installation Program

Air Source Heat Pump:

- SEER 14.5 \$480
- SEER 15 \$580
- SEER 16+ \$630

Plenum Heater or Boiler

\$25/kw up to \$500 max.
Plenum heater must be designed to the heat loss of the home

Air Source Heat Pump Paired with Plenum Heater or Boiler

Efficiency Rebate \$100

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump

(Must be Energy Star[®] Rated) \$200

Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM) ... \$25

Smart Thermostat \$25



Air-Source Heat Pump

Combine REA Rebates with heat pump efficiencies to start saving today!

Keeping everyone safe is REA's mission

Kristin Dolan, CEO, Runestone Electric Association



Kristin Dolan, CEO

As I write this article, it currently is 29 degrees below zero early Thursday morning on January 31, 2019. I am writing with a feeling of relief, as it will warm up by mid-afternoon to 4 degrees below zero — a much welcome reprieve for all of us hearty Minnesotan's from the last 48 hours. We at REA are so very grateful that our distribution system operated well in the extreme temperature and wind conditions.

On Wednesday, January 30, the wholesale market issued a maximum generation event, calling for all generation to run. Minnesota and the upper Midwest was experiencing a high demand environment as you can imagine in these extreme and sustained temperatures. Wind generation was performing well below forecasts, also adding to the constraint. We are thankful for the baseload and peaking plant generation resources in place to meet the demand of electricity needed.

Our number one concern is people throughout events like this. We have proactive contingency plans in place to keep our employees safe when working outside. It is still very tough conditions in which our lineworkers and our energy management technicians have to experience. It is amazing to see their dedication to get your power back on and your heat restored. A huge thank you to our Energy Management Department for working around the clock the last 48 hours to ensure electric heating systems were functioning for our members. Also a huge thank you to our linemen who responded as outages occurred.

Our number one concern is your safety. We have dedicated employees who are focused on keeping your power and heat on. We accomplish this through proactive planning and by working together with you. Thank you to our members who called and worked with us as we talked you through the steps to restore your heat. A small number of members were unfortunately affected by equipment that at times was unable to withstand the extreme air and wind temperatures that we saw this week. Thankfully there are quick, easy fixes to reset the equipment. Our team worked around the clock to assist our members, talking them through the equipment reset or making a site visit to replace the equipment if needed.

I mentioned at the beginning that our distribution system operated well. We proactively plan for reliability and maximum demand events of our system.

Our electrical engineers plan system design around forecasted load requirements and reliability projects. From this study, they develop a construction plan in which our linemen then build. Proactive maintenance of the distribution system contributes to distribution system reliability. Load control and energy conservation by our members also play an important role during these extreme events. Thank you to all of our members who participate in energy management programs and also conserve energy when the need calls. REA members set a wonderful example of a community working together to make sure all have the necessary resources to see everyone through.

I often get asked, what do I lose sleep over in my role at REA? My answer is safety. I suspect every employee and board member at REA feels the same way too. We don't want to see anyone hurt around electricity: employees or members of the public. We lose sleep during events like this week. During dangerously cold temperatures we are very concerned about your safety and remain ever vigilant to keep the power and heat on. As with nature, there are factors not always within our control, but we can restore the power as safely as conditions allow and as quickly as possible. Thank you to those members who were affected by a temporary loss of power or heat for your patience. All of us at REA are very proud to serve our REA community.

District Meetings

Thank you to all the members who attended our district meetings on January 22nd and 23rd. I thoroughly enjoyed the engagement with you, and we had great questions from the crowd. Congratulations to all of the nominated directors in District One and District Four (please see page 1). I love seeing our democratic process in action. I want to thank our members for their participation in their cooperative.



Help keep our linemen safe. Allow plenty of room for crews at work.

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - December 2018

- Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for November 2018 noting November sales were up significantly from the budget amount. Operating expense was also higher for the month. Right-of-way clearing, which was behind the year-to-date budget, caught up this month.
- The board reviewed and approved the 2018 Rate Study and Cost-of-Service Review and proposed rates.
- The board approved the 2019 Budget.
- The board reviewed and approved proposed additions and changes to the

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of Runestone Electric Association to address changes that have occurred in the law, to modernize archaic language, to provide for efficiencies and cost savings in the operation and administration of the Cooperative, to address developments in technology, to strengthen director qualifications, and to provide additional legal protection to the cooperative. The board approves and recommends the additions and changes for consideration at the next annual meeting.

The Regular February Board Meeting will be on March 5, 2019.

Douglas County Car Care Program wins REA Touchstone Energy Community Award



David Dziengel, REA's Operation Round Up® Community Trust chairman (center right) congratulates Cliff Korkowski, Douglas County Car Care former executive director (Center left) on receiving the 2018 Local Touchstone Energy Community Award. Others pictured include (from left to right) Kristin Dolan, Runestone Electric Association CEO, Barry Wahlberg, Community Trust board member, Kris Chisholm, Douglas County Car Care executive director; Rod Borden, Community Trust board member; Vern Lorsung, Community Trust board member; Deborah Anderson, Community Trust board member; Ron Tschaekofske, Community Trust board member; Janet Johnson, Community Trust board member; Mike Loken and Barbara Johnson, REA board members.

It was an excellent first day on a new job for Kris Chisholm. Late in 2018, the new Executive Director (Kris Chisholm) of Douglas County Car Care, and the retiring Executive Director (Cliff Korkowski) accepted a special award from Runestone Electric Association. REA's Operation Round Up® Trust Board named Douglas County Car Care of Alexandria, as the winner of the REA 2018 Touchstone Energy Community Award, as well as a \$500 donation.

"Douglas County Car Care clearly demonstrates a strong commitment to community that we at Runestone Electric value highly," REA Community Trust Board President Dave Dziengel said. "We are very pleased to recognize Douglas County Car Care's contributions to our local communities."

The Douglas County Car Care Program receives donated cars, repairs them and gives them to needy individuals or families. "Lack of reliable transportation is the biggest barrier to employment for people in poverty. It is also a critical issue for seniors who want to continue to live in their own home," Korkowski said. "For many, getting a car means getting a job. Getting a car fixed means keeping a job or being able to continue living at home."

According to Korkowski, donated cars are brought to or delivered to Koep's Korner in Alexandria. There they are evaluated to determine if they are feasible to be repaired, and then donated to qualifying applicants. "If a family owns a vehicle, but can't afford the needed repairs, repairs are made using primarily volunteers. Repairs are completed by a *Car Care Saturday* repair shop (rotates between one of three community auto dealerships that donate space and labor for car repairs once a month), or a repair shop that is set up with reduced rates for Douglas County Car Care Program repairs," explained Korkowski.

"This area is blessed with many organizations that are doing wonderful things to better our communities," Kristin Dolan said. "We are pleased that as a Minnesota Touchstone Energy cooperative, we have this opportunity to recognize those who positively impact our communities!"

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS:



REA Scholarship Program
9 - \$1000 Scholarships available
Visit www.RunestoneElectric.com
for details and to apply
Deadline: March 1, 2019

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 2018?



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.

Account information at your fingertips



Sign up for for SmartHub today!
Visit www.RunestoneElectric.com

Space heaters can dramatically increase your electric bill

Use the formula below to determine what the monthly cost of operating a space heater will be before you plug it in.



Example for a 1,500 watt space heater:

(wattage divided by 1,000) x hours used x cost per kWh = cost per day

Example: (1,500 watts ÷ 1,000) x 24 hours x 11.18¢ (REA's rate Sept - May) = \$4.02 per day

To calculate a monthly cost multiply your cost per day by number of days in the month.

\$4.02 x 30 days = \$120.74. This is your cost per month.

Bottom line: space heaters are convenient, but expensive to use!

Space Heater Safety Tips

Use the tips below to keep your home safe

DO: Plug your space heater directly into the wall outlet.

DO: Buy a unit with an automatic shutoff in case the unit tips over, or you forget to shut it off.

DO: Keep your space heater in low-moisture rooms.

DO: Keep your space heater at a safe distance (at least 3 feet) from kids, pets and flammable items.

DO: Always follow the directions and take a broken space heater to a qualified appliance service center.

DON'T: Leave your space heater unattended. Always unplug it before you leave the house or go to bed.

DON'T: Place your space heater near curtains, clothing, furniture or bedding.

DON'T: Use an extension cord to plug in your space heater. It can cause the heater to over-heat, and can be a tripping hazard.

DON'T: Try to repair a broken space heater yourself.

DON'T: Put your space heater in your bathroom. The moisture can damage the unit, which could cause it to malfunction.

**Official monthly publication of
Runestone Electric Association**

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Office Hours

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**24-hour outage &
emergency service: (800) 473-1722**

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Kristin Dolan, CEO
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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.

***This institution is an equal
opportunity provider***

**Sign up for the Coal
Creek Tour today!**

2019 Coal Creek Tour

Tuesday, June 11 - Thursday, June 13
\$150 per person for double occupancy \$200
for single occupancy
Included: transportation, lodging,
four meals and all tours

To sign up call the REA office: (800) 473-1722
or email: rea@RunestoneElectric.com
Space is limited