

Welcome  
to your  
Co-op.



**Runestone Electric**  
A S S O C I A T I O N



**Power Outage?**

Call our 24/7 phone number: **800-473-1722**



**Account Number:**

---



**Contact Us:**

Phone: 320-762-1121 Toll Free: 800-473-1722

Email: [rea@runestoneelectric.com](mailto:rea@runestoneelectric.com)

Web: [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com)

Mail: 6839 Power Lane SW, Alexandria, MN 56308

Like us on Facebook  
@RunestoneElectric

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## Office Hours:

Monday through Friday:  
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Contacting Us:

Phone: 320-762-1121      24/7 Line: 800-473-1722

Pay by Phone: 855-385-9907      Fax: 320-763-4149

General Email:  
rea@runstoneelectric.com

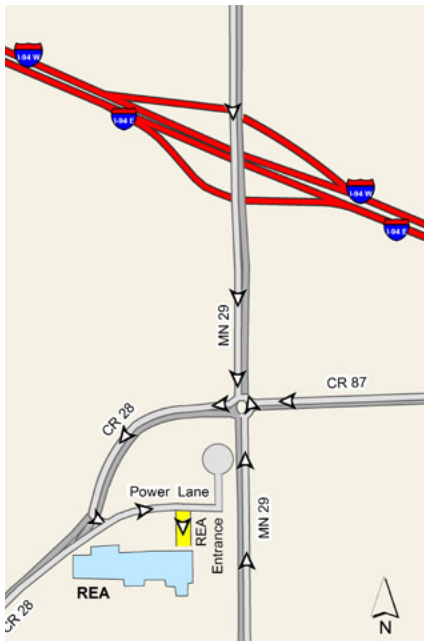
Website:  
www.runstoneelectric.com

Mail:  
6839 Power Ln SW  
Alexandria, MN, 56308

## REA Office:

Address:  
6839 Power Ln SW  
Alexandria, MN 56308

## Directions:



## Power Outages

Runestone Electric has nearly 3,000 miles of power lines in its service territory. The cooperative makes every effort to minimize power outages through sound engineering practices and preventative maintenance. On the average, electricity is available to Runestone Electric members 99.97 percent of the time.

## To report an outage

Please call our 24/7 line at:

**800-473-1722**

That number is answered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including weekends and holidays.

## Safety First!

Stay away from downed power lines, even if you are certain they are not energized. A line that was previously safe may become energized unexpectedly in the process of repairing damaged lines.

Keep a battery-powered radio on for outage related information. When necessary, outage messages are broadcast on: KXRA 1490 AM, KX92.3 FM, Z-99.3 FM, KIKV 100.7 FM, KMRS 1230 AM, and KKOK 95.7 FM.

## Service Calls

When a crew is dispatched and the member's equipment is at fault, the member may be charged.

## Life Support and Other Critical Loads

We need to be informed of special energy needs you may have, such as medical life-support systems or confined livestock. Every effort is made to consult these accounts when planned outages are necessary. Please call the REA office to be added to the list. Runestone Electric strongly urges all members with critical energy needs to purchase a standby generator. See REA's Standby Generator Solutions on page 13.

## Residential Rates

### General Service

June, July & August      Non-Summer  
12.55¢ per kWh              11.18¢ per kWh

Fixed Charge

\$29.25 per month

*See the Energy Wise programs on page 12 for additional rates.*

The fixed charge of \$29.25 is billed monthly and reflects the fixed costs of providing service which is not directly related to the amount of energy purchased. These fixed costs include poles, wire, transformers, meters, substations, maintenance, depreciation, record keeping and other costs which go on, even when no energy is purchased.

### 73 Watt LED Yard Light:

\$9.40 per month

The monthly fee includes installation, maintenance and energy used.

### Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment

When needed, the WPCA adjusts to reflect changes in REA's wholesale power costs from Great River Energy (GRE), our power supplier. This may be seen as a charge or a credit on your monthly electric bill.

## Paying Your Bill

REA bills are due on the 25th of the month. When the 25th falls on a weekend or holiday, the next business day is considered the due date. In the event the current bill is not paid by the 25th of the month, a 5% late payment charge will be added. This charge will be waived if the account has been paid on time the previous 12 months.

## Sales Tax Exemptions

Electricity purchased by members and used for their primary source of residential heat are exempt from state sales tax for the billing months of November through April. In addition, some electricity purchased for use in agricultural and industrial production is exempt from state sales tax. Exemption forms are available through the cooperative's billing department.

## Late Payments

Bills not paid by the due date are subject to a late fee equal to 5% of the unpaid current billing balance. This charge will be waived if the account has a good payment record for the past 12 months.

No collection activity will take place upon a member's failure to pay a one month bill unless there is an issue with previous payments being delinquent.

If no payment is received by the due date the following actions will take place:

1. If the account has been sent a disconnect notice within the past 12 months, a final disconnect notice is issued giving 10 working days (20 calendar days from November 15 - April 15) to get a bill up to date.
2. Prior to disconnection of service, a final attempt will be made to contact the consumer, either by phone or in person.

If you are having problems paying your electric bill, contact our billing department before your account becomes delinquent. They can provide you with advice on a payment plan to suit your specific situation.

## Call Before you Dig

Always call 811 before you dig to have a professional come to your home and locate buried PUBLIC utility lines free of charge. No matter the size of a digging project, if you come into contact with a buried power line, you could be electrocuted or seriously injured.



Remember that utility power lines will be marked for free, up to your main meter. Underground powerlines from your main meter inward, however, are the responsibility of the member. Property owners need to call an electrician or a powerline locating company to have their private lines marked. A list of private powerline locators can be found at [www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org)

Examples of what the member is responsible for locating can be found at [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com)

You can also request and view the status of your locate on-line. Call GSOC at 1-800-252-1166 or visit the website at least 48 hours before you dig. It's the law!

## Understanding your Bill

### REA EXAMPLE Bill

Phone numbers on file if they're incorrect, please contact the REA office to correct

Service Address  
The address where your meter is located

Usage Period  
Dates of service covered by this bill

Please tear off the bottom portion (at this perforation) and return it with your payment

### Current Mailing Address

**Your Account Number**  
This provides the office with the fastest means of accessing your account

**Total due on due date**

**Service Map Location**  
Used internally to identify service location

**Bill Messages**  
Issues pertaining to you and the cooperative will be found here

**Savings from Off-Peak**  
Members with off-peak electric heat will see savings year round from electric heat and electric water heating

**Due Date or Draft Date**  
Payment must reach our office before this date to avoid a late charge

## Payment Options

### Automatic Payments

From your checking, savings, debit or credit card. Visit [runestoneelectric.com](http://runestoneelectric.com) or contact the office for an Automatic Bank Pay form or use SmartHub to set up automatic payments.

### Pay from Computer, Tablet or Smartphone

Using a check, credit or debit card visit [runestoneelectric.com](http://runestoneelectric.com) to create an account on SmartHub. A free app is also available.

### One Time Payment

Simply call 1-855-385-9907 24/7 - free of charge. You can also make a one time payment online by going to [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com) and using the PayNow application.

### Pay by Phone

Using check, credit or debit card simply call 1-855-385-9907 24/7 - free of charge.

### Pay by Mail.

Allow 5-7 business days if mailing a check to make sure it arrives at our office by the due date to avoid a late payment charge. We do not go by the postmark date.

### Drive-up drop box

Located on east side of REA parking lot.

### Pay in Person

Is paying face to face more your style? Visit our office to pay in person. (See map on page 3)

### Budget Pay

REA averages your projected electric bills for the year and gives you a consistent monthly billing amount to pay each month. To qualify for budget pay, you must have been in residence at the same location for one year and be current with your bill.

### Paperless Billing

View online statements instead of receiving a paper statement and monthly newsletter. Visit [runestoneelectric.com](http://runestoneelectric.com) to create an account on SmartHub to sign up for paperless billing.

### We Accept



We apologize that we are unable to accept credit card payments on large or small commercial accounts and irrigation accounts.

## Online Account Management with SmartHub

Take control of your account 24/7 using SmartHub. SmartHub allows you to see your month to month, day to day, and hour to hour electric usage. It also allows you to pay your bill from anyplace, any time. An added bonus? It's FREE!

With SmartHub, you can:

- Make a payment
- View current and past bills
- View energy usage
- Analyze your past and current usage
- Utilize tools to help you conserve energy
- **Go paperless**
- Sign up for automatic payment options



### 3 Easy Steps to Sign Up for SmartHub:

1. Go to [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com)  
Select "View & Pay Bill"
2. Click on "New User? Sign up to access our Self Service site."
3. Follow the prompts and press submit.  
You will need your account number and a valid email address. If you have multiple accounts, choose one account number to sign up under and all accounts will appear in your account.

### Free App

Members with smartphones or tablets can download the SmartHub app from the App Store or Google Play. The app includes all the functions the website offers, plus its easily accessible while on the go!

## Electrical Safety

Staying safe around electricity could save your life. Keep these tips in mind while around electrical equipment:

- » Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- » Don't climb trees near power lines.
- » Never fly kites, remote control airplanes or balloons near power lines.
- » If you get something stuck in a power line, call Runestone Electric Association to remove it.
- » Keep a safe distance from overhead power lines when working with ladders or installing objects such as antennas.
- » Never touch or go near a downed power line.
- » Don't touch anything that may be touching a downed wire, such as a car.
- » Keep children and pets away.
- » Call REA at 1-800-473-1722 to report downed power lines.



**Only attempt to leave your vehicle if it is on fire.**

To exit safely:

- » Jump out of the vehicle, making sure NO part of your body or clothing touches the ground and vehicle at the same time.
- » Land with both feet together and in small, shuffling steps, move at least 40ft. away from the vehicle.
- » The ground could be energized. Shuffling away with both feet together decreases the risk of electrical shock.
- » Remember to call 911 for help in either scenario!

## What is a Cooperative?

For starters, electric co-ops are owned by those they serve. **That's why those who receive electric service from us are called members, not customers.** Without members, there would be no Runestone Electric Association.

Members maintain democratic control of our co-op, which means they elect fellow members to represent them on the board of directors in the spring at our annual meeting. As a bonus, co-op members receive special benefits like Energy Management Programs. When possible, margins ("dividends") are returned to our members in the form of capital credit checks.

One principle that sets us apart from other businesses is our concern for community.

As a cooperative, we have a special responsibility to support the areas in which our members live and work. From sponsoring local food shelves to supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our communities.

Of course, co-ops span all industries, including credit unions, dairy operations, health care, housing, and much more. There are more than 29,000 co-ops across the nation and not all are small or rural. Just look at nationally known co-ops like Sunkist, Ace Hardware, and Land O' Lakes.

Overall, co-ops are more accessible than other types of businesses. We give our members a voice, and we are local—living and working alongside those we serve.

**That's the cooperative difference.**

## Cooperative Principles

*Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same set of core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance. Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844. These principles are a key reason that America's electric cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of their members first.*

### 1. Open and Voluntary Membership

Membership in a cooperative is open to all persons who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender, or economic circumstances.

### 2. Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors/trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

### 3. Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

### 4. Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.

### 5. Education, Training, and Information

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs, and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.

### 6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives

By working together through local, national, regional, and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies, and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

### 7. Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.



## The Runestone Difference

Pair the 7 Cooperative Principles with REA's Mission, Vision and Values and you have the Runestone Difference. From commercial, to seasonal, residential and farm, we work hard to be better than our members expect us to be. Check out our Mission, Vision, and Values:

### Our Vision

To be better than our members expect us to be.

### Our Mission

To serve our members with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity.

### Our Foundation

Cooperative Principles » Our Members » Our Employees » Our Communities

### Our Values

Service » Integrity » Dependability » Engagement » Stewardship

## Membership Guarantees *Exclusively for the members of REA*

### Service First

When you contact our office with any service or billing related question, we will respond within two working days, guaranteed. This is our commitment to superior customer service. If we fail, we'll apply a \$20 credit to your electric service account.

### Courtesy

Our staff is here to help you. If you are ever treated in a discourteous manner, your next month's fixed charge is on us.

### Yard Lights

Your (Runestone Electric owned) yard light is important, both to you and to us. When it fails, we will have it fixed within five working days from the time you notify us. If not, your following month's yard light billing is free.

### Satisfaction Guaranteed

Our bottom line is your satisfaction. Any time you feel that we have not performed up to your expectations, let us know. Our goal is simply to maintain the highest standard of service in the industry.

## Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

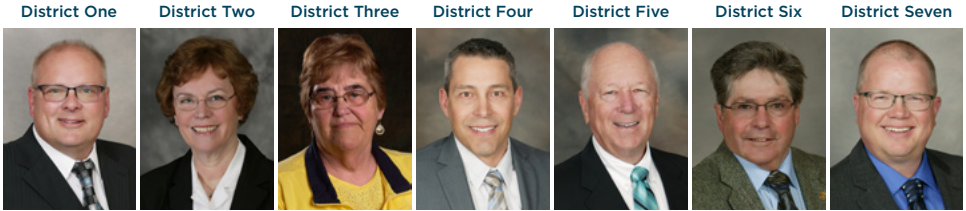
To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint> and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



## Your Board of Directors

Runestone Electric Association's rates and policies are the responsibility of an elected seven-member board of directors. As a cooperative member, you are entitled to vote for the director from your district every three years. Any member residing in the district may seek the position of district director. **Your directors are your voice in the operation of your co-op.** Current directors are:



District One

District Two

District Three

District Four

District Five

District Six

District Seven

**Gary (Andy) Anderson**

**Barbara Johnson**

**Audrey Hjelle**

**Dave Staples**

**Mike Loken**

**Cliff Patrick**

**Matthew Mattson**

### District One

**Gary (Andy) Anderson**, Vice President  
Parkers Prairie, MN  
(218) 943-6100

### District Four

**Dave Staples**, Treasurer  
Kensington, MN  
320-491-6607

### District Six

**Cliff Patrick**, Director  
Alexandria, MN 56308  
(320) 554-7163

### District Two

**Barbara Johnson**, President  
Miltona, MN  
(320) 834-2498

### District Five

**Mike Loken**, Secretary  
Alexandria, MN  
(320) 834-3472

### District Seven

**Matthew Mattson**, Director  
Kensington, MN  
(320) 965-2665

### District Three

**Audrey Hjelle**, Director  
Barrett, MN  
(320) 528-2383

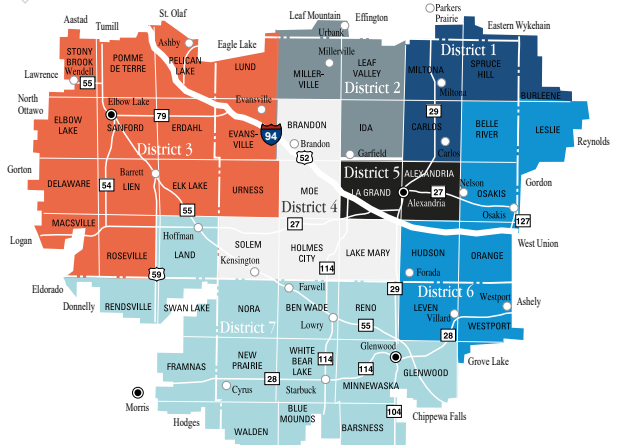
### Interested in becoming a director?

Check out the director qualifications in Article III, Section 7 on page 20 (within the bylaws) or visit [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com)

## Service Territory Map

Runestone Electric's service territory is divided into seven districts. Each district elects a representative to serve a three-year term on the board of directors. The map shows districts as they are defined by township.

- District One
- District Two
- District Three
- District Four
- District Five
- District Six
- District Seven



## Capital Credits

Capital credits are one of the great advantages of belonging to a cooperative such as Runestone Electric. As a member you are more than a customer. You are an owner of the cooperative and entitled to share in what's left over after all expenses are paid. Your share of these margins is called capital credits.

At the end of the year, net margins are allocated to each member based on the amount of electricity purchased by his/her account during the year.

The board of directors decides when to retire capital credits based on the cooperative's financial condition. In the meantime, Runestone Electric uses the money as working capital for operating and reinvesting in the cooperative. These funds are used to retire debt and to build equity, or ownership, for the members.

Should you move off the system, be sure to notify us of your new address and of any subsequent address changes. This will ensure that you receive your capital credit checks when your share of patronage is refunded.

## Wholesale Power Suppliers: Great River Energy

Runestone Electric is a member of another cooperative, Great River Energy (GRE) of Maple Grove, Minnesota. GRE is our generation and transmission cooperative delivering wholesale electric power to our substations. From the substations, Runestone Electric's distribution lines carry the power to your home or business. GRE serves some of the fastest growing regions in Minnesota. GRE's resource mix is very diverse totaling approximately 2,800 megawatts.

## WAPA

Runestone Electric also receives power from WAPA or Western Area Power Administration. The energy we receive from WAPA is hydro power from the Missouri River.

## REA Subsidiaries



### Heartland Security

Owned by 14 electric cooperatives, including Runestone Electric Association, Heartland Security protects your home, your business, and your loved ones. You can rely on Heartland Security to safeguard what matters most to you. Visit [www.heartlandss.com](http://www.heartlandss.com) to learn more.



### Star Energy Service

STAR Energy Services LLC is based in Alexandria, MN, with a branch office in La Crosse, WI. The company was formed in 1997 to provide electrical engineering services and operational support to rural electric utilities. They offer a variety of services to assist electric utilities with distribution of electricity as well as provide a variety of technology solutions to enhance delivery and reliability of electricity. Visit [www.star-energy.com](http://www.star-energy.com) to learn more.

## ENERGY WISE Programs

Energy Wise programs are designed to control Runestone Electric's peak demand for electricity, which usually occurs during the afternoon and early evenings of the hottest and coldest days of the year. These peaks have the greatest effect on our wholesale power cost which makes up over 50 percent of your monthly electric bill.

### Off-Peak Saves Money and Energy

The easiest and best way to save money on your energy bill is to join Runestone Electric's Energy Wise Programs. Depending on the program you choose, you can qualify for rebates, monthly credits or almost half-priced electricity.

Off-peak programs reduce the amount of wholesale energy the cooperative needs to purchase during peak use periods. We pass these savings onto you through lower electric rates. This helps keep electric rates stable for the long term.

REA offers special, lower rates to those members who participate in our energy management programs, allowing certain electric loads to be turned off during these peak periods. Off-peak rates may apply to water heating, space heating and cooling, EV charging, and irrigation. Rebates are also available for some off-peak programs.

Equipment on off-peak is wired to an energy management radio controller. The controller controls the equipment's use during peak demand (usually in early evenings). Because of the way the program is designed, most members never notice their equipment being controlled. The difference shows up each month on their lower electric bill.

For more information, please contact our office at (800) 473-1722 or visit our website: [www.RunestoneElectric.com](http://www.RunestoneElectric.com)

## Sign up for text message notifications when we control:

Text #loadcontrol to 22300 *msg and data rates apply*

### Off-Peak Electric Heating Rates

ETS (Electric Thermal Storage). 4.69¢/kWh  
*Must be primary heating system*

Dual Fuel  
*electric plenum heater, electric boiler, baseboard heat*

Automatic back-up system .....6.04¢/kWh  
*Not open to new participants*

Without automatic back-up.....6.34¢/kWh

Air Source Heat Pump  
*without complimentary dual fuel system*  
Automatic back-up.....7.24¢/kWh

Geothermal Heat Pump  
With Dual Fuel control .....6.04¢/kWh

Electric Vehicle Storage .....4.69¢/kWh  
Shop Rate .....7.85¢/kWh  
*Designed for space heating with no backup.*

#### Minimum Kilowatt (kW):

Any electric heating system of 7kW or larger, combined with an established alternate heat source, qualifies for the dual fuel rate.

*With off-peak heating, off-peak rates may apply to electric water heating.*

### Renewable Energy Options

Runestone Electric has a variety of renewable energy options available for its members. From a community solar garden, to wind and solar subscription plans available through REA's power supplier, Great River Energy, to off-peak charging rates for electric cars, REA has an option to fit your needs.

#### Renewable Energy Options include:

- **Community Solar** REA is pleased to offer our members a simple, convenient and cost-effective way for our members to participate in solar generation.
- **Revolt Program** - Charge your electric vehicle with 100% renewable energy at no extra cost.
- **Wellspring: Solar Energy** - \$2/100 kWh block. This is in addition to the general service rate.
- **Wellspring: Wind Energy** - 20¢/100 kWh block. This is in addition to the general service rate.

Contact REA for more information.

## Heating Rebates

ETS (Electric Thermal Storage)  
*Space Heating & Room Storage Heating*  
 \$50/kw up to \$5,000

Geothermal Heat Pumps..... \$400

**Quality Installation Program**

Air Source Heat Pump:

≥ SEER 14.5 ..... \$480  
 ≥ SEER15 ..... \$580  
 ≥ SEER 16+ ..... \$630

Central Air Conditioning:

≥ SEER 14.5 ..... \$50  
 ≥ SEER15 ..... \$50  
 ≥ SEER 16+ ..... \$50

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

Ductless Air Source Heat Pump ..... \$200  
*Must be Energy Star® Rated*

Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM) \$25

Smart Thermostat.....\$25

Air Conditioner or ASHP Tune-up .....\$25

*All rates and rebates are subject to change. Rebate forms available at [www.runestoneelectric.com](http://www.runestoneelectric.com) or by calling the REA office: 800-473-1722*

## Energy Star® Rebates

Runestone Electric offers rebates to members who purchase certain appliances that bear the ENERGY STAR® label.

ENERGY STAR products save you money and help save the environment by reducing demand for our natural resources.

Please contact REA or check out our website for current rebates.

## Worry-Free Hot Water with a Storage Water Heater!

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

With a storage water heater from REA, your water heater will heat during the night until 6:00 AM Monday through Friday. Currently, weekends and holidays are control-free with the exception of peak demand events in which control times are typically between 4:00 - 10:00 p.m. if it is a control day. If you have a large family or use large quantities of hot water on weekdays, we can program your controller to heat for a few hours in the afternoon at no additional charge.

This program is for residential and agricultural use. Interest-free payment plans available. Price includes a mixing valve, controller and sales tax. Installation is not included.

### General Service Rate:

Suggested Retail: \$1,800.00  
~~-\$1,300.00 Discount~~  
**\$500.00 REA price**

### Off-Peak Electric Heat Rate:

Suggested Retail: \$1,800.00  
~~-\$1050.00 Discount~~  
**\$750.00 REA Price**

*If you are not on our off-peak heating program the general service rate would apply.*

**Call REA to purchase your next water heater!**

## Standby Generators

Are you considering a whole-house generator? REA has a solution through Briggs & Stratton.

Our state-of-the-art system allows you to purchase a smaller generator without giving up the conveniences of whole-house power.

By using the customized priority you set, your power is intelligently routed to priority one, then two, then three, and so on.

The generator automatically powers what you need when you need it most.

### Benefits of Owning a Generator System

Our standby power systems are designed to provide peace of mind and keep your life uninterrupted. Lights stay on, the sump pump keeps running, and your furnace or AC keeps your family comfortable.

### Features of a generator include:

- » Standby generator system intelligently powers your whole house
- » Generator automatically starts when the power goes out



- » Sold and installed by REA
- » From Briggs & Stratton - The Power Experts!
- » Equipped with Symphony® II Power Management - Allows you buy a smaller generator and still get the power you need to manage your whole house

### Generator packages include the following:

- » Generator
- » DirectPower™ Automatic Transfer Switch
- » Basic installation
- » Cold weather kit and battery
- » Concrete pad
- » Remote indicator light
- » 12 months maintenance by REA

Contact REA's Energy Management Department to set up a site visit for pricing, financing options, and installation details

## Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicles are quickly becoming a reality in homes across the country. Runestone Electric Association is ready to provide you with the information to help you understand the ins and outs of battery electric vehicles and hybrid battery electric vehicles! Start your research on the Energy Wise MN website.



[www.energywisemn.com/electric-vehicles](http://www.energywisemn.com/electric-vehicles)

There you will find facts, types of electric vehicles, and even a savings calculator that will compare your current vehicle to whatever type of electric vehicle you're interested in.

## What REA offers EV current & future owners:

### Rates:

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

Uncontrolled: General Service Rate: 11.8¢/kWh

\*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. See requirements

See website or contact REA for requirements.

### Rebates:

**\$250 Rebate** for qualifying uncontrolled EV chargers

**\$500 Rebate** for qualifying controlled EV chargers

## Member Advisory Council

Members are encouraged to participate in the Member Advisory Council. The Member Advisory Council is made up of three member representatives from each of the seven districts (see the Service Territory Map on page 9). Appointed by the district director, council members meet four times each year to review and discuss co-op operations and current issues. Please contact Runestone Electric if you would like to participate in the Member Advisory Council.

## Vote in Director Elections

We encourage ALL members to vote in director elections. REA holds a nomination process at our district meetings in which the names of qualified candidates are placed on the ballot. Ballots are mailed to the members of the voting districts. Members can vote by mail or cast their vote by bringing their ballot to the Annual Meeting.

If, for any director election, there is only one nominee for a board position, so that the nominee is running unopposed, ballots will not be mailed, and the election will be determined by acclamation at the annual meeting.

Any questions on voting or elections can be answered by a phone call to the REA office at 1-800-473-1722.

Details can also be found in the REA Bylaws under Article III, Section 5 (page 19).

## Run for the Board of Directors

Each year districts elect directors. Districts 1 & 4 hold elections in one year, Districts 2 & 5 the following year, and Districts 3, 6 & 7 the year after that. When the district in which your membership resides is having an election, you may seek nomination to be a director candidate at the District Meetings. Nomination by petition is also available with fifteen or more signatures from members in your district within fifteen days after the District Meeting. Please see the Director Qualifications in the REA bylaws under Article III, Section 7 (page 20).

## Operation Round Up®

As a Runestone Electric Association member, you have the opportunity to participate in Operation Round Up®, a program which provides financial assistance to non profit organizations such as first responders/fire departments, youth activities, education, emergency assistance and other community based projects in our service territory.



Each month, Runestone Electric 'rounds up' the electric bills of participating members to the next highest dollar and deposits the change in a community trust account. For example, if your bill is \$83.73, our billing system rounds your bill up to \$84 and the 27 cents is used for community causes.

The average contribution per participating member is \$6.00 or about 50¢ per month. The most a member could contribute to the program in one year is \$11.88.

The fund is administered by Runestone Electric Association Community Trust Board. The Trust Board is a group of members appointed by, but operating independently of, Runestone Electric's Board of Directors.

Keep an eye out for the quarterly distributions in the REA member newsletter, *Newsline*.

Participation in Operation Round Up is voluntary. If you wish to participate, do nothing. Your contribution will be included on your future bills.

**If you DO NOT wish to participate, please contact the REA office.**

## Attend the Annual Meeting

REA holds an Annual Meeting to update members on how their co-op is doing financially and operationally, to elect directors, and to transact business. It is an opportunity for members to learn more about their co-op, ask questions, and learn more about programs offered by REA. Members are notified each year by mail and in the newsletter when and where the Annual Meeting will take place.

## **Articles of Incorporation of Runestone Electric Association** *(As Amended and Restated 2019)*

The Articles of Incorporation of Runestone Electric Association are amended and restated as follows:

### **ARTICLE I Name, Purpose, and Registered Address**

**Section 1.** The name of this Association shall be Runestone Electric Association.

**Section 2.** The conduct of the business of this Association shall be upon the cooperative plan and the general nature of its business and the purposes for which it is formed are:

- (a) To generate, manufacture, purchase, acquire and accumulate electric energy for its members and to transmit, distribute, furnish, sell and dispose of such electric energy to its members; and to construct, erect, purchase, lease and in any manner acquire, own, hold, maintain, operate, sell, dispose of, lease, exchange and mortgage plants, buildings, works, machinery, supplies, apparatus, equipment and transmission and distribution lines or systems necessary, convenient or useful for carrying out and accomplishing any of the foregoing purposes;
- (b) To assist its members to wire their premises and install therein electrical and plumbing appliances, fixtures, machinery, supplies, apparatus and equipment of any and all kinds and character and in connection therewith and for such purposes, to purchase, acquire, lease, sell, distribute, install and repair electrical and plumbing appliances, fixtures, machinery, supplies, apparatus and equipment of any and all kinds and character and to receive, acquire, endorse, pledge, hypothecate and dispose of notes and other evidences of indebtedness;
- (c) To acquire, own, hold, use, exercise and, to the extent permitted by law, to sell, mortgage, pledge, hypothecate and in any manner dispose of franchises, rights, privileges, licenses, rights of way and easements necessary, useful or appropriate to accomplish any or all of the purposes of this Association;
- (d) To purchase, receive, lease as lessee, or in any other manner acquire, own, hold, maintain, sell, exchange and use any and all real and personal property or any interest therein necessary, useful or appropriate to enable this Association to accomplish any and all of its purposes;
- (e) To borrow money and otherwise contract indebtedness for the purposes, or any of them, for which this Association is formed, and to issue notes, bonds and other evidences of indebtedness, and to secure any of its obligations by mortgage, pledge or deed of trust of all or any of its property, assets, franchises and income;
- (f) To sell and convey, mortgage, pledge, lease as lessor and otherwise dispose of all or any part of its property and assets;
- (g) To diversify into other business purposes approved by the Board of Directors, exercising corporate powers set forth in Minnesota Statutes Section 308A.201.
- (h) To do and perform, either for itself or its members, any and all acts and things, and to have and exercise any and all powers as may be necessary or convenient to accomplish any or all of the foregoing purposes, or as may be permitted by the Act under which this Association is formed; provided, however, that the conduct of the business of this Association shall be upon the cooperative plan.

The enumeration of the foregoing powers shall not be held to limit or restrict in any manner the general powers of this Association, and this Association shall be authorized to exercise and enjoy all of the powers, rights and privileges granted to or conferred upon associations of the character of this Association by the laws of the State of Minnesota now or hereafter in force, including all powers as set forth in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 308A now in force or hereinafter

amended.

Section 3. The registered office and principal place of transacting the business of this Association shall be at 6839 Power Lane SW, Alexandria, Minnesota.

### **ARTICLE II Duration**

The period of duration of this Association shall be perpetual.

### **ARTICLE III Cooperative Membership and Operation**

**Section 1.** This Association is organized on a non-stock, membership basis. The Association will maintain appropriate membership records.

**Section 2.** The Association shall at all times be operated on a cooperative non-profit basis for the mutual benefit of its patrons. No interest or dividends shall be paid or payable by the Association on any capital furnished by its patrons. The net income of the Association, except for amounts set aside as capital reserves or additional reserves, shall be distributed on the basis of patronage. The records of the Association may show the interest of patrons and members in the reserves.

**Section 3.** Each member shall have only one vote in the affairs of the Association, and membership shall not be transferable except with the approval and consent of the Board of Directors.

### **ARTICLE IV Original Incorporation and Board of Directors**

The Association was incorporated on December 3, 1935. The names and addresses of the original incorporators of this Cooperative Association and its first Board of Directors are as follows:

John J. Wilken, Brandon

Charles A. Gustafson, Parkers Prairie

Clifford R. Hove, Alexandria

Sidney Angus, Garfield

Chris Nelson, Osakis

David Hvezda, Alexandria

Charlie A. Schuneman, Carlos

### **ARTICLE V Directors**

**Section 1.** The government of this Association and the management of its affairs and business shall be vested in a Board of Directors consisting of seven (7) members who shall be elected by ballot, if an election is contested, by the members for such terms as the Bylaws may prescribe at the annual meeting of the members. If an election is uncontested with only one candidate for a director position, then the director may be elected by any reasonable process as provided in the bylaws.

**Section 2.** The Board of Directors shall have the power to make and adopt such policies, rules and regulations, not inconsistent with these Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws of this Association or the laws of the State of Minnesota, as it may deem advisable for the management, administration, and regulation of the business and affairs of this Association.

### **ARTICLE VI Limitation of Director Liability**

A director of this Association shall not be personally liable to this Association or its members for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director, except for:

- (A) Liability based on a breach of duty of loyalty to the Cooperative or the members;
- (B) Liability for acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
- (C) Liability for any transaction from which the director



# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

derived an improper personal benefit; or

(D) Liability for any act or omission occurring prior to the date this Article VI became effective.

If Chapter 308A of Minnesota Statutes hereafter is amended to authorize the further elimination or limitation of the liability of a director, then the liability of a director, in addition to the limitation of personal liability provided herein, shall be limited to the fullest extent permitted by the amended Chapter 308A of Minnesota Statutes. Any repeal or modification of this Article by the members of this Cooperative shall be prospective only and shall not adversely affect any limitation on the personal liability of a director of the Cooperative existing at the time of such repeal or modification.

## ARTICLE VII Amendment of Articles

This Association reserves the right to amend, alter, or repeal any provision contained in these Articles of Incorporation in the manner now or hereafter prescribed by law.

### Bylaws of Runestone Electric Association (As Amended and Restated 2021)

## ARTICLE I Members

**Section 1. Qualifications and Obligations.** Any natural person or legal entity with the capacity to enter legally binding contracts may become a member in the Cooperative by: (a) completing (in person, telephonically, or electronically) the membership application procedure as adopted by the Board of Directors and (b) purchasing electric service from the Cooperative in the amount as specified below, unless the person notifies the Cooperative in writing within 60 days that the person does not consent to membership. Unless the Board determines otherwise, an applicant automatically becomes a member of the Cooperative upon completing the membership procedure to the Cooperative's satisfaction and receiving cooperative electric service. For good cause determined by the Board of Directors, the Board may refuse a qualified applicant membership in the Cooperative. The patrons (including each member) of the Cooperative, by dealing with the Cooperative, acknowledge that the terms and provisions of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws shall constitute and be a contract between the Cooperative and each patron, and both the Cooperative and the patrons are bound by such contract, as fully as though each patron had individually signed a separate instrument containing such terms and provisions. The terms of that contract shall survive the termination of member service by the Cooperative. The provisions of this paragraph of the Bylaws shall be called to the attention of each patron of the Cooperative by posting in a conspicuous place in the Cooperative's office.

Each member shall:

- (a) comply with and be bound by the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative, these Bylaws and any amendments thereto and such policies, rules and regulations as may from time to time be adopted by the Board of Directors;
- (b) pay all obligations owing to this Cooperative as and when the same become due at prices, rates, or amounts determined by the Board, pursuant to terms, conditions, time, and manner specified by the Cooperative;
- (c) furnish to the Cooperative reasonable access to and execute and deliver to this Cooperative grants of easement or right-of-way on or over lands owned by the member to be used for furnishing electric service to the member, other members, or for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Cooperative's electric facilities. All such easements shall run with the land and shall be binding on and shall inure to the benefit of the Cooperative and the member's heirs, successors, and assigns. These grants shall be in such reasonable widths and accordance with such reasonable terms and conditions as the Cooperative shall require.
- (d) complete any documents or provide any information

required by the Cooperative to provide the service requested by the member.

**Section 2. Joint Memberships.** Any two or more natural persons or legal entities, each of whom qualifies to be a member, may hold a joint membership in the Cooperative for a location to which the Cooperative provides electric service by completing the application for joint membership, provided the persons or entities qualify and comply jointly with the provisions of the above Section 1.

Any provisions relating to the rights and liabilities of membership shall apply equally with respect to the holders of a joint membership. For a joint membership:

- (a) The presence at a meeting of one or more of the joint members shall be regarded as the presence of one member and shall constitute a joint waiver of notice of the meeting;
- (b) The vote of any of the joint members or all of them jointly shall constitute one joint vote;
- (c) The absence of any two or more persons or entities holding a joint membership from any annual or special meeting of the members, shall permit them to cast a vote by mail when permitted in these Bylaws;
- (d) A waiver of notice, petition, consent, or other document signed by any one of the joint members shall constitute a joint waiver or act;
- (e) Notice to any one of the joint members shall constitute notice to all;
- (f) Any one, but not more than one, may be elected or appointed as a director, provided that the qualifications for such office are met.

Upon the death of a joint member, all capital credit rights automatically transfer to the surviving joint member or members.

**Section 3. Suspension of Membership.** The Cooperative may suspend a membership if a member temporarily ceases using Cooperative service as determined by the Board, upon request of a member, when a landlord member transfers bill payment responsibility to the landlord's tenant of landlord's electric service, or for other good cause. Upon suspension, a member may not receive notice, nominate, vote, remove, demand, request, petition, consent, or otherwise act as provided in these bylaws.

**Section 4. Withdrawal of Membership.** Any member may withdraw from membership upon payment in full of all liabilities of such member to the Cooperative and upon compliance with such terms and conditions as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

## Section 5. Transfer of Membership and Termination of Membership.

- (a) Membership in the Cooperative shall be transferable only with the approval and consent of the Board of Directors except as hereinafter otherwise provided. The Cooperative shall have the first right and privilege of purchasing the membership offered for sale by any member. Any membership so acquired by the Board of Directors for the Cooperative shall be canceled and retired. Upon the death, cessation of existence, expulsion or withdrawal of a member, the membership of such member shall thereupon terminate. Termination of membership in any manner shall not release the member from the debts or liabilities of such member to the Cooperative.
- (b) A membership may be converted to a joint membership upon two or more persons or entities making written application and complying with the requirements of Sections 1 and 2 above. Such transfer shall be noted in the records of the Cooperative.
- (c) When a membership is held jointly by two or more persons or entities, upon the death, cessation of existence, expulsion or withdrawal of any of the joint members such membership shall be deemed to be held solely by the remaining joint members with the

# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

same effect as though such membership had been originally issued solely to the remaining joint member(s), and upon the recording of such death, cessation of existence, expulsion or withdrawal in the records of the Cooperative the membership may be reissued in the name of such remaining joint member(s), provided, however, that the estate of the deceased person or successors or assigns of the entity shall not be released from any membership debts or liabilities to the Cooperative.

- (d) Upon the death of a member, the Cooperative may reissue the decedent's membership to a surviving spouse upon compliance by the surviving spouse with Section 1.
- (e) A membership shall not be considered terminated or suspended because the member's service is seasonal, is subject only to a monthly fixed charge, or is subject only to a distribution system access fee.

**Section 6. Purchase of Electric Energy.** As soon as electric energy shall be available, each member shall be subject to the following:

- (a) Each member shall purchase from the Cooperative all (or such lesser amount as allowed by law) electric energy used on the Member's premises at monthly rates fixed by the Board of Directors; provided, however, that the Board of Directors may limit the amount of electric energy which the Cooperative shall be required to furnish to any one member;
- (b) Production or use of electric energy on such premises, regardless of the source thereof, by means of facilities which shall be interconnected with Cooperative facilities, shall be subject to approval by the Cooperative of the application by the member for authorization to interconnect, under such appropriate policies, rules, and costs as shall be fixed from time to time by the Cooperative. The Cooperative shall compensate any member for energy produced on the premises and accepted by the Cooperative in the manner prescribed by law.
- (c) It is expressly understood that amounts paid for electric energy in excess of the cost of service are furnished by members as capital and each member shall be credited with the capital so furnished as provided in these Bylaws.
- (d) If a member substantially reduces or ceases electric use, the Cooperative may charge the member reasonable costs and expenses incurred by the Cooperative for unrecovered investments such as, for example, installation of a three-phase line made on behalf of the member and at member's request.
- (e) Each member shall pay to the Cooperative such minimum amounts as shall be fixed by the Board of Directors from time to time.

**Section 7. Provision of Cooperative Service.** A member shall comply with any reasonable procedure required by the Cooperative regarding the provision of Cooperative service, including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. Based upon different costs of providing Cooperative service to different groups of members, the Cooperative may charge each group a different rate or price for providing the Cooperative service.
- B. The Cooperative may construct, operate, relocate, reconstruct, and maintain an above or below ground electric distribution line or system on or under the member's property, and above or below the ground upon all streets, roads or highways abutting the member's property. The Cooperative may read, inspect, replace or maintain metering and load management control equipment.
- C. The Cooperative may inspect and make such repairs, changes, alterations, improvements, removals from, substitutions and additions to its facilities as the Cooperative may from time to time deem advisable.
- D. All the Cooperative's lines and facilities shall remain the

property of the Cooperative.

- E. The member shall keep the Cooperative's right of way clear of all buildings, structures or other obstructions.
- F. The Cooperative shall have the right to access across the member's property to its facilities from the most readily and accessible public road or driveway for the purpose of maintaining or working on any part of the electric distribution system.
- G. The Cooperative may cut, trim, and control trees, shrubbery, and other vegetation on the member's property by machinery, by chemicals, or otherwise to the extent necessary to keep the right of way clear for the Cooperative's line or system, and the Cooperative may cut down from time to time all dead, weak, leaning or dangerous trees that are tall enough to strike the wires in falling.
- H. Member shall comply with the National Electrical Code, all Minnesota laws regulating the installation of electrical wiring and equipment, and such rules and regulations as may be adopted by the State Board of Electricity, and upon request, member shall provide to the Cooperative proper evidence of compliance with permit requirements prior to connection of electric service.
- I. The member releases the Cooperative from any and all liability of every kind and nature which may occur from member's defective installation or wiring on the member's property or from the member's failure to inspect that wiring or facilities, and member agrees to hold the Cooperative, its employees, and agents harmless from any and all such liability.
- J. The Cooperative may license, permit or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of its lines or system, or if any of its system is placed underground, of the trench and related underground facilities, by any other person, association or legal entity. The Cooperative may permit the attachment of wires of others to the structures of those electric facilities.
- K. Member agrees that member will not do any act which will interfere with or harm the Cooperative's electrical system.
- L. The Cooperative may use Cooperative equipment to measure, collect, maintain, transmit, communicate, and store the aggregate or incremental amount, quantity, or quality of electric energy used by a member and other data or information regarding the member's use of electric energy.
- M. Member consents to the Cooperative using an automatic telephone dialing system, or an artificial or pre-recorded voice, to contact the member regarding the member's Cooperative service or the member's use of a Cooperative service.
- N. Member shall pay interest and late fees as reasonably determined by the Board of Directors and all costs, including reasonable attorney collection fees, required to collect or obtain payment of amounts owed but not timely paid to the Cooperative.
- O. Each member shall indemnify the Cooperative for, and hold the Cooperative harmless from, liabilities, damages, costs, or expenses, including reasonable attorney fees and legal expenses, incurred by the Cooperative, or by a Cooperative director, officer, employee, agent, or representative, and caused by the negligence, gross negligence, or willful misconduct of the member or a non-member occupying the same location as the member, or by the unsafe or defective condition of a location occupied by the member.

**Section 8. Member Equipment Connected to Cooperative Equipment.** Except as otherwise provided by the Board, before and while Member Equipment (any equipment, structure, facility, or other good owned, controlled, operated, or furnished by member) is connected to Cooperative Equipment (any equipment, structure, facility, or other good owned, controlled, operated, or furnished by the Cooperative), the member:

# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

- A. shall comply with, and shall ensure that the Member Equipment, the connection, and any act or omission regarding the Member Equipment and the connection comply with these bylaws and all terms, conditions, requirements, and procedures required by the Cooperative regarding the Member Equipment and the connection;
- B. shall ensure that the Member Equipment and the connection do not adversely impact the Cooperative's ability to safely, reliably, and efficiently operate the Cooperative's distribution system;
- C. grants the Cooperative the right to inspect the Member Equipment and the connection; and
- D. grants the Cooperative the right to disconnect Member Equipment that does not comply with all terms, conditions, requirements, and procedures required by the Cooperative or that adversely impacts the Cooperative's ability to safely, reliably, and efficiently operate the Cooperative's distribution system.

If Member Equipment is connected to Cooperative Equipment, then: (1) the member is liable for damage to, and for the nonperformance of, Cooperative Equipment caused by the Member Equipment or the connection; and (2) the member is liable for, and must indemnify the Cooperative against, injury or death to any person and damage to any property caused by, or resulting from, the Member Equipment or the connection.

**Section 9. Termination of Electric Service.** The Cooperative may terminate electric service either with notice or without notice (as applicable) to the Member as provided by law.

**Section 10. Interruption of Cooperative Service; Liability Limits.** The Cooperative shall provide electric service to members in a reasonable manner. The Cooperative, however, does not insure, guarantee, or warrant that it will provide adequate, continuous, or non-fluctuating electric energy. The Cooperative shall not be responsible for acts of public enemies, war, strikes or other labor disturbances, fires, floods, acts of God or any causes of like or different kind beyond the reasonable control of the Cooperative. The Cooperative is not liable for damages, costs, or expenses, including attorney fees or legal expenses, caused by the Cooperative's electric service, unless the damages, costs, or expenses are caused by the Cooperative's gross negligence or willful misconduct. The Cooperative's responsibility and liability for providing electric service terminates at the point of delivery of the electric service to the member. Under no circumstances shall the Cooperative be liable for any indirect, special, exemplary, punitive, or consequential damages arising out of the Cooperative's electric service.

**Section 11. Non-liability for Debts of the Cooperative.** The private property of the members shall be exempt from execution for the debts of the Cooperative, and no member shall be individually responsible for any debts or liabilities of the Cooperative.

**Section 12. Forfeiture of Membership.** The Board of Directors may, by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the members thereof, expel any member if such member shall have knowingly, intentionally, or repeatedly violated any of the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative, these Bylaws, or any policies, rules or regulations adopted from time to time by the Board of Directors, in which case the Cooperative shall make such refunds as required by law. Such member shall thereafter have no rights, privileges or benefits in the Cooperative.

## ARTICLE II Meetings of Members

**Section 1. Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting of the members shall be held at the principal place of business of the Association, or at any other place conveniently located within the area served by it, or solely by remote communication if authorized by law on such date and at such time as may be designated by the Board of Directors. Such annual meeting shall be called for the purpose of electing directors, passing upon reports covering the previous fiscal year and transacting such other business as may come before the meeting. If the election of directors shall not be held on the day designated herein

for any annual meeting, or at any adjournment thereof, the Board of Directors shall cause the election to be held as a special meeting of the members as soon thereafter as conveniently may be. Failure to hold the annual meeting at the designated time shall not work a forfeiture or dissolution of the Cooperative. If authorized by the Board of Directors, a member may participate in a meeting of the members by means of remote communication when the meeting is held with attendance of members in person or, alternatively, when held solely by remote communication. Participation in a meeting by that means constitutes presence at the meeting.

In any meeting of members in which the Board of Directors has authorized participation of members held solely by means of remote communication:

1. The Cooperative shall implement reasonable measures to verify that each person deemed present and entitled to vote at the meeting by means of remote communication is a member; and
2. The Cooperative shall implement reasonable measures to provide each member participating by means of remote communication with a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting, including an opportunity to:
  - a. Read or hear the proceedings of the meeting substantially concurrently with those proceedings;
  - b. If allowed by the procedures governing the meeting, have the member's remarks heard or read by other participants in the meeting substantially concurrently with the making of those remarks; and
  - c. If otherwise entitled, vote on matters submitted to the members.

**Section 2. Notice of Annual Meeting.** Notice of the annual meeting shall be given by the Secretary by publication in a legal newspaper or newspapers published or circulated in the counties where the Cooperative operates and in a newspaper published in the county in which the Cooperative's principal place of business is located at least two (2) weeks previous to the date of such meeting, or by mailing notice thereof to each and every member personally not less than fifteen (15) days previous to the date of such meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the member at the member's address as it appears on the records of the Cooperative, with postage thereon prepaid. In lieu of publication or mailed notice, the Notice of Annual Meeting may be given by publication in the cooperative newsletter. Alternatively, if permitted and as required by law, notice may be given to the members electronically. If the meeting is to be held by remote communication or if members are permitted to participate by remote communication, then the notice shall include directions for attending the meeting by remote communication.

**Section 3. Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the members may be called by a majority of the directors or upon a written petition signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of all the members. Special meetings of the members may be held at the principal place of business of the Cooperative or at any other place conveniently located within the area served by it. In lieu of publication or mailed notice, the Notice of Special Meeting may be given by publication in the cooperative newsletter.

**Section 4. Notice of Special Meetings.** It shall be the duty of the President to cause the Secretary to give notice of the time, place and purpose of a special meeting, either by publication in a legal newspaper or newspapers published or circulated in the counties where the Cooperative operates at least two (2) weeks previous to the date of such meeting or by mailing notice thereof to each and every member personally not less than fifteen (15) days previous to the date of such meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the member at the member's address as it appears on the records of the Cooperative, with postage thereon prepaid. Such notice shall be issued within ten (10) days from and after the date of the presentation of the written petition mentioned in Section 3 of this Article II, and

# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

such special meeting shall be held within thirty (30) days from and after the date of presentation of such petition. Alternatively, if permitted and as required by law, notice may be given to the members electronically.

The failure of any member to receive notice of an annual or special meeting of the members shall not invalidate any action which may be taken by the members at any such annual or special meeting.

**Section 5. Quorum.** Not less than fifty (50) members, present in person or by remote communication if authorized by the board, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the members. In determining a quorum at any meeting, on a question submitted to a vote by mail or electronically, members present in person or represented by mail or electronic votes shall be counted. If an insufficient number of members are present to constitute a quorum, a majority of the members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

**Section 6. Establishment of a Quorum.** The attendance of a sufficient number of members to constitute a quorum at any meeting of the members shall be established by a registration of the members present in person or by remote communication if authorized by the board at such meeting, which registration shall be verified by the President and Secretary and shall be reported in the minutes of such meeting.

**Section 7. Voting.** Each member shall be entitled to one (1) vote and no more upon each matter submitted to a vote at a meeting of the members. Members attending a member meeting may consider, vote or act only upon a matter for which the power to consider, vote, or act is conferred upon members by law, the articles of incorporation, or these bylaws. At all meetings of the members at which a quorum is present all questions shall be decided by a vote of a majority of the members voting thereon at such meeting in person or by mail, except as otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative or these Bylaws. The spouse of a member may vote on behalf of the member unless the member has indicated otherwise. A member shall be entitled to vote by electronic means for a matter if authorized by and in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 8. Voting by Mail or Electronically.** Any member who is absent from any annual or special meeting of the members may vote by mail or electronically (if authorized by the Board) on the ballot herein prescribed, upon any motion, resolution or amendment to be acted upon at such meeting. The ballot shall be in the form prescribed by the Board of Directors of the Cooperative and shall contain the exact text of the proposed motion, resolution or amendment to be acted upon at such meeting. The ballot shall also contain spaces opposite the text of such motion, resolution or amendment in which such member may indicate the member's affirmative or negative vote therein by marking the appropriate space upon such ballot. If voting by mail, such ballot shall be mailed or delivered to the Cooperative or to a location designated by the Cooperative in a plain, sealed envelope inside another envelope bearing the member's name or otherwise indicating the member's identity. A properly executed ballot shall be accepted by the Cooperative and counted as the vote of the absent member at such meeting. The failure of any such absent member to receive a copy of any such motion or resolution or ballot shall not invalidate any action which may be taken by the members at any such meeting.

If a member introduces any such motion, resolution or amendment at an annual or special meeting that is not included in the mail ballot or electronic ballot, it is advisory only and is not binding upon the Cooperative, even if approved by the members present at the meeting.

The Board of Directors may authorize member voting by electronic means if the Cooperative is able to authenticate that it is the Cooperative member who is casting the vote.

**Section 9. Order of Business.** The Board of Directors shall determine the agenda and the order of business at the annual meeting and at all other meetings of the members. To the extent applicable, the order of business shall be essentially as follows:

1. Establishment of a quorum.
2. Statement that the notice of this meeting was properly given as required by the bylaws.
3. Act on unapproved minutes of previous meetings of the members.
4. Election of directors.
5. Presentation of reports of officers, directors and committees.
6. Unfinished business.
7. New business.
8. Adjournment.

The meetings of the members shall be governed by the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Cooperative and the laws of the State of Minnesota. Business matters and procedures not so governed shall be generally governed by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

**Section 10. Postponement of Meeting of the Members.** In the event of inclement weather or the occurrence of a catastrophic event, natural disaster, or other good cause, any annual, special, or district meeting of the members may be postponed and rescheduled by the President or in the President's absence by any other available officer of the Board. Notice of the postponement and rescheduling shall be given by the Cooperative in any media of general circulation or broadcast serving the area served by the Cooperative.

## ARTICLE III Directors

**Section 1. General Powers and Tenure.** The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a board of seven (7) directors, which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative except such as are by law or by the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative or by these Bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members. The term of office for each director shall be for three (3) years, and terms shall be staggered so that either two or three directors are elected each year.

**Section 2. Districts.** The service area of the Cooperative shall be divided into seven (7) districts as designated by the Board of Directors from time to time.

Not less than sixty (60) days before any district meeting at which candidates for the Board of Directors are to be nominated, the Board of Directors shall review the composition of the seven (7) districts and if it appears that the district membership in any one (1) district is more than 20% greater or 20% lesser than 1/7th of the total membership of the Cooperative, the Board of Directors shall redistrict the service area in an equitable manner.

No more than one (1) director shall have residence in each of the seven (7) districts. Should any member of the Board of Directors change his or her residence from the district from which that director was elected, a vacancy shall automatically exist on the Board of Directors for the district from which that director was elected.

**Section 3. Nomination at District Meetings.** At least thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting, a meeting of members shall be held in each district in which a vacancy will exist on the Board of Directors at the next annual meeting. Such meeting shall be called at the time and the place within the district as may be designated by the member of the Board of Directors elected from that district. The district meeting may be held at any location within the district or at any location surrounded by the district service area, even if the specific location is not served by the Cooperative. Notice of the district meetings shall be given by the Secretary of the Cooperative by mailing a notice thereof to each and every member of the district not less than seven (7) days previous to the date of such meeting. At least ten (10) members, present in person, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The director elected from the district shall act as chair of the meeting. The members present at such meeting shall nominate one (1) or more members who reside in the district as

# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

candidates for the Board of Directors. Nominations may not be closed until all members present shall have had an opportunity to nominate. A list of nominations for director shall be immediately prepared, signed by the Chair and Secretary, and posted at the principal place of business of the Cooperative.

**Section 4. Nomination by Petition.** Any fifteen (15) or more members from any district in which a vacancy will exist on the Board of Directors at the next annual meeting may make other nominations in writing over their signatures not later than fifteen (15) days after the district meeting, and the Secretary shall post the petition at the same place where the list of nominations made by the district meetings is posted.

**Section 5. Elections.** A ballot marked "Ballot for Director District \_\_\_\_\_" containing the names of all the nominees with the names in alphabetical order, shall be mailed or delivered electronically (if authorized by the Board) as permitted by law with the notice of the meeting to the members of districts in which a director is to be elected. The ballot shall not specify the manner of nomination of the nominee. The Secretary shall also mail with the notice of the meeting a statement of the number of directors to be elected. Such statement of the Secretary shall also inform the members of each district in which a director is to be elected, of the manner in which the members of that district may vote for a director as provided in this Section. Any member of a district in which a director is to be elected, who is absent from any such meeting, may vote by mail for a director by marking the ballot opposite the name of a candidate and enclosing the ballot in a sealed envelope inside another envelope bearing the name of the member or otherwise indicating the member's identity, addressed to the Cooperative or to a location designated by the Cooperative. When such ballot so enclosed is received by mail from any absent member, it shall be accepted and counted as a vote for the director by ballot for the district of such absent member at such meeting. In every election, the nominee from each district in which a vacancy exists, receiving the largest number of votes of members in that district shall be elected to the Board of Directors. In the case of a tie vote, the winner shall be determined by a flip of a coin. Notwithstanding anything in this Section, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors.

Members may not nominate from the floor of an annual or special meeting of the members an individual to run for election as a director candidate.

**Uncontested Elections.** Notwithstanding anything in these bylaws or applicable procedural rules to the contrary, if for any director election there is only one nominee for a board position so that the nominee is running unopposed, ballots need not be provided by mail or electronically to the members in that district, and the election shall be made by the chairperson of the member meeting entertaining a motion to elect the single candidate by a voice vote, show of hands, or other appropriate means.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** Subject to the provisions of these Bylaws with respect to the removal of directors, vacancies occurring in the Board of Directors may be filled by a majority vote of the remaining directors. The director appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the vacancy shall serve until the next annual or special meeting of the Cooperative, when an election shall be held for director for the remainder of the unexpired term in that district.

**Section 7. Qualifications.** No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who:

- (a) is not a bona fide member of the Cooperative receiving electric service from the Cooperative in the district that the director represents or would represent if elected;
- (b) is not a bona fide resident of the district from which he or she is elected or for which he or she is a candidate; (bona fide resident shall be defined as occupying and continuously and materially purchasing electric service at a location within any director district from which the director is elected or for which he or she is a candidate for at least nine (9) months each calendar year);

- (c) is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise substantially competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated business;
- (d) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination was or during service on the Board of Directors is adjudged to be guilty of a felony;
- (e) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination was a full-time employee of the Cooperative;
- (f) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination was an employee of a statewide association of electric cooperatives, an electric generation and transmission cooperative, or any other entity in which an electric cooperative is a member.
- (g) within five (5) years preceding a director candidate's nomination or during his or her term if elected was or becomes employed by a labor union which represents, has represented, or has endeavored to represent any employee of the cooperative;
- (h) is a close relative of an incumbent who is not up for reelection at that time;
- (i) is a close relative of an employee of the Cooperative;
- (j) is or becomes the full-time employee or agent or, who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of, another director;
- (k) does not have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts;
- (l) is absent from three or more regular meetings ("Unexcused Absences") of the Board of Directors during any consecutive twelve month period, unless excused for good cause (an "Excused Absence") by the Board. If a director participates in more than one regular meeting during any consecutive twelve month period by electronic communication, that director shall be considered absent from that meeting for purposes of determining the number of the director's Unexcused Absences, unless the attendance by electronic communication is approved for good cause by the Board.

A "close relative" as used in these Bylaws is a person who:

- a. is by blood, law, or marriage (including half, step, foster, and adoptive relations) a child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, or sibling; or
- b. is a spouse or resides in the same residence.

A member that is an authorized farm corporation or family farm corporation may select an individual member residing on or actively operating the farm to be eligible for election to the board.

With regard to the provisions in Paragraphs (h) and (i) above, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be reelected a director if, during a director's incumbency, a director becomes a first kindred relative of another director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which the director was not a party.

After the Board of Directors determines that a director or nominee for director lacks eligibility under the provisions of this Section or as may be provided elsewhere in these Bylaws, it shall be the duty of the Board to promptly make a disqualification. After the Board of Directors determines that any director nominee or any existing director lacks eligibility under this Section, it shall be the duty of the Board to withhold such position from such director nominee or to cause a director to be removed from the Board of Directors, as the case may be.

Notwithstanding anything contained in this Section, failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any election of directors or any action taken by them.

A former director is ineligible to become an employee of the Cooperative for five (5) years following termination of the director's service on the Board of Directors.



# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

## Section 8. Compensation.

- (a) Directors shall receive such compensation (including any benefits) for service approved by a vote of a majority of the members present in person and voting at an annual or special meeting of the Cooperative. If authorized by the Board, directors may also be reimbursed for expenses actually and necessarily incurred in carrying out Cooperative business.
- (b) Compensation for directors shall first be recommended by Resolution of the Board of Directors and submitted to the Member Advisory Council. If approved by a majority vote of the Member Advisory Council, the Resolution shall be recommended to the annual or special meeting for adoption. The text of the proposed compensation as set forth in the Resolution shall be set forth in the Notice of Meeting.
- (c) No director shall receive any additional compensation for serving the Cooperative as an officer, agent or in any other capacity.
- (d) A membership vote on director compensation under this Section shall not be subject to Article II, Section 8, Voting by Mail.

**Section 9. Rules and Regulations.** The Board of Directors shall have the power to make and adopt such rules and regulations, not inconsistent with law, the Articles of Incorporation of the Cooperative or these Bylaws, as it may deem advisable for the management, administration and regulation of the business and affairs of the Cooperative.

**Section 10. Accounting System and Reports.** The Board of Directors shall cause to be established and maintained a complete accounting system which, among other things, subject to applicable laws and rules and regulations of any regulatory body, shall conform to such accounting system as may from time to time be designated by the Administrator of the Rural Utilities Services of the United States Department of Agriculture. The Board of Directors shall after the close of each fiscal year cause to be made a full and complete audit of the accounts, records and financial condition of the Cooperative as of the end of each fiscal year. Such audit report shall be performed by a certified public accountant, and a summary of the report shall be submitted to the members at the following annual meeting. The audit report shall be provided to a member upon request.

**Section 11. Members' Power to Remove a Director or Officer.** The members shall have the power to remove any director or officer for cause related to the duties of the position of the director or officer. Any member may bring charges against an officer or director by filing them in writing with the Secretary, together with a petition signed by twenty percent (20%) of the members, requesting the removal of the officer or director in question. The removal shall be voted upon at the next regular or special meeting of the members. To be heard at the annual meeting the charges and petition must be received by the Secretary at least 60 days prior to the annual meeting. The director or officer against whom such charges have been brought shall be informed in writing of the charges previous to the meeting and shall have an opportunity at the meeting to be heard in person or by counsel and to present evidence; and the person or persons bringing the charges against the director shall have the same opportunity. If a director is removed by the members, then the vacancy shall be filled by a vote of the members of the district for which the vacancy exists at a special meeting of the members to be held within 60 days of the removal. The members of the district shall be mailed a notice of the meeting and a ballot containing the names of all candidates who have petitioned for nomination pursuant to Article III, Section 4.

**Section 12. Director Conduct.** A director shall discharge his or her duties, including duties as a board committee member:

- (a) In good faith;
- (b) With the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances;

- (c) In a manner the director reasonably believes to be in the Cooperative's best interests; and
- (d) Consistent with established board policies regarding director ethics and code of conduct.

The Board of Directors shall have the power to censure, in such form and to such degree as it deems appropriate, any director who does not conform to the provisions of this section in the discharge of his or her duties. Such censure may, in the discretion of the Board of Directors, include a recommendation to the membership that the director be removed from office.

## ARTICLE IV Meetings of Directors

**Section 1. Regular Meetings.** A regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held without notice other than this Bylaw, immediately after, and at the same place as the annual meeting of the members or by unanimous consent in any other convenient location. A regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at least ten (10) times a year at approximately monthly intervals at the office of the Cooperative at Alexandria, Minnesota or at a place designated by the Board of Directors. Such meeting may be held without notice other than a resolution fixing the time and place of the regular meetings.

**Section 2. Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or any three (3) directors. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Board of Directors may fix the time and place for the holding of any special meeting of the Board of Directors called by them.

**Section 3. Notice.** Notice of the time, place and purpose of any special meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given by written notice, delivered personally or mailed, to each director at the director's last known address. Notice may also be given by telephone or by electronic means, such as a facsimile machine or computer message, in lieu of written notice. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail so addressed, with postage thereon prepaid, at least five (5) days before the date set for the meeting. If in person, by telephone, or by electronic means, such notice shall be made at least thirty-six (36) hours before the time set for the meeting. The attendance of a director at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except in case a director shall attend a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting shall not have been lawfully called or convened. At any time, a director may also waive notice of any board meeting by delivering to the Cooperative a written waiver of notice signed by the director and later filed with the board minutes or the Cooperative's records.

**Section 4. Quorum.** A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors, provided, that if less than a majority of the directors are present at said meeting, a majority of the directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

**Section 5. Manner of Acting.** The act of the majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors.

**Section 6. Participation in Meetings by Means of Remote Communication.** A director may participate in a board meeting by means of conference telephone or, if authorized by the Board, by such other means of remote communication, in each case through which the director, other directors so participating, and all directors physically present at the meeting may communicate with each other during the meeting. Participation in a meeting by that means constitutes presence at the meeting, but the director may be considered absent for purposes of the attendance requirement to remain qualified as a director if the director participates in more than one regular meeting during any consecutive 12 month period by electronic communications as provided in Article III, Section 7(l).

**Section 7. Board Action by Written Consent.** Without a board meeting, the Board may take action required or permitted to be taken at a board meeting if the action is

# Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws Continued...

taken by all directors and is evidenced by one or more written or electronic consents describing the action taken, signed by each director, delivered to the Cooperative, and included with the Cooperative's board meeting minutes. Except when a different effective date is provided, action taken by director written consent is effective when the last director signs the director written consent. A director written consent has the effect of, and may be described as, a board meeting vote.

## ARTICLE V Officers

**Section 1. Number.** The officers of the Cooperative shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may be determined by the Board of Directors from time to time. The offices of Secretary and of Treasurer may be held by the same person.

**Section 2. Election and Term of Office.** The officers shall be elected, by ballot, annually by and from the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the Board of Directors held after each annual meeting of the members; provided, when there is only one nominee for any office, then, if there is no objection, written balloting may be dispensed with and voting may be conducted in any other proper manner. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as may be convenient. Each officer shall hold office until the first meeting of the Board of Directors following the next succeeding annual meeting of the members or until the director's successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified, subject to the provisions of these Bylaws with respect to the removal of officers.

**Section 3. Removal.** Any officer or agent elected or appointed by the Board of Directors may be removed by the Board of Directors whenever in its judgment the best interests of the Cooperative will be served thereby. Members may remove an officer at a membership meeting for cause related to the duties of the position of the officer and fill the vacancy caused by the removal.

**Section 4. Vacancies.** Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, a vacancy in any office may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

**Section 5. President.** The President:

- (a) shall be the principal officer of the Cooperative and shall preside at all meetings of the members and of the Board of Directors;
- (b) may sign, with the Secretary, any deeds, mortgages, deeds of trust, notes, bonds, contracts or other instruments authorized by the Board of Directors to be executed, except in cases in which the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or by these Bylaws to some other officer or agent of the Cooperative, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed; and
- (c) in general shall perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors from time to time.

**Section 6. Vice-President.** In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President and shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

**Section 7. Secretary.** The Secretary shall:

- (a) be responsible for preparing, or supervising the preparation of, the minutes of meetings of the members and the Board of Directors;
- (b) see that all notices are duly given in accordance with these Bylaws or as required by law;
- (c) be custodian of the corporate records and of the seal of the Cooperative, and shall affix the seal to any document when duly authorized in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws;

- (d) keep a register of the post office address of each member which shall be furnished to the Secretary by such member;
- (e) have general charge of the membership records of the Cooperative;
- (f) keep on file at all times a complete copy of the Bylaws of the Cooperative containing all amendments thereto, which copy shall always be open to the inspection of any member, and upon request of a member and at the expense of the Cooperative forward a copy of the Bylaws and of all amendments thereto to the requesting member; and
- (g) in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may delegate any or all of the duties to responsible employees of the Cooperative.

**Section 8. Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall:

- (a) be responsible for or supervise the care and custody of all funds and securities of the Cooperative;
- (b) be responsible for or supervise the receipt and the giving of receipts for moneys due and payable to the Cooperative from any source whatsoever, and the deposit of all such moneys in the name of the Cooperative in such financial institution(s) as shall be selected by the Board of Directors; and
- (c) in general perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer as from time to time may be assigned by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may delegate any or all of the duties to responsible employees of the Cooperative.

**Section 9. Chief Executive Officer.** The Board of Directors shall employ a Chief Executive Officer who may be, but who shall not be required to be, a member of the Cooperative. The Chief Executive Officer shall have general charge and management of the business of the Cooperative, subject to the control of the board of directors, and perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time require and shall have such other authority as the Board of Directors may from time to time vest in him or her.

**Section 10. Bonds of Officers.** The Treasurer and any other officer or agent of the Cooperative charged with responsibility for the custody of any of its funds or property, shall give bond in such sum and with such surety as the Board of Directors shall determine. The Board of Directors in its discretion may also require any other officer, agent or employee of the Cooperative to give bond in such amount and with such surety as it shall determine.

**Section 11. Compensation.** The powers, duties and budget for compensation of officers, agents and employees shall be fixed by the Board of Directors, except compensation of directors which is governed by Article III, Section 8.

**Section 12. Reports.** The officers of the Cooperative shall submit at each annual meeting of the members reports covering the business of the Cooperative for the previous fiscal year and showing the condition of the Cooperative at the close of such fiscal year.

## ARTICLE VI Contracts, Checks and Deposits

**Section 1. Contracts.** Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Board of Directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name and on behalf of the Cooperative, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

**Section 2. Checks, Drafts, Etc.** All checks, drafts or other orders for the payment of money, and all notes, bonds or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Cooperative shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, employee or employees of the Cooperative and in such manner as shall from time to time to be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.



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**Section 3. Deposits.** All funds of the Cooperative shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Cooperative in such insured financial institution(s) as the Board of Directors may select.

## ARTICLE VII Non-Profit Operation

**Section 1. Interest or Dividends on Capital Prohibited.** The Cooperative shall at all times be operated on a cooperative non-profit basis for the mutual benefit of its patrons. No interest or dividends shall be paid or payable by the Cooperative on any capital furnished by its patrons.

**Section 2. Patronage Capital in Connection with Furnishing Electric Energy.** In the furnishing of electric energy the Cooperative's operations shall be so conducted that all patrons will through their patronage furnish capital for the Cooperative. In order to induce patronage and to assure that the Cooperative will operate on a non-profit basis, the Cooperative is obligated to account on a patronage basis to all its patrons, for all amounts received and receivable from the furnishing of electric energy in excess of operating costs and expenses properly chargeable against the furnishing of electric energy.

All such amounts in excess of operating costs and expenses at the moment of receipt by the Cooperative are received with the understanding that they are furnished by the patrons as capital. The Cooperative is obligated to pay by credits to a capital account for each patron all such amounts in excess of operating costs and expenses. The records of the Cooperative shall be set up and kept in such a manner that at the end of each fiscal year the amount of capital, if any, so furnished by each patron is clearly reflected and credited in an appropriate record to the capital account of each patron, and the Cooperative shall within a reasonable time after the close of the fiscal year notify each patron of the amount of capital so credited to the patron's account. All such amounts credited to the capital account of any patron shall have the same status as though they had been paid to the patron in cash in pursuance of a legal obligation to do so and the patron has then furnished the Cooperative corresponding amounts for capital.

As reasonable and fair, the Cooperative may allocate capital credits to classes of similarly situated patrons under different manners, methods, and timing, provided the Cooperative allocates capital credits to similarly situated patrons under the same manner, method, and timing.

In the event of dissolution or liquidation of the Cooperative, after all outstanding indebtedness of the Cooperative shall have been paid, outstanding capital credits shall be retired without priority on a pro rata basis before any payments are made on account of property rights of members.

If, at any time prior to dissolution or liquidation, the Board of Directors shall determine that the financial condition of the Cooperative will not be impaired thereby, the capital then credited to patrons' accounts may be retired in full or in part. The Board of Directors shall determine the method, basis, priority and order of retirement, if any, for all amounts heretofore and hereafter furnished as capital.

Capital credited to the account of each patron shall be assignable only on the records of the Cooperative pursuant to written instructions from the assignor and only to successors in interest or successors in occupancy in all or a part of such patron's premises served by the Cooperative unless the Board of Directors, acting under policies of general application, shall determine otherwise.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the Board of Directors, at its discretion, shall have the power at any time upon the death of any patron who is a natural person, if the legal representatives of the deceased patron's estate shall request in writing that the capital credited to any such patron be retired prior to the time such capital would otherwise be retired under the provisions of these Bylaws, to retire capital credited to any such patron immediately upon such terms and conditions as the Board of Directors, acting under policies of general application, and the legal representatives of such patron's estate shall agree upon; provided, however, that the financial condition of the Cooperative will not be impaired thereby.

**Section 3. Capital Credits in Connection with Furnishing Electric Energy, and Other Services.** The Board of Directors shall have the power to adopt rules providing for the separate retirement of that portion of capital credited to the accounts of patrons which corresponds to capital credited to the account of the Cooperative by an organization furnishing electric service to the Cooperative. Such rules shall (a) establish a method for determining the power supply portion of capital credited to each patron for each applicable fiscal year, (b) provide for separate identification in the Cooperative's records of the power supply portion of capital credited to the Cooperative's patrons, (c) provide for appropriate notifications to patrons with respect to the power supply portion of capital credited to their accounts, and (d) preclude a general retirement of the power supply portion of capital credited to patrons for any fiscal year prior to the general retirement of other capital credited to patrons for the same year or of any capital credited to patrons for any prior fiscal year.

Further, the Board of Directors shall have a like power to adopt rules providing for the separate retirement of such portions of capital credited to the accounts of patrons which correspond to capital credited to the account of the Cooperative by any other organization furnishing goods or services to the Cooperative.

**Section 4. Non-Operating Margins.** Funds and amounts, other than amounts received and receivable from the furnishing of electric service and in excess of operating costs and expenses chargeable against the furnishing of electric energy ("operating margins"), received by the Cooperative that exceed the Cooperative's costs and expenses ("non-operating margins") may be:

- (a) allocated as capital credits to patrons in the same manner as the Cooperative allocates operating margins as capital credits to patrons; or
- (b) retained or used by the Cooperative as non-allocated capital and used to pay or offset any indebtedness, cost, expense or to establish a reserve.

## ARTICLE VIII Waiver of Notice

Any member or director may waive, in writing any notice of meetings required to be given by law, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws, and any such waiver shall be effective whether given before, at, or after the meeting. In case of a joint membership a waiver of notice signed by any of the joint members shall be deemed a waiver of notice of such meeting by both joint members.

## ARTICLE IX Security Interest in Patronage Capital

As security for the full and prompt payment and performance when due of any and all obligations or indebtedness that may be owed by a patron (member or non-member) to the Cooperative, the Cooperative shall have a continuing security interest in and recoupment claim against the patronage capital allocated to a patron. Each patron authorizes the Cooperative to perfect that security interest by any filing required under the Uniform Commercial Code. Regardless of a statute of limitation or other time limitation, after retiring capital credits allocated to a patron or former patron, the Cooperative may recoup, offset, or set off an amount owed to the Cooperative by the patron or former patron, including any service fees, by reducing the amount of retired capital credits paid by the amount owed to the Cooperative.

## ARTICLE X Dispute Resolution

Any and all disputes, claims or controversies arising from or related in any way to the Cooperative's provision of electricity or other services, or in its furnishing of any goods, or in the conduct of its operations, other than disputes or claims relating to the payment for electrical energy and/or other services provided by the Cooperative, that are not resolved by agreement of the parties, shall, at the request of either party, be resolved by binding arbitration. In the event the arbitration involves claims of \$100,000 or more, there shall be three (3) arbitrators, one picked by each party and a third selected by the two (2) arbitrators selected by the parties. In the event the dispute involves less than \$100,000, there shall be one (1) arbitrator. If the parties cannot agree

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on an arbitrator, the determination shall be made by the Minnesota District Court in Douglas County, Minnesota. The arbitration shall take place in Douglas County, Minnesota, or as close to this location as possible, under and pursuant to the rules contained in chapter 572B of Minnesota Statutes, the Uniform Arbitration Act. The determination of any dispute in arbitration shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota, including the Frye-Mack Standard and not the Daubert Standard with respect to testimony of experts. The cost of the arbitrators and the filing fees shall be shared equally by the parties.

All disputes between the parties must be arbitrated individually, and not through a Class Action.

Each member of the Cooperative, by virtue of their membership, agrees to arbitrate any and all claims or controversies according to these bylaws and the regulations and policies prescribed by the Board of Directors and further agrees to abide by and comply with any arbitration award. This agreement to arbitrate disputes shall survive any withdrawal from or termination of a member's membership in the Cooperative.

## ARTICLE XI Disposition of Property

The Cooperative may not sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any substantial portion of its property; merge with or consolidate into another entity that is not a rural electric cooperative association within the meaning of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936; or dissolve the Cooperative; or file for bankruptcy with the United States Bankruptcy Court unless any such act is authorized at a meeting of the members thereof by the affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of all of the members of the Cooperative, and unless the notice of such proposed act shall have been contained in the notice of the meeting; provided, however, that notwithstanding anything herein contained, the Board of the Cooperative, without authorization by the members thereof, shall have full power and authority to authorize the execution and delivery of a mortgage or mortgages or a deed or deeds of trust upon, or the pledging or encumbering of, any or all of the property, assets, rights, privileges, licenses, franchises and permits of the Cooperative, whether acquired or to be acquired, and wherever situated, as well as the revenues and income therefrom, all upon such terms and conditions as the

Board shall determine, to secure any indebtedness of the Cooperative. For purposes of this Article, a merger with or consolidation into another rural electric cooperative association shall not be deemed a sale, lease or other disposal of property. Other provisions of these Bylaws notwithstanding, any repeal, amendment, or alteration of this Article that would result in a change in the member approval requirements for acts described herein, must be approved by a majority vote of all members of the Cooperative.

## ARTICLE XII Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Cooperative shall begin on the first day of January of each year and end on the thirty-first day of December of the same year.

## ARTICLE XIII Seal

The corporate seal of the Cooperative shall be in the form of a circle and shall have inscribed thereon the name of the Cooperative and the words "Corporate Seal, Minnesota". The use or nonuse of the corporate seal does not affect the validity, recordability, or enforceability of a document or act of the Cooperative. The use of the seal by the Cooperative on a document is not necessary.

## ARTICLE XIV Electronic Records and Signatures

To the extent permitted or required by law and subject to reasonable policies of the Cooperative, any signature required or document required to be in writing by these Bylaws will be effective and enforceable if it is in electronic form.

## ARTICLE XV Amendments

These Bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed by the members at any regular or special meeting if approved by a majority of the votes cast, provided the notice of such meeting shall have contained either a copy of the proposed alteration, amendment or repeal or a summary statement thereof. Any repeal, amendment, or alteration of Article X or of this sentence of this Article XIV of these Bylaws, however, that results, directly or indirectly, in a change in the member approval requirements for acts described in Article X, must be approved by a majority of all members of the Cooperative.

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