



Your Comfort Is Important

Call REA *first* when replacing or upgrading your **heating system**

NEWSLINE

November 2019

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Add Comfort and Efficiency to Your Home Save Money and Energy with Rebates from REA



Air Source Heat Pump

Air Source Heat Pump Quality Installation Program Rebate:
SEER 14.5: \$480 • SEER 15: \$580 • SEER 16+: \$630

**Air Source Heat Pump Paired with Plenum Heater or ASHP
Boiler Efficiency Rebate:** \$100

Geothermal Heat Pump Rebate: \$400 per Unit

Plenum Heater Rebate: \$25/kw, \$500 max

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

ETS (Electric Thermal Storage) Rebate:

Space Heating & Room Storage Heating:
\$50/kw \$5,000 max or 100kw

Smart Thermostat: \$25

With a smart thermostat, you can control your temperature on-the-go. Setting your thermostat becomes as easy as opening an app on your phone or tablet or you can simply program the temperature once and let the thermostat take over from there. Visit runestoneelectric.com for qualifying models.

1 thermostat rebate per household



Is your Dual Fuel System ready for winter?

If you have a dual fuel heating system, also known as an off-peak system, now is the time to be sure your off-peak controls are functioning and your back-up system is prepared. Your fuel supply should be checked and chimneys cleaned.

Summer storms can damage equipment controls within off-peak heating systems. It is the member's responsibility to contact an electrical contractor should the system not be functioning correctly.

If you have electric heat, but are not sure if you are on the dual fuel program, please call REA at (800) 473-1722.

When will my dual fuel heating system be controlled?

- » Usually on the coldest winter evenings during periods of the highest demand for electricity. But other factors can lead to load control as well.
- » Between 100 and 120 hours per year (400 hours max.) and will not exceed 12 hours per control event.
- » Any time of the day, but typically in the early evening (4:30 - 9:30 p.m.) and occasionally in the morning.
- » Check on the likelihood of control by visiting www.RunestoneElectric.com and select "Today's Load Control" on the right.

REA wishes you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving!

**REA will be closed
November 28 and 29**

To report a power outage or an emergency, call (800) 473-1722. We have a 24-hour dispatch service to take your call.

During this time when we have so much for which to be thankful, we want to thank you for your business!



Stop and read **BEFORE** turning off your water heater

If you plan to shut off your electric water heater using the breaker in the panel you may inadvertently shut off the power to the off-peak meter. This will cause the electric heat to be billed at the general service rate, instead of the off-peak rate.

We strongly encourage you to have an electrician install a separate disconnect switch for your water heater. This would enable you to shut off your water heater at your convenience, while maintaining power to the off-peak meter.

Feel free to contact REA with questions regarding turning off your water heater.



CEO, Kristin Dolan

A Note from the CEO: Stop a Congressional Taxing Problem

Kristin Dolan, CEO, Runestone Electric Association

Regardless of where you live, scenes of devastation from tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, and other catastrophic natural disasters become etched into our memories. Recovery efforts following such events are often long and grueling. And power restoration is one of the highest priorities.

Electric cooperatives frequently receive federal or state grants to assist with storm recovery efforts following severe weather. But due to an unintended consequence of federal tax law changes in 2017, electric co-ops that receive those grants are now at risk of losing their tax-exempt status in the year(s) the grant(s) is/are received. This would force them to raise electric rates to pay taxes on the grant money they received to rebuild.

This is a serious issue for hundreds of electric co-ops across the nation. No co-op should be forced to choose between accepting aid to rebuild their system after a disaster and losing its tax-exempt status.

Under the new tax law, electric cooperatives that receive federal, state, or local government grants are at risk of losing their tax-exempt status. It doesn't matter what the grant is for—storm recovery, broadband deployment or economic development. If grants cause a co-op's non-member income to exceed 15 percent, its tax-exempt status is gone in that year.

Congress inadvertently created this problem. Now Congress needs to pass legislation to fix it – before it's too late. A legislative fix is the only option, and without it, electric co-ops and the millions of American families and businesses they serve may lose the ability to quickly recover after disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, or western wildfires.

Electric co-ops are private, not-for-profit companies created to supply electricity to their member-consumers. They belong to the communities they serve and operate at cost. Most of them are tax-exempt.

In June of 2013, a powerful storm passed through Central Minnesota, leaving behind widespread devastation. Runestone was hit especially hard, with over half of REA's members left without power for many hours, and unfortunately, many were without power for several days.

In the following months, President Obama declared areas affected by this storm a Federal Disaster. As a result, federal aid through FEMA was available to reimburse REA for some of our storm-related expenses, which totaled over \$400,000. Thankfully, REA qualified for \$250,000 in FEMA grants. When budgeting, we do make accommodations for some storm damage, but nothing like we incurred following that June storm.

Clearly, REA and other co-ops should not receive a tax bill for stepping up after a natural disaster.

It defies logic for one government agency to give with the right hand only to have the IRS take back with the left. Even those rural areas and co-ops not affected by natural disasters are vulnerable under the new tax law because any kind of federal, state, or local grant has the potential to push co-ops over the 15-percent threshold.

Thankfully, there is a common-sense remedy on the table. The bipartisan RURAL Act, introduced by Representatives Terri Sewell (D-Ala.) and Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) and Senators Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and Tina Smith (D-Minn.), will restore certainty and common sense. The bill ensures that co-ops do not jeopardize their tax-exempt status when they accept government grants.

Time is running out, and lawmakers must pass legislation this year. Passage of the RURAL Act is essential for America's rural communities. As co-ops prepare for the next natural disaster, relief can't come soon enough.

Please visit www.action.coop/ruralact to learn more and to show your support.



June 2013 Storm Damage

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - September 2019

- » Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for August 2019 and noted electric revenue, power cost, and operating expenses were all under budget for August, giving a positive variance on the monthly margin. There is a significant margin variance through August, which is expected to decrease as expenses catch up to budget the remainder of the year.
- » Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) President & CEO Darrick Moe joined the meeting via conference call to explain the 2020 MREA Budget Proposal and answer questions from the board.
- » Director Hjelle reviewed the NRECA Region 5 & 6 Meeting held September 10 – 12, 2019, in Milwaukee, WI. Director Hjelle received her Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) at the meeting.
- » Approved a funding request to support an electric vehicle charging station at the Simonson Gas Station located off of the Alexandria Exit (#103). The funds would be released to the project developer, once the project is fully funded. Other funding support will come from a Depart. of Energy grant, Alexandria Light & Power, Missouri River Energy Services, and Great River Energy.
- » Approved seeking financing from MN Department of Health Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) and Great River Energy (GRE) to purchase an 8' x 12' indoor agriculture container shed as a demonstration project. SHIP, GRE, and REA, will share a third of the cost.
- » **The regular November Board Meeting will be November 26, 2019.**

Is Your Water Heater Ready for Winter?

Worry-Free
Water Heating from REA



Storage Water Heaters from REA
use electricity efficiently to **SAVE** you money

- » **Manufacturer Limited Lifetime Warranty**
Labor reimbursed by REA (*Limited*)
- » **6-Year Manufacturer Warranty on Water Heat Parts**
Labor reimbursed by REA (*Limited*)
- » **Safe - No venting required**
- » **Energy Efficient**
Efficiency factor greater than .90

General Service Rate

Suggested retail price:

\$1,600.00

-1,200.00 Discount

\$ 400.00 REA price

Energy Wise® Off-Peak Rate

Suggested retail price:

\$1,600.00

-950.00 Discount

\$ 650.00 REA price

- Installation not included in price
- Installation of the receiver is required to receive the discounted price.

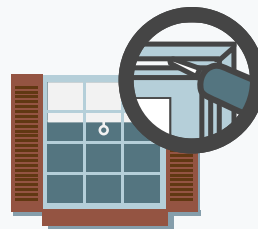
Stainless steel electric water heater
100 gallon dimensions:

- Height: 61"
- Diameter: 27"



This program is for residential and agricultural use.
Interest-free payment plans available. Price includes a mixing
valve, controller, and sales tax. Contact REA for more information.

Easy Ways To Save Electricity



Weatherize

Seal doors and windows with caulk, weather stripping and/or plastic film.

Seal in Warmth

Close blinds and curtains during the night to keep cold air out. Open them during the day to let sunlight in.



Cook up savings

Use smaller appliances, like microwaves, toaster ovens and slow cookers when possible.

Laundry for Less

Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter-weight clothing. You'll spend less time running the dryer for lighter-weight items, which saves energy.



Interested in more ways to save?

REA is here as your trusted energy provider to get you the tools you need to use electricity wisely. Give us a call or check out our website for more energy saving advice.

800-473-1722 or visit
www.RunestoneElectric.com

REA Supports Local Businesses

Here's a **FREE** way to promote your business!



Runestone Electric
Association
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Let the Co-op Connections Card program help you reach more than 12,000 homes and businesses in REA's service territory.

BUSINESSES: Sign up by **November 20** to be included in a special insert listing businesses participating in the Co-op Connections Card program to be mailed in December.

Visit www.RunestoneElectric.com or
call REA to learn more (320)762-1121

Help us Update our Critical Load List

Electricity is a lifeline for members with medical equipment and farmers with confined animals. It is good to notify REA if you have confined animals or if you use medical equipment, such as:

- » Respirators
- » Oxygen concentrators
- » Home dialysis
- » Bi-pac/c-pap machines
- » Other human life-threatening medical conditions

REA maintains this list so that we may attempt to notify members prior to a planned outage.

Having your name on REA's Critical Load List does not necessarily mean we will restore power to your location first. During an outage, we restore power to the largest group of members first. This strategy

provides the highest probability that Critical Load members are restored quickly.

When possible, Critical Load members will receive advance notice of planned power outages. The notification allows members to make alternate arrangements during the outage, if necessary. We encourage members to be prepared with back-up plans in case of an outage.

If you haven't notified REA, please complete this coupon and return it to us with your next bill payment, give us a call or email us at rea@runestoneelectric.com.

In addition, please notify REA if the person with the medical condition moves off the REA system, no longer needs life support or has passed away, so that we can keep our list current.

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Office Hours:
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mon- Fri.

Memorial Day to Labor Day:
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mon- Fri.

Board of Directors

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District 2: Barbara Johnson, President

District 3: Audrey Hjelle, Director

District 4: Dave Staples, Director

District 5: Mike Loken, Treasurer

District 6: Clif Patrick, Vice President

District 7: Brad Burklund, Director

Editorial Staff

Kristin Dolan, CEO

Sue Lundeen, Editor

Ally Coleman, Communications Specialist

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 a corded phone or a charged cell phone in the house, because cordless phones won't work when the power is out.
- » Program the number above your 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

REA Critical Load List

☐ **YES, Medical Equipment in use.**

Type of medical equipment or medical condition:

Battery Backup? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ **YES, Confined Farm Animals**

Type: _____

Is there a generator on-site for backup electricity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Acct #: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please return to:

Runestone Electric Association
6839 Power Lane SW
Alexandria, MN 56308
rea@runestoneelectric.com



Runestone Electric
Association
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative