

Soak up the **SUMMER SAVINGS**

NEWSLINE

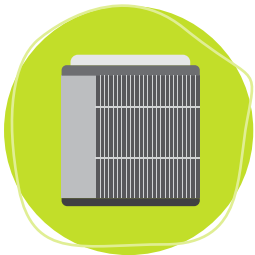
July 2023

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6 WAYS TO SAVE ON YOUR SUMMER ELECTRICITY BILL

The summer heat can sometimes feel impossible to beat. Your air conditioner (A/C) is working overtime to try and keep your home or business cool and comfortable. The harder your A/C is working, the higher your electricity bill could be. Help out your home and your wallet by trying these six, simple ways to save on your summer electricity bill.



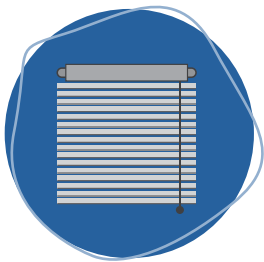
Regularly inspecting your A/C unit can ensure it is functioning as efficiently as possible. Vacuum air vents regularly to remove dirt, dust and pet hair build-up. Replacing a dirty A/C filter every month or two can lower your energy usage. If you suspect your A/C unit is in need of service, be sure to reach out to a certified HVAC technician.



Don't let the savings a fan could offer breeze past you! A ceiling fan works great when paired with your A/C unit. The wind chill effect created by a fan allows you to keep your thermostat four degrees higher without a change in comfort.



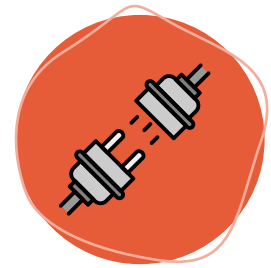
You heard us right! A conventional oven can heat a house or apartment and force your A/C to keep up. This summer, bust out the crockpot and fire up the grill to enjoy some delicious summertime meals while also saving on your electricity bill!



The best thing you can do to avoid sunbathing in your living room is to keep the blinds closed on southern and western-facing windows. Open northern-facing windows to allow natural light into your home without heating it up.



An LED light gives off significantly less heat and uses 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs. Soak up those cool savings by switching your home or business over to LED bulbs.



If you aren't using it, unplug it. Computers, toasters, gaming devices and other gadgets all generate a small amount of heat in a room. Unplug to save on your electricity bill all year-round.



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from your CEO

Construction season at REA

Summer is construction season at REA! The 2023 Work Plan includes many projects, such as building new service connections, service upgrades, moving powerlines for road construction projects, pole replacements, and the list goes on.

Some of our ongoing construction projects include replacing yard poles with overhead meter loops, changing out porcelain fuseholders, replacing aged transformers, and adding electronic “smart” circuit breakers to several substations.

Other construction projects are necessary due to road construction projects resulting in the need for our lines and poles to be moved. This summer, REA crews will assist Integrity Contracting out of Shevlin to install over eleven miles of underground cables along Co Rd 15 and near Minnewaska Area High School in Pope County, Co Rd 8 in Douglas County, and near the Gorton Substation in Grant County.

Even though we have adopted the process of rebuilding overhead powerlines with underground cable whenever possible, the fact remains that we have nearly 37,000 power poles across our system. STAR Energy Services, a subsidiary of REA, documents and periodically inspects every pole. Our Work Plan includes the replacement of approximately 380 poles per year that fail the inspection process.

Inspecting Power Poles

STAR Energy Services will conduct pole inspections in Framnas, New Prairie, Hodges and Walden Townships this summer. You will be able to identify the vehicles by the STAR Energy Services logo, and REA’s name will also be visible on the vehicles.

The inspection begins with a visual inspection of the pole, checking insulators, hardware, conductors, trees touching the wire, etc. Next, a sound inspection is done by hammering on all sides of the pole. The hammering produces a sound that can indicate if decay is present in the pole. If decay is present, the pole is tagged for replacement.

A boring inspection comes next by drilling a hole into the pole at a 45-degree angle below the groundline - wood shavings and any voids that the drill hits will indicate if any decay is present. Then a treated plug is inserted into the drilled hole.

A tag indicating the year of the inspection is placed on the pole. Technicians then confirm the pole manufacturer, height and class of pole, year and species of pole. All of this information is stored electronically for future reference.

Pole inspection and replacement is one of our many initiatives to improve power reliability. Our top priority at Runestone Electric is doing all we can to keep your lights on safely.



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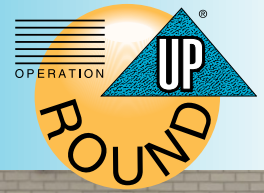


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REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - May 2023

- » Reviewed the Financial Report for May 2023. Operating expense for the month is under budget, as some budgeted operations and maintenance items were incurred earlier in the year. Margin for the year is under budget, with about half attributed to the gross margin and half to operating expense.
- » Set Thursday, April 25, 2024 for the Annual Meeting at Alexandria Area High School.
- » Approved changes to the Schedule of Charges to simplify the yard light charges to one option rather than multiple sizes.
- » CEO Haman reviewed a Heartland Security board meeting.
- » Mr. Rooney gave the Energy Management Report updating the Board on the Aclara Demand Response Units (DRUs), NRECA’s load control study on ductless heat pumps, Aquanta (water heater control devices) performance data, and recent irrigation control test results.
- » Director Hjelle reported on the May Great River Energy Board meeting and the committees in which she participates.
- » **The regular July Board Meeting will be Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 9:00**

Small Change Can Make Big Changes with Operation Round Up®



Through the contributions of Runestone Electric Association's participating members, the Operation Round Up® Trust Board recently approved **\$11,590** to assist local community programs during its quarterly meeting.

REA's Operation Round Up Trust Board, a voluntary board of seven REA members, reviewed and considered 23 grant applications and distributed funds to 21 projects and programs this past quarter. Community-based projects and programs have received over \$1.2 million since the program's inception in 2003. On average, participating REA members contribute \$6.05 for the year. Proof that small change adds up. Best of all, 95% of all funds collected are distributed as grants.



Representing some of the organizations receiving Operation Round Up® grants in June, from left to right: Barry Wahlberg, Operation Round Up Board member; Suzanne Sudmeier, Life Connections; Jana Townsfeldt, Alex Brush & Palette Club; Janet Johnson, Operation Round Up Board member; Jill Ramey, Osakis Trap Team; Deb Anderson, Operation Round Up Board member; Bernice Trousil, Bohemian Independent Cemetery; Heather Smith-Ahrens; Marian Wrolson, Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery Association; Patty Benson, Grant County Historical Society; Carol Anderson, Bethel Memorial Cemetery Association; Ryan Franks, Starbuck Police Department; Julie O'Brien, Runestone Area Education District; and Dick Wittkamp, Ardie Piper and Sonya Anderson, Let's Go Fishing-Alexandria Lakes Area.

Fire Departments & First Responders:

- » Osakis Fire Department - tools for rescue truck (\$1,100)
- » VFW Coffee & Donuts for Veterans (\$500)
- » Selective TV - equipment (\$500)
- » Grant County Historical Society - community play (\$500)

Community:

- » Bethel Memorial Cemetery - maintenance (\$300)
- » Bethel Cemetery Association - maintenance (\$300)
- » Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery Association - maintenance (\$300)
- » Alexandria Rotary Club - concert series (\$750)
- » Garfield Community Club - Garfield Days (\$300)
- » Van Loon Cemetery Association - maintenance (\$300)
- » Bohemian Independent Cemetery - maintenance (\$300)
- » St. Paul's Cemetery - maintenance (\$300)
- » Let's Go Fishing (Alexandria Area Lakes) - AED for pontoons (\$1,000)

Youth:

- » Starbuck Police Department - Kids Safety Camp (\$1,000)
- » Alexandria Area High School Trap Team (\$250)
- » Osakis Trap Team (\$250)
- » Runestone Area Education District - wheelchair swing (\$1,260)
- » Alex Brush & Palette Club - youth art fair (\$280)
- » Long Prairie-Grey Eagle Elementary School - band instruments (\$600)

Calling all Non-Profit Organizations!

Area organizations are encouraged to apply for Operation Round Up grants. The deadline for the next round of funding is **August 11, 2023**. Application forms can be completed online at www.RunestoneElectric.com.

Operation Round Up Spotlight: Kids Safety Camp at Minnewaska Area High School

The Starbuck Police Department will host the 7th Annual Safety Camp in August 9 - 10, from 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. This camp is for kids going into grades 4 - 7 to learn about important safety topics while also participating in fun activities. Members of the Starbuck Police Department along with many other public safety partners will be hosting this exciting event.

Topics will include: electrical safety, water safety, first aid/EMS, severe weather, summer safety, wildlife safety, fire safety, bullying/internet safety, K9 demo, 911 use and more.

The youth involved with this camp will have the opportunity to build positive relationships with local Police, Fire, and EMS staff all while having fun.



REA provides electrical safety information during Kids Safety Camp.

Register at www.starbuckcitygov.com

WAYS TO PAY

Make paying your electric bill quick and convenient!



Runestone Electric
ASSOCIATION

AUTOPAY

Never forget to pay your bill again with REA's Auto Pay program. The automatic payments come out on the due date from a checking, savings, debit or credit card. Please see this month's bill insert or use SmartHub to sign up with a checking or savings account. Sign up with a credit card through SmartHub.

DRIVE-UP DROP BOX

Conveniently drop your payment in the drop-box located on the east side of the REA parking lot.

PAY ONLINE

Pay instantly from a computer, tablet or smartphone using REA's SmartHub or Pay Now programs. Pay using a checking account, credit card or debit card.

PAY BY PHONE

Feel the ease of instantly paying your bill anytime with REA's Secure Pay program. Simply call 1-855-385-9907 and pay using a check, credit card or debit card. Credit and debit card payments can also be made 24/7 by calling REA at 1-800-473-1722.

3 Easy Steps to Sign up for SmartHub

Step 1:

Go to runestoneelectric.com and click on the "View & Pay Bill with SmartHub" under Account Center

Step 2:

On the SmartHub login page, you will click on "Sign up to access our Self Service site" that's located right next to "New

Step 3:

Fill in the required information and click submit.

HELPFUL HINT!

You will need your account number and an email address to create an account. Your account number is located on the bottom portion of your bill OR feel free to call the office to get that information.

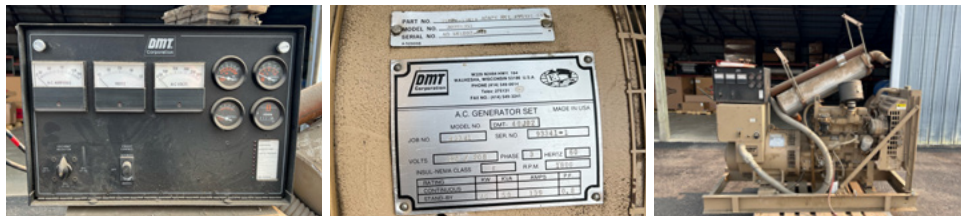
PAY BY MAIL

Pay your bill the traditional way: through the mail. **Remember to allow 7-10 business days if mailing your payment.**

GO PAPERLESS

Receive your bill and newsletter electronically. Sign up for a SmartHub account and choose paperless billing today!

For Sale on Sealed Bids: DMT 3-Phase 40KW Diesel Generator



Bids are being accepted for a DMT 3-Phase 120/208 Volt 40KW diesel generator with a John Deere engine. This 90's model generator has 111 hours and has been stored indoors. The generator does not come with a fuel tank. The generator may be viewed at REA's Operation Center from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Monday - Friday until August 1, 2023. The equipment will be sold "as is" and "with all faults." REA's Purchase Agreement form will need to be signed by the buyer prior to closing. Cash payment required, no checks please. REA reserves the right to accept or reject any and all offers.

Deadline for submitting a bid is August 1, 2023.

Include your name, phone number, and bid in a sealed envelope and submit to:

REA Generator Bid
6839 Power Lane SW
Alexandria, MN 56308

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6839 Power Lane SW
Alexandria, MN 56308

320-762-1121

Fax: 320-763-4149

rea@runestoneelectric.com
www.runestoneelectric.com

24/7: 800-473-1722

Office Hours:
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mon- Fri.

Board of Directors

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

Editorial Staff

Al Haman, CEO
Sue Lundeen, Editor
Ally Koudela, Communications Specialist

In Case of a Power Outage

- » Please call 800-473-1722 for 24-hour service. Please report any tree branches in lines, twisted wires, broken poles and if your neighbors are also out of power.
- » Be sure to have a corded phone or a charged cell phone in the house, because cordless phones won't work when the power is out.
- » Program the number above into your cell phone for easy access.
- » Never assume we know you are without power. Always call to report an outage.

REA will use reasonable diligence to furnish adequate and dependable electric service, but it cannot and does not guaranty continuous and uninterrupted service.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Twins FREE! YOUTH BASEBALL CLINIC!

SATURDAY, AUG. 5 / ALEXANDRIA, MN
OPEN TO EVERYONE, AGES 6-12!

FIELD:

Alexandria Area High School
Softball Complex
4300 Pioneer Rd SE
Alexandria, MN 56308

HOST:

Alexandria Public School
Community Education and
Runestone Electric

TIME:

10:00 - 12:00 PM

REGISTER:

PLAYBALLMN.COM

