

Face Covering Required While Visiting the REA Office

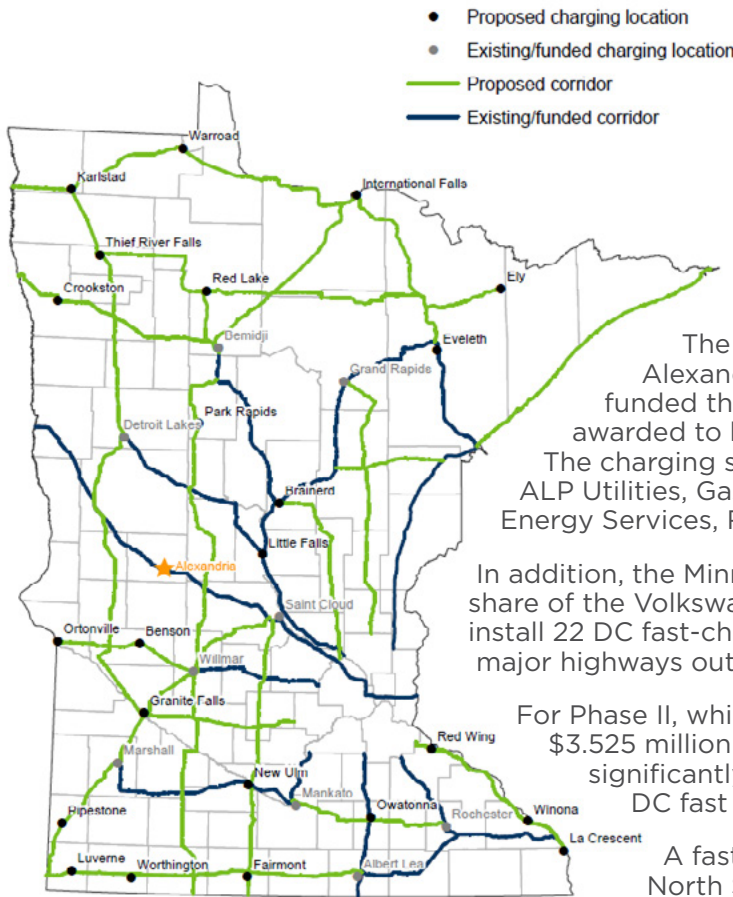


In compliance with Executive Order #20-81, face coverings are **REQUIRED** at Runestone Electric Association effective July 25, 2020.

NEWSLINE

August 2020

In this Issue: **Restoring Outages** pg 2 **Director Spotlight** pg 3



Fast Charging Now Available for Electric Vehicles in Alexandria

Minnesota, which currently has about 30 DC fast chargers available, has set its sights on adding more EV (electric vehicle) charging stations across the state.

The fast charger located at the Simonson's Station Store in Alexandria is part of the M2M project, (Michigan to Montana) funded through a \$4.9 million U.S. Department of Energy Grant awarded to build alternative fuel infrastructure along the I-94 corridor. The charging station was made possible in part through funding from ALP Utilities, Gas Technology Institute, Great River Energy, Missouri River Energy Services, Runestone Electric Association, and the M2M project.

In addition, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) with part of its share of the Volkswagen settlement funds has awarded Phase I funding to install 22 DC fast-charging stations and several level 2 chargers at sites along major highways outside of the Twin Cities metro area. See picture below.

For Phase II, which is underway now through 2023, the state has allocated \$3.525 million to go toward 43 additional DC fast chargers that will significantly increase the number of highways routes with access to DC fast charging.

A fast charger highway corridor from the Twin Cities to the North Shore is already in place for EV drivers.

To locate a charger near you or to map out a trip, visit plugshare.com.



Virtual Ribbon Cutting for the EV Fast Charger at Simonson's in Alexandria

On July 22, 2020, partners gathered for a virtual ribbon cutting to present the new EV charger located at Simonson's Station Store in Alexandria. The ribbon cutting was streamed live via ZOOM. Project Partners include ALP Utilities, Gas Technology Institute (GTI), Great River Energy (GRE), Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), Runestone Electric Association (REA), Twin Cities Clean Cities Coalition, and the American Lung Association.



Al Haman,
Interim CEO

A Note from the Interim CEO: It's been a stormy summer!

Al Haman, Interim CEO, Runestone Electric Association

July was a stormy month with numerous outages due to trees, lightning, and wind. Outages due to trees are generally caused when an uprooted tree falls through the conductor and breaks the line, or a branch weighs the conductor down and causes a short circuit. In either case, the wire can end up on the ground or

hang dangerously low.

When REA receives a phone call regarding a downed or low hanging line, we dispatch someone immediately to secure the area. Unfortunately, in the most severe situations, our entire available workforce is deployed, and we can't secure all locations. So please, always watch for downed power lines following a storm. If trees are toppled, and large branches lay on the ground, keep a sharp lookout for power lines as they can be hard to see, particularly at night. Never assume that these lines are de-energized, even when crews are working in the area.

REA has an outage management system that aids in the analysis of phone calls and helps us prioritize the restoration. The outage management system can analyze phone calls entered into the system to predict the number of unique outages and how many accounts are affected. Based on experience, we've come to realize only 10% to 20% of people who are out of power actually report the outage. If you are out of power, we ask that you call REA. We are not able to automatically detect outages and rely on member phone calls. Please don't assume your neighbors have already called.

When a power outage is not isolated to an individual service location, we begin the restoration with a sequenced approach. Our goal is to safely restore electricity to as many members as possible, as quickly as possible.

This is the sequence we use to restore power:

1. Determine that the substation(s) that serve the area are fully operational.
2. Check and repair the main distribution feeder lines from the substation(s).
3. Check and repair tap lines coming off the feeder lines.
4. Check service to individual accounts or those served in common by a single transformer.

5. If the problem exists between the electric meter and the structure(s) it is the responsibility of the property owners to make the repairs with a qualified electrician. The same is true for electrical issues within the structure(s).

Outages due to thunderstorms are somewhat variable, yet we do our best to prepare in advance. Power lines are designed to withstand all but the most damaging wind, lightning arrestors are used in an effort to protect equipment, and the right-of-way management program is designed to keep trees a sufficient distance away. When a storm passes through, we mobilize as quickly and safely as possible to process all available data in order to dispatch our crews efficiently. After the power has been restored, the event is reviewed, trends are analyzed, and system improvements recommended. In these ways, we are continually working to reduce exposure to outages and their duration.

Bottom line, never assume we know you are without power. Simply call 800-473-1722 to report your outage.



Thankfully only a few REA accounts were affected by the deadly tornado near Dalton, MN, on July 8, 2020.
Photo courtesy: Tornado Tailgaters

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - June 2020

- » Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for May 2020 noting REA recorded the GRE COVID relief payment as a credit to power cost in May and passed the credit through to the members on the May bills. Sales are down for the year, from budget, but power cost is down more, giving a gain in gross margin. Expenses for the year are significantly under budget, reflected in lower labor expense with more capitalized labor and budgeted events and training being delayed, changed or canceled.
- » In compliance with the CARES Act, Mrs. Nelson presented amendments to the Section 125 Cafeteria Plan.
- » REA Operations Technician Troy Pederson and REA Purchasing Agent Derick Swenson provided the Board with an update on the yard pole replacement project.
- » Approved 2020-2022 REA Strategic Plan.
- » **The regular August Board Meeting will be August 25, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.**

DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Barbara Johnson

Barbara is the District Two Director, representing the North-Central region of REA's service territory. Barbara is more than just a director; she's an avid traveler who has visited 6 of the 7 continents! Read more about Barbara below:



How many years have you been on the board?

I have been on the REA board for 11 years, serving as the board president since 2016.

Where do you live?

I live in Leaf Valley Township on the west end of Lake Miliona.

Where is your hometown/high school?

I was born in Austin, TX while my dad was in the Army. When he went overseas, my mother and I came to Alexandria to live with my grandfather until my father returned. We then moved to Glenwood where I started school. We moved around several times and I finished high school in Enderlin, ND. I went on to college at University of North Dakota - Grand Forks for mathematics. After getting married, my husband and I lived in several different places before moving back to this area 19 years ago.

Tell us about your family.

LeRoy and I have been married over 50 years and have three adult children and seven awesome grand kids.

What is your passion as a board member?

I love serving on the board and I'm always learning something new about this ever-changing industry, but probably the most important thing for me is providing our members with affordable and reliable electricity in a safe manor for our members and employees.

Learn more about Electric Vehicles!

What is an EV?

An EV is short for Electric Vehicle. When we talk about EVs we are talking about plug-in battery storage electric vehicles.

EVs are becoming more popular everyday due to innovative technology, lower sticker prices and longer driving range. Learn more about EVs using the websites below:

Visit REA's Electric Vehicle page at: www.runestoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/electric-vehicles/

Visit Energy Wise MN's Electric Vehicle page at: www.energywisemn.com/electric-vehicles



BONUS! Fun Questions:

Tractors - Red or Green?

I plead neutral - I'm not a farm girl!

Lefsa - Sugar or No Sugar?

Butter and sugar

Do you say Wash or Worsh?

Wash

What keeps you busy outside of being a director for REA?

My passions are genealogy, photography and travel.

Three words that best describe you:

Honest, caring, interested (I love to learn new things)

What is the best advice you've either given or received?

Someone once told me, you were given two ears and one mouth, use them proportionately.

What is something others might not know about you?

I was a really shy child and my first grade teacher thought I couldn't read because I was so quiet.

What is your favorite REA program?

It's hard to choose just one, but three of my favorites are Operation Round Up, the Member Advisory Council and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) International electrification program.

NRECA's International Program is near and dear to my heart. I love to travel. On a trip to Tanzania I saw firsthand how important electricity is. The school we visited used solar panels tied into car batteries. This was their only source of power to try to run their computer lab. The headmaster told us it was hard to get instructors to come to their school because the instructors wanted to stay where there was electricity.

EV Rates

Controlled: Electric Vehicle Charging Rate*: 4.69¢/kWh

Uncontrolled: General Service Rate: 11.8¢/kWh

EV Rebates

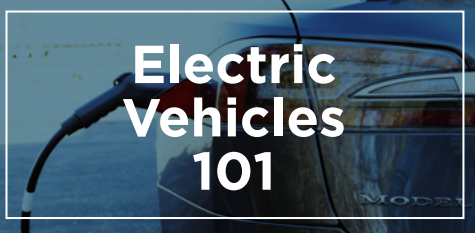
\$250 Rebate for qualifying uncontrolled EV chargers

\$500 Rebate for qualifying controlled EV chargers

**Available to members with a plug-in electric vehicle. An 8-hour charge between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. is available for controlled chargers.*

Community Education Classes Coming This Fall.

Are you interested in electric vehicles or renewable energy? If so, you're in luck! REA's Energy Services & Business Development Manager, Ryan Rooney, will be teaching two classes this fall on those very subjects. Take a look at the class details below.



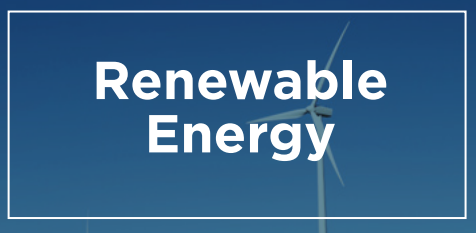
Electric Vehicles 101

Seeing more Electric Vehicles (EVs) on the road and in the news? You will learn how to separate fact from myth when it comes to owning an EV. You will learn about what current and future EV's are available and how to calculate ownership and fuel saving compared to your current vehicle. Common questions like, public charging, cold weather driving, maintenance, and battery technology will be covered in the class. Come and see some of the current EVs in person!

Date: September 15, 2020
5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Location: REA Office:
Main Parking Lot

Cost: \$12



Renewable Energy

Have you have wondered how much of the electricity that you use is renewable? You will learn where your electricity comes from today (wind, coal, hydro, natural gas, and solar) and common ways you can reduce your energy costs.

Date: October 20, 2020
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Location: REA Office:
Meeting Room

Cost: \$12

Class size is limited for both classes, so register today!

Register by visiting the Alexandria Community Education website at www.alexschools.org.

NEWSLINE

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www.RunestoneElectric.com

24/7: 800-473-1722

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

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

Board of Directors

- District 1: Gary (Andy) Anderson, Secretary
- District 2: Barbara Johnson, President
- District 3: Audrey Hjelle, Vice President
- District 4: Dave Staples, Director
- District 5: Mike Loken, Treasurer
- District 6: Clif Patrick, Director
- District 7: Matthew Mattson, Director

Editorial Staff

- Al Haman, Interim 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 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

Dehumidifier Basics



Using a dehumidifier to suck moisture out of the air can cost more than \$100 a year on an electric bill. Consider replacing a standard dehumidifier with an energy efficient Energy Star® model. Replace your old dehumidifier with an Energy Star unit and receive a \$25 rebate from REA.

Contact REA at 800-473-1722 for a rebate form or visit www.RunestoneElectric.com.

No more Landline?

Please keep your phone number(s) updated so we can contact you when we have a planned outage at your location.

Update your phone number by calling 800-473-1722 or email rea@runestoneelectric.com



Know what's below, Call before you dig!



Call 811 or visit gopherstateonecall.org before you dig