

REA WISHES YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

REA will be closed December 25, 2023 and January 1, 2024.

To report a power outage or an emergency, call (800) 473-1722.

We have a 24-hour answering service to take your call.



NEWSLINE

December 2023

Member Advisory Council pg 2 • Cooperative Builder Award pg 4



You're Invited!

RUNESTONE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Christmas Open House

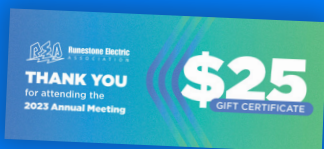
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

1 PM TO 3 PM

Stop in for a visit with the REA Board of Directors! The coffee will be hot and served with Christmas cookies. Pick up a Senior Perspective Cook Book as a token of our appreciation for your business.

While Supplies Last

Remember to use your Annual Meeting Gift Certificate!



If you attended the REA Annual Meeting in April and received a gift certificate, please remember to redeem your certificate at one of the participating REA businesses **before 12/31/23**. A complete list of participating businesses can be found on the gift certificate or online at www.runestoneelectric.com.



REA'S CHRISTMAS LIGHT CONTEST

Let's light up the countryside! REA is hosting a Christmas light contest to recognize the members that put hard work into their light displays AND let our communities know where to look for these spectacular lights. Check out the details below.

Categories and Prizes:

- Best Large Display (\$100 REA bill credit)
- Best Small Display (\$100 REA bill credit)
- Most Creative Display (\$100 REA bill credit)

Registration:

Online registration form at www.runestoneelectric.com or call REA at 800-473-1722. Submit a photo with an address so that the public will know where to go to check out the holiday displays.

Details:

- Display must be served by Runestone Electric Association.
- Deadline for contest entry is 12/10/23.
- Map of participating displays will be available at www.runestoneelectric.com after 12/10/23.
- Judging of the lighting displays will take place between 12/15 - 12/17.
- Winners will be notified on 12/21/23.



Al Haman
CEO

Celebrating 45 Years of the Member Advisory Council!

The Member Advisory Council was formed back in 1978 as an effort to increase communication between REA management and the membership. Communication was difficult back then. For many REA members, it was a long-distance call to call the

office. Handwritten letters were one of the most common ways to communicate and there was no email, cell phones, websites, social media, and other modern forms of communication we have today.

Over the past 45 years, more than 300 individuals and couples have served on the Member Advisory Council, and we thank them for their service. The Council meets quarterly to discuss issues affecting REA and the energy industry and functions as a sounding board for ideas. Our goal is to provide interesting programs that educate the attendees on a variety of topics. For instance, we learned about mining in Minnesota at the November meeting. Julie Lucas with MiningMinnesota shared the important role mining plays today and into the future.

REA's Bylaws task the Council with the responsibility for acting on any REA Board of Directors proposal

to adjust the compensation directors receive. If the proposal to increase director compensation passes the Council by a majority vote, the Council chairperson presents the proposal to the membership at the next annual meeting.

A few years ago, we added a Member Spotlight to each meeting. Representatives from a variety of businesses served by REA have shared their stories. These businesses include Bred & Butter Dairy, Country Blossoms Farm, Canary Beach Resort, Pope/Douglas Solid Waste, Andes Tower Hills, Selective TV, Smokey Timbers Campground, West Central Research & Outreach Center, L'Etoile du Nord Vineyard, Crooked Willow, Rolling Forks Vineyard, Dorrich Dairy, Car Care Program, Malacha Enterprises, and Colorful Seasons Garden Center.

If this sounds like something you'd like to be a part of, let us know, and we will add you to a list of members interested in the Member Advisory Council.

The year is coming quickly to a close. We've had a good 2023 at REA and look forward to 2024. On behalf of the Board of Directors and all employees, I want to thank you for your great support. It's a pleasure to serve you, and I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



The Member Advisory Council enjoyed hearing about Colorful Seasons Garden Center from owner Lynelle Brickweg. REA provides power to the greenhouses located west of Alexandria.



Julie Lucas, Executive Director of MiningMinnesota, came to Alexandria in November. Julie is an advocate for responsible mining of mineral resources in Minnesota that will help “keep the lights on” as our nation undergoes a clean energy transformation.

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - October 2023

- » Reviewed the Financial Report for September 2023. Margin for the month of September is close to budget. Although the current year-to-date REA margin is ahead of budget, the final year-end REA margin is expected to be close to budget. Quarterly reports for accounts receivable, REDLG, associated patronage & directors' expense were provided this month.
- » Appointed Dale & Donna Vollmers, District 2; Don McAdoo, District 5; and Nick & Michaela Olson, District 7, to the REA Member Advisory Council.
- » Reviewed district populations as per REA Bylaw requirement Article III, Section 2 and determined redistricting is not needed.
- » Determined 2024 District Meeting dates and locations: District 2 - Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at Leaf Valley Town Hall, Garfield and District 5 - Thursday, February 15, 2024 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Alexandria
- » **The regular December Board Meeting will be Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.**

Sign Up for Paperless Billing for a Chance to Win a 50" Vizio Smart TV!

Sign up for paperless billing through your SmartHub online account by January 31, 2024, for a chance to win one of three 50" Vizio smart TVs. (Just in time for the big game!) Your membership will be automatically entered if you've already signed up for paperless billing. This paperless billing promotion runs until January 31, 2024, and winners will be notified on February 1, 2024.

What is paperless billing?

When you opt into paperless billing, you will receive your bill electronically to your email rather than a paper bill in the mail.

Scan Me!



Scan the QR code or visit runestoneelectric.com for contest details, and to log into your SmartHub account today!

How to Go Paperless

Do you have a SmartHub online account?

Yes No

Follow the instructions to the right to sign up for an online account.

How will you be accessing your SmartHub account?

Mobile App Desktop Computer, SmartHub App on a Tablet, or an Internet Browser

Sign In

Go to the "more" tab and press "settings"

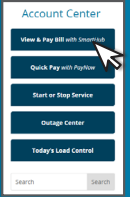
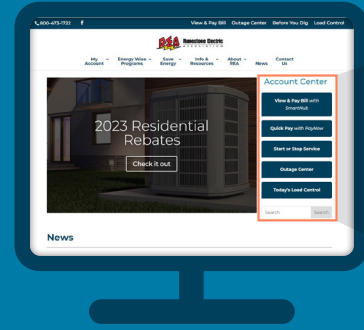
Click "paperless billing" and use the slider to sign up for paperless

Sign In

Go to "Settings" and click "Paperless Billing"

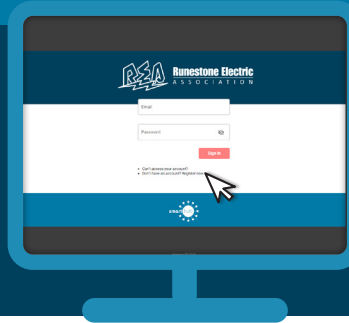
Click the slider to the on position to sign up for paperless billing

3 Easy Steps to Sign up for SmartHub



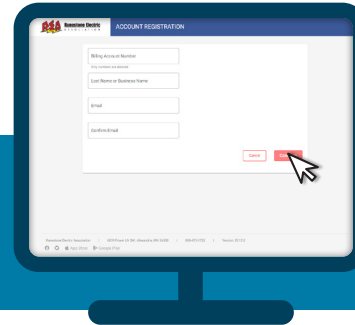
Step 1:

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 "Register Now" that's located right next to "Don't Have an account?"



Step 3:

Fill in the required information and click continue.

HELPFUL HINT!

You will need your account number and an email address to create an account

If you need help, we're happy to assist!
Contact us: 800-473-1121 or 320-762-1121

ATTENTION High School Seniors! It's Time to Apply!

Apply for one of **Twenty-Four \$1,000 scholarships** available through a random drawing.

Scholarship applicants must be a graduating high school senior whose parents or legal guardians are members of REA. Students attending public, private, parochial or home school are eligible to apply. The deadline to apply for the REA scholarships is March 1, 2024. Winners will be announced at the Annual Meeting on April 25, 2024.

Scholarship applications can be filled out online at www.runestoneelectric.com. If you're unable to fill out the application online, call REA for an application at 800-473-1722.



Space Heaters Can Dramatically Increase your Electric Bill

Use the formula below to determine what the monthly cost of operating a space heater will be before you plug it in.

Example for a 1,500 watt space heater:

(wattage divided by 1,000) x hours used x cost per kWh = cost per day

Example: (1,500 watts ÷ 1,000) x 24 hours x 9.69¢ (REA's general service rate) = \$3.49 per day

To calculate a monthly cost multiply your cost per day by number of days in the month.

\$3.49 x 30 days = \$104.70. This is your cost per month.

Bottom line: space heaters are convenient, but expensive to use!



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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

2023 Cooperative Network Builder Award Winner: Audrey Hjelle

Audrey Hjelle, who sits on the REA Board and also serves as secretary for Great River Energy's Board (REA's power supplier), was chosen to receive the Cooperative Network Builder Award. This award recognizes her outstanding contributions to advance cooperative philosophy and ideals.

Audrey was nominated for this award for her dedication to furthering the mission of electric cooperatives over the last three decades. Her experience as a cooperative member since 1963 provides a unique perspective to the organizations she serves through her board seats.

"I first met Audrey when I was elected to the REA Board of Directors," said Gary (Andy) Anderson, REA Board President. "Over the past seven years, she has mentored me and other board members, sharing her knowledge and understanding of the cooperative world, specifically our electric co-op. When attending meetings or training events, Audrey is never too busy to take the time to explain a question I or others might have."

Audrey is also known for being a community builder, having established connections across local, state and regional levels. "Although Audrey is actively involved in several organizations on a state and national level, she has not forgotten her roots. She is attentive to the members of REA's District 3, which she represents (Audrey lives outside of Barrett in Grant County), and is always willing to listen to their concerns and brings those concerns to the Board and management," said Andy.

Cooperative Network has a history of bringing together and strengthening the voice of cooperative businesses.



Audrey Hjelle (center) recently received the 2023 Cooperative Builder Award from Cooperative Network President/CEO Dan Smith and Cooperative Network board member Amanda Hoefling.

FREE Christmas String Lights Recycling

Recycle Christmas/Holiday string lights & power cords at the Pope/Douglas Solid Waste Recycle Center, ALP, REA, Ace Hardware Glenwood & Alexandria, True Value Hardware in Osakis, Glenwood Library, or Starbuck City Office.

Accepted until January 31, 2024.