



# Electrify your EVeryday with an Electric Vehicle!

Learn more about EVs and how they can fit into your lifestyle on the REA website.

Visit REA's Electric Vehicle page at: [www.runstoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/electric-vehicles](http://www.runstoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/electric-vehicles)

# NEWSLINE

March 2021

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## District Meetings will be held in June - Outdoors!

Normally held in January or February, the 2021 REA District Meetings will be held in June due to COVID-19 concerns. The District Meetings offer REA members an opportunity to nominate one or more candidates for the office of director, learn more about their electric cooperative, talk with their elected representatives, and visit with neighbors. Reminder postcards will be sent in May. **The 2021 District Meetings will be held outdoors!**

**DISTRICT 2 MEETING**

**District 2 Townships:**  
Millerville, Leaf Valley, and Ida

**Monday, June 14, 2021**      **6:30 p.m.**

Join us at:  
*gathered oaks*  
4550 Co Rd 34 NW  
Alexandria, MN 56308

**DISTRICT 5 MEETING**

**District 5 Townships:**  
LaGrand and Alexandria

**Thursday, June 17, 2021**      **6:30 p.m.**

Join us at:  
  
1951 Englund Rd SW  
Alexandria, MN 56308

## Matthew Mattson Completes Coursework

REA Director Matthew Mattson, Kensington, recently completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director professional development program from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Matthew completed required coursework in director duties and liabilities, understanding the electric business, board operations and process, strategic planning and financial decision making.

**Congratulations Matthew Mattson on completing the Credentialed Co-op Director program. Matthew is pictured during the January Zoom board meeting.**





**Al Haman**  
CEO

# A Note from your CEO

## Lake Mary Substation rebuild and transmission line project to increase capacity and reliability

On December 21, 1969, Mr. Joseph Perino, REA's Manager, received a letter from Mr. Stephen Green, Field Engineer for the Rural Electrification Administration. It read in part:

*"On September 9, Mr. (Forrest) Bey and I made a final inspection of the Lake Mary Substation. Its construction was most satisfactory in accordance with the recommendations of Rural Electrification Administration Bulletin 65-1 and is approved."*

And so began the in-service life of the Lake Mary Substation south of Alexandria. It has remained relatively unchanged for all these years with two major upgrades. A new substation power transformer was purchased in 1995, and installation of monitoring equipment in 1998, which was the first generation of "smart grid" technology.

Today, 52 years later, we are making plans for a new Lake Mary Substation on Runestone-owned property. The tentative site will be slightly south and east of the headquarters building, roughly 200 yards from the current location. The exact location is pending transmission line routing and permits, but we feel this location is the best use of property we own, and it is adjacent to the power lines already in place.

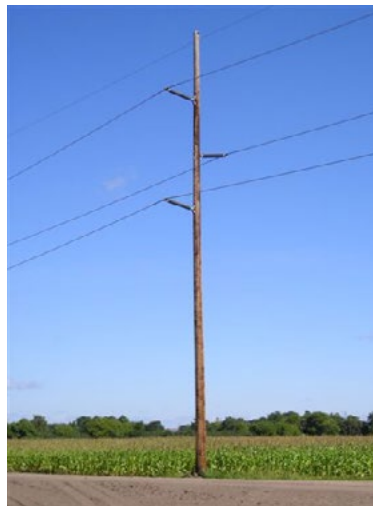
The substation requires a new transmission power line, which will be built and owned by our wholesale power provider, Great River Energy. Their plan is to use part of the existing power line right of way as much as possible. A new power line is necessary to make connection with an existing 115 kV power line. The old service voltage was 41.6 kV, voltage we are migrating away from wherever possible. The 115 kV power line provides better voltage stability and is more resistant to momentary outages and other power reliability issues.

The primary factor driving the project is load growth south of Alexandria. The Lake Mary Substation serves 942 member accounts in parts of Lake Mary, Hudson, and LaGrand townships. The present substation power transformer is overloaded in the winter. Rather than put

a larger, new transformer into the 52-year-old facility, we made the decision to build a new substation and take advantage of modern design, new equipment, and the latest smart grid technology.

Building a new 1.4-mile transmission line and substation is expensive. The substation alone has an estimated cost of \$1,400,000 and will have a similar design as two other substations recently built in the Alexandria area. We expect this new substation to deliver another 52 years of safe, reliable service.

Great River Energy has created a web page about the project that has additional information. It can be found at <https://greatriverenergy.com/project/lake-mary-substation-and-115-kv-transmission-tap-line/>.



**Pictured is a typical 115 kV wood single circuit structure likely to be used for the transmission line project.**

**The rebuilt Lake Mary Substation will look similar to the Lake Mina Substation (pictured below) located on County Road 40 in LaGrand Township. Construction of the new substation is planned for the summer of 2022.**



### REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - January 2021

- » Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for December 2020 noting REA ended the year ahead of the budgeted margin. COVID relief from GRE and the GRE December refund were passed through as credits on electric service bills. The GRE December PCA was kept and not charged on the member bills.
- » CEO Haman presented contracts for approval as part of the 2021 Operations and Maintenance Budget.
- » Mr. Rooney provided the 2021 Energy Management Rate Review.
- » Approved the 2020 Long-Range Forecast.
- » Approved changes to the Schedule of Charges by increasing the storage water heater cost from \$400 to \$500 on the general service rate and \$650 to \$750 on the off-peak rate, and increasing the installation cost of underground metered customer-owned yard lights from \$1,000 to \$1,200.
- » CEO Haman reviewed the 2020-2022 REA Strategic Plan and provided a COVID update.
- » **The regular March Board Meeting will be March 30, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.**

# Steps to Save Energy with Gaming Consoles



Today's video game consoles have life-like graphics, voice control, gesture recognition and the ability to stream live Internet content. They also consume a surprising amount of electricity. With a few simple steps, you can game on with the newest innovative and intuitive features, and not waste energy.

## Power saving settings

The Xbox One comes set-up to listen for the "Xbox On" voice command to turn on and allow other devices to access it via the network. By configuring "Energy-saving" Power Mode, you can disable such features and drop the Xbox One's standby power use by 98 percent. The PlayStation 4 (PS4) enters a low power "rest" mode after one hour of inactivity, which can be reduced to save even more. The Wii U's power consumption is already optimized in all non-gaming modes, consuming less than half a watt when your console is standing by.

## Turn off the controllers

The PS4 includes a useful feature that allows the controllers to turn themselves off when not in use. You can choose to turn off your controllers automatically after 10, 30 or 60 minutes. Xbox's Kinect can instantly recognize body movements. This accessory can use up to 14 watts when the game console is in use. If you don't use Kinect often, consider disconnecting it.

## Keep up with updates

Video game system updates often offer new features. For

example, a system update allows the PS4 to power down automatically and the USB ports to enter a lower power state once connected controllers are fully charged, dropping its power consumption by over 65 percent.

## Don't let games come between you and your cable and streaming

For energy efficiency plug your cable TV cord into the first HDMI port on your TV and connect your Xbox to a secondary HDMI port. Plugging your cable TV cord into your Xbox requires the Xbox to consume power, even when you are not gaming.

Do you love binge-watching your favorite shows on Netflix? Try to avoid using your game console and use a digital media player (Roku, Apple TV, etc.) instead, which uses 15 times less energy. Better yet, you can watch Netflix most efficiently through a Smart TV, which does not require an extra streaming device.

## TV time adds up too

If you are spending more time at home, you are also probably spending more time in front of the TV regardless, of whether you are a gamer or not. Any activity that increases screen time means increased energy use, making it important to choose an energy-efficient Energy Star model.

Energy Star TVs are, on average, 25 percent more energy efficient than conventional models, saving energy in all usage modes: sleep, idle and on.

*Information from Energystar.gov*

# Water Heater Price to Increase April 1st

REA Energy Wise® water heating program uses electricity efficiently to save you money. This program offers high-efficiency storage water heater options and the use of electricity during non-peak usage times.

**Time for a new water heater?**  
Order from REA today before the price increase April 1st!

**Stainless steel electric water heater 100 gallon dimensions:**  
H: 61" D: 27"

*This program is for residential and agricultural use.*

*Interest-free payment plans available.*



## General Service Rate

\$1,800.00 Suggested retail price  
- 1,300.00 Discount

**\$ 500.00 REA price as of 4/1/21**

## Energy Wise® Off-peak Rate

\$1,800.00 Suggested retail price  
- 1,050.00 Discount

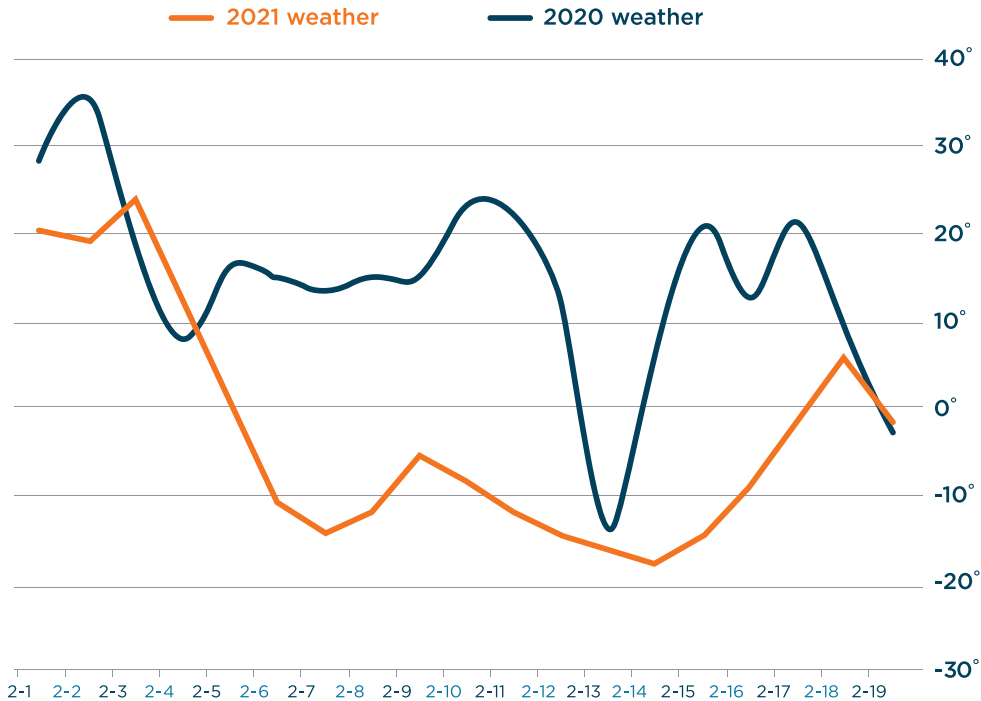
**\$ 750.00 REA price as of 4/1/21**

Price includes a mixing valve, controller, and sales tax. Installation not included in price. Installation of the controller is required to receive the discounted price.

**Residential Warranty** - Storage water heaters sold by REA and enrolled in an off-peak program come with a limited lifetime warranty against leaking. In addition, the water heater parts have a 6-year manufacturer warranty. Ask us about labor reimbursement.

# Is Your Bill High This Month?

## Cold Temps Could be Your Culprit!



## NEWSLINE

The official monthly publication of Runestone Electric Association.

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### 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, 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

### Sign up to get text messages

from REA on control days!  
Simply text #loadcontrol to 22300.  
*Msg and data rates apply.*

## Operation Round Up®



Runestone Electric Association's Operation Round Up® has distributed over \$1 million in grants to community-minded groups and organizations throughout the Cooperative's service territory since its inception in 2003. Over 65% of REA's members allow their bills to be rounded up to the next dollar, with the average yearly contribution of \$6. **Thank you REA Members** for supporting Operation Round Up!

The deadline for the next round of funding is May 7. Go to [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com) to apply.

The following 19 area organizations shared \$12,125 in grants.

### Seniors

- » Alexandria Senior Quilters (\$225)

### Youth

- » Morris Post Prom (\$200)
- » Alexandria High School Senior Graduation Party (\$250)

### Fire Departments & First Responders

- » Evansville Fire Department (\$1,000)
- » Glenwood Fire Department (\$1,000)

### Community

- » Lakes Area Law Dogs (\$500)
- » Ida Lake Association (\$200)
- » Nora Lutheran Quilting (\$250)
- » Smokey Timber Foundation (\$500)
- » Osakis Backpack Attack - United Way (\$1,000)
- » Glenwood City Cemetery (\$250)
- » Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County (\$1,000)
- » The Caring & Sharing Room (\$1,000)
- » Productive Alternatives - Hoffman Day Services (\$1,000)

## Unsure if you participate in Operation Round Up?

Look for it on your bill or give REA a call at 800-473-1722 and we can look for you.

