

REMINDER:

The deadline to apply for 1 of 24 \$1,000 scholarships available through a random drawing is **MARCH 1, 2024.**

For more information and to apply, visit our website at www.runestoneelectric.com.



Unable to access application online? Call REA for an application at 800-473-1722.

NEWSLINE

February 2024

New EV and Solar Calculators pg 2 • Ice Storm Photos pg 3

Attend Your District Meeting!

District Two



District Two Meeting

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Leaf Valley Townhall

15240 Co Rd 6 NW, Garfield

5:30 p.m. Light Meal

6:00 p.m. Meeting

District Five



District Five Meeting

Thursday, February 15, 2024

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

2702 Hwy. 29 N, Alexandria

5:30 p.m. Light Meal

6:00 p.m. Meeting

District Meetings offer REA members an opportunity to have a light meal, nominate one or more candidates for the office of director, learn more about their electric cooperative, talk with their elected representatives, and visit with neighbors. In addition, all members in attendance will have their name entered in a drawing to win door prizes. We look forward to seeing you!

Please RSVP by calling REA at 800-473-1722, emailing rea@runestoneelectric.com, or on our Facebook event.

What district are you in and who represents you?

Visit www.runestoneelectric.com/who-is-my-director to find out

Billing Reminders

- » To cover overall cost increases, the Board has approved a 3% monthly fixed charge increase to all rates, effective 2/1/2024. Most members will see an increase of \$1.50 to the monthly fixed charge. Unfortunately, cost increases on all fronts continue to plague REA.
- » When paying by check, only use black or blue ink.
- » Please refrain from using checks with dark colored pictures or scenes on the checks.
- » Allow sufficient time to mail your payment due to longer mail delivery dates.
- » Keep your phone number(s) updated so we can contact you when we have a planned outage, payment reminders, capital credits or other co-op business.

We recommend adding our number: **320-762-1121** to your contacts so you'll know it's REA and not a telemarketer. Update your phone number by calling the office at 320-762-1121 or send us an email at rea@runestoneelectric.com.



This Month's Safety Tip...

Be careful when piling snow near pad-mounted transformers and beneath power lines where children might reach them. Just a quick look up is all it takes to make sure it is safe!



Al Haman
CEO

Thinking of installing solar panels or purchasing an electric vehicle?

Check out the new tools to help with the analysis before you buy

Energy seems to be a hot topic almost everywhere you go these days. The amount of information coming at us is overwhelming at times, even for someone in the industry. Every new technology claims to save

money, save time, or provide a cure for something that ails you. Often, the information you receive is from the company selling the product. Having a non-biased source is important to make sure all factors are considered.

At Runestone Electric, we work hard to earn your trust and connect with you as your trusted energy advisor. In the past several years, members have

asked if solar panels, electric vehicles (EVs) and efficient heating systems like air source heat pumps are worth the investment.

We realize every situation is different. Our goal is to provide the tools and information to allow you to make the best decision for your circumstances. We are excited to announce two new calculators that are available on our website to explore the value of both solar and EVs. These calculators are user-friendly and allow you to personalize the evaluation to ensure you receive the information you need to confidently move forward with your decision.

We are here to help if you have any questions. You can find the new calculators at www.runstoneelectric.com.

NEW EV TOOL

Calculate your estimated savings potential.

30 Input the estimated miles you drive each day.

Monthly Fuel Cost* \$82 /mo. \$984 /yr.

Monthly EV or PHEV Cost* \$12 /mo. \$144 /yr.

Estimated Savings* \$69 /mo. \$827 /yr.



Scan the QR code to use the EV tool today!

www.runstoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/electric-vehicles

NEW SOLAR TOOL

Solar Calculator

Is Runestone Electric Association your electric provider?

Yes No

Scan the QR code to use the solar tool today!



www.runstoneelectric.com/energy-wise-programs/renewable-energy

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - December 2023

- » Reviewed the November 2023 Disbursements. Due to the early board meeting date, the November 2023 financials will be presented at the January Board meeting.
- » Approved transferring the 2023 Uncollectible Accounts to the reserve for bad debt. Efforts are made to continue to collect on accounts even after the account has been written off.
- » Network & IT Administrator Sue Gibbons and IT Specialist Dave Kittleson provided an update on cybersecurity programs and services at REA.
- » Approved the 2024 Budget with \$6.4 million in capital plant additions and an REA operating margin of \$1,384,810.
- » Approved an overall 3% fixed charge increase to all rate classes effective February 1, 2024, to maintain a \$1.4 million operating margin.
- » Approved refunding the oldest membership allocation - 100% of 1995 and 100% of 1996. Checks will be mailed in April.
- » **The regular February Board Meeting will be Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.**

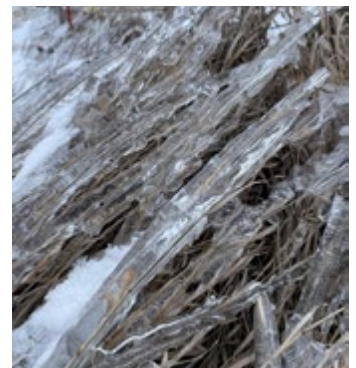
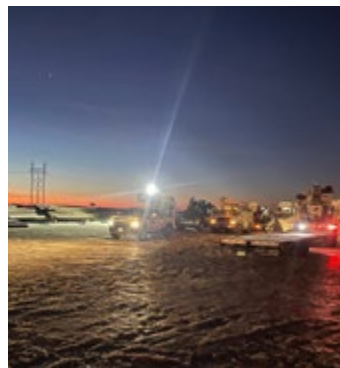
REA Provides Mutual Aid to Dakota Valley Electric After Christmas Ice Storm

One of the principles that guide all electric co-ops is Cooperation Among Cooperatives. Since rural electrification began in the 1930s, electric co-ops have relied on one another for help when disaster strikes. Mutual aid allows co-ops to share resources to restore power faster to their membership. After the co-op has recovered, they reimburse the co-op(s) that gave mutual aid.

So when disaster struck our co-op friends to the west, Dakota Valley Electric, and they reached out for mutual aid, REA was ready to help. Dakota Valley Electric of Milnor, ND (About 40 miles west of Wahpeton) was hit with a massive ice storm on Christmas day. They experienced outages to half their system and millions of dollars in damage. Their service territory covers SE North Dakota from Wahpeton to Ashley and the SD border to Jamestown. They have 4,665 miles of line and only 6,718 accounts served. (In comparison, REA has 3,004 miles of line and 15,089 accounts.)

From December 29 to January 5th, five REA linemen left to help our co-op neighbors. They worked tirelessly for days straight and **replaced 127 poles during their time in North Dakota!**

REA CEO Al Haman received a message on January 2nd from Dakota Valley's General Manager, Mark Kinzler: "I want to say a huge thank you for sending crews. They are awesome guys. We have had a long 9 days and lost 1200 poles and 3500 accounts (half our system). We are down to the last 250 accounts this morning but are in the worst areas so it's slow going. But we have been blessed by having great neighbors like Runestone. Thank you again. Mark"





Monitored temperature sensors

help protect your home by notifying our monitoring center and you of extreme temperatures so you can take action before damage occurs.



heartlandss.com | 888.264.6380

Heartland Security is a subsidiary of REA

⚡ Businesses ⚡ WANTED

For REA Annual Meeting Gift Certificates

The \$25 Annual Meeting gift certificates are back again in 2024! Members attending the REA Annual Meeting on April 25, 2024, will receive a \$25 gift certificate (one per membership) to be redeemed at participating REA businesses.

If REA serves your business and you offer food, beverages, retail or other entertainment, consider participating in the program. We'd love to promote your business to the +400 REA members that attend the Annual Meeting. Like any other gift certificate, the gift certificate is used at your business and then submitted to REA for payment.

The \$25 gift certificates are:

- » Individually numbered and embossed to prevent replication
- » Not redeemable for cash
- » Cannot be replaced if lost
- » Expire December 31, 2024

To participate, call REA at (800) 473-1722 or email rea@runestoneelectric.com.

NEWSLINE

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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

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning. Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety. Check the lint trap opening to ensure it's clean. Use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening.

If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue buildup. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.

