

Celebrating Co-op Month at the REA Office!

October is Co-op Month and to celebrate, we will be serving cookies from Country Blossom Farm and Apple Cider all month. **Stop by for a treat!**

NEWSLINE

October 2023

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Dual Fuel Participants Tips & Reminders:

Is your Dual Fuel System ready for winter?

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

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

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

During the heating season, the electric heat portion of your dual fuel system may be controlled up to a maximum of 400 hours, however this is rare.

- » Control will not exceed 12 hours per control event.
- » If you're on dual fuel, check the electric and non-electric (dual) parts of your heating equipment now.
- » Fill your fuel tank full in case it needs to run for hours at a time.
- » We anticipate more control in the morning.
- » Check on the likelihood of control by visiting www.RunestoneElectric.com and select "Today's Load Control"
- » **Sign up to get text messages on control days - text #loadcontrol to 22300.**

Air Source Heat Pumps Your Year Round Choice

An Air-Source Heat Pump works as a more efficient central air conditioner during the warmer months and provides heating in all other seasons.

BONUS WINTER BENEFIT: Electric ASHP heating is much more efficient and cost effective than fuel heat technology, delivering up to three times more energy than the electricity it uses

Combine REA Rebates with heat pump efficiencies to start saving today!



Plans to escape the cold this winter?

Stop and read BEFORE turning off your water heater at your electrical panel

Turning off your water heater when leaving on extended trips can be a good idea as long as you follow these tips:

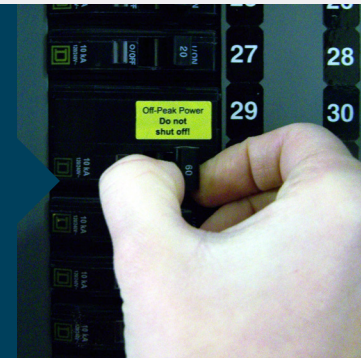
1. Check your breakers

Don't turn off the breaker if you have a yellow sticker (pictured) or if your electrical panel lists your water heater circuit powering your off-peak meter and controller. If the breaker is turned off, you will miss out on the value of off-peak rates while you're away.

2. Disconnect Switch

Have your electrician install a disconnect switch. Installed next to the water heater, a disconnect switch lets you shut off your water heater while maintaining power to the off-peak meter and controller.

Still have questions?
Feel free to contact REA.



Look up **AND LIVE!**

Be aware of your surroundings this harvest season.

This little reminder could save you time, money, and even **your life!**

REA wishes area farmers a safe and successful harvest!



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from your CEO Celebrating the Cooperative Way of Doing Business

The November 21, 1935, Park Region Echo told of a meeting held at the high school in Alexandria: *Rural Electrification Plan in Douglas County Okayed by Mass Meeting. 350 Farmers Ask Government Aid for Farm Lines.* That headline summarized the farmer's feelings at the time, and

they expressed their desire for electricity by signing a petition for a cooperative line in Douglas County.

We began as Douglas County Light and Power Association with incorporation on November 30, 1935. In early 1936, the cooperative began its campaign to sign up farmers for electricity. By June 1949, the name of the cooperative was officially changed to Runestone Electric Association (REA), recognizing the cooperative's expansion beyond Douglas County.

Today REA serves over 15,000 members in parts of seven counties with 3,000 miles of line. Much has changed in the past 88 years, but your electric cooperative continues to operate with a mission to provide you, our members, with safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

October is National Co-op Month, and REA is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. I hope you stop by our office to enjoy cookies from Country Blossom Farm and apple cider.

Celebrating co-ops in October also reminds me of the fall harvest currently underway. I wish all area ag professionals a safe harvest. Remember to look up, plan your work in advance, and keep a safe distance from power lines. If you contact a power line, remain in your equipment, immediately call 911 or REA, and tell bystanders to stay away. We want everyone to stay safe around power lines!

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - August 2023

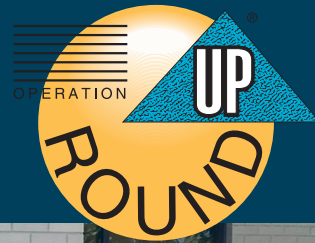
- » Reviewed the Financial Report for July 2023. July's margin was ahead of budget with a gain in the gross margin and lower expenses. Kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage for the year is right on budget, and the year-to-date margin is ahead of budget.
- » Reviewed the Minnesota Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) statute and the impacts on REA of legalizing recreational marijuana in Minnesota. Commercial driver license (CDL) holders must comply with federal law, which does not allow marijuana use.
- » National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Regional Vice President Alison Deelstra provided an

equity management overview. Equity determines construction spending, capital credit retirement, and rates. REA's equity has averaged 38.7% over the last five years, which is typical for rural electric cooperatives.

- » Reviewed REA's response to emergencies by reviewing the Emergency Action & Restoration Plan, mayday drills, event alert forms, and the Crisis Communications booklet. Also discussed ways directors may help during a crisis.
- » **The regular October Board Meeting will be Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.**

REA Members Support Their Communities

Operation Round Up Distributes
\$14,400 in September!



Attention Non-Profits!

The deadline for the next round of funding is **November 10, 2023**. Application forms can be completed at www.RunestoneElectric.com.

Representing some of the organizations receiving Operation Round Up® grants in September, from left to right holding the banner: Sharie Kalina, St. John's Nepomuk Quilters; Lyla Radil, Lakes Area 1st Responders; and Virgil Coziahr, Starbuck Fire Department. Back row from left to right: Jim Dyr Dahl, St. Luke's Cemetery; Susan McDowall, Pope County Council on Aging; Kristin Klimek, Lakes Area Humane Society; Shaune Moen and Lauren Molloy, Pope County Humane Society; Davis Larson, Nora Lutheran Cemetery; Brenda Hvezda, St. John's Nepomuk Quilters; Ken Weisel, Lowry Lions; Barry Wahlberg and Rich Duncan, Operation Round Up Board members; and Micheal Kalpin, Leaf Valley Fire Department.

Through the contributions of Runestone Electric Association's participating members, the Operation Round Up® Trust Board recently approved **\$14,400** 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 33 grant applications and distributed funds to 23 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 **\$5.89 for the year**. Proof that small change adds up. Best of all, 95% of all funds collected are distributed as grants.

Fire Departments & First Responders:

- » Starbuck Fire Department - batteries for positive pressure fan (\$1,000)
- » Lowry First Responders - new oximeter (\$1,000)
- » Leaf Valley Fire Department - lights, radio, bumper brush guard on new pickup (\$1,000)
- » Osakis Fire Department - pager replacement (\$1,000)
- » Lakes Area First Responders - repairs to EMS trailer (\$1,000).

Community:

- » St. Lukes Cemetery Association - preservation and maintenance (\$300)
- » St. John's Nepomuk Quilters - supplies (\$300)
- » Friends of Christmas - light display (\$500)
- » Donnelly Community Club, Inc. - Threshing Bee supper (\$500)
- » Pope County Humane Society - adoption project (\$500)
- » West Central Communities Action - building community resiliency (\$1,000)
- » Garfield Action Committee - community playground (\$1,000)

- » Nora Lutheran Cemetery - straighten tombstones (\$300)
- » Alexandria Area Branch of AAUW - Project Book Shelf (\$200)
- » Lakes Area Humane Society - adoptive animal spay/neuter project (\$500)
- » Lowry Lions - community park (\$500)
- » The Village Family Service Center - therapeutic games & cards (\$500)
- » United Communities Advocating Non-Violence - UCAN domestic violence awareness (\$1,000)
- » Explore Alexandria Tourism - Saturday Christmas market (\$500).

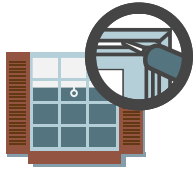
Youth:

- » Community Preschool - playground standing rocker (\$300)
- » West Central Area Schools - Free and Safe Halloween Carnival (\$500)
- » Northern Lights Council (Boy Scouts of America) - registration and campership assistance (\$500).

Seniors:

- » Pope County Council on Aging - senior citizens celebrations (\$500)

Easy Ways To Save Electricity



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



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

Laundry for Less

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



Seal in Warmth

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



Interested in more ways to save?

REA is here as your trusted energy provider to get you the tools you need to use electricity wisely. Give us a call or check out our website for more energy saving advice - **800-473-1722** or visit **www.RunestoneElectric.com**

Utility Scam Awareness


We want to warn our members to be on guard for scams targeting payment on their electric bill. Here are some things to look for in a potential scam call:

- » Caller will contact you and inform you that your power will be disconnected in a short period of time if you do not make an immediate payment on your account.
- » Caller will ask for payment with a prepaid credit card or gift card.
- » Caller will ask for personal and financial information.

Know that REA will never call and demand quick payment over the phone while threatening disconnection with no prior communication. REA members who are delinquent will receive a disconnect notice and REA will attempt phone calls (if we have correct phone numbers) prior to disconnection. Contact REA if you receive a questionable call.



Energy Assistance Providers



Douglas, Grant, Pope and Stevens Counties:
West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc.
(218) 685-4486
1-800-492-4805

Otter Tail County:
Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership, Inc.
Detroit Lakes - (218) 847-1385
Fergus Falls - (218) 739-3011
1-888-458-1385

Todd County:
Todd County Social Services
(320) 732-4516
1-888-838-4066

NEWSLINE

The official monthly publication of Runestone Electric Association.

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District 6: Joel Seela, Director
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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

Sign up to get text messages from REA on control days!

Simply text #loadcontrol to 22300.
Msg and data rates apply.