

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

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

Deadline to apply is March 1!



Scan to Apply

NEWSLINE

February 2026

LED Lighting Guide pg 3 High Bill Energy Hogs pg 4

Businesses Wanted For REA Annual Meeting Gift Certificates

The \$25 Annual Meeting gift certificates are back again in 2026! Members attending the REA Annual Meeting on April 22, 2026, 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, 2026

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



Thank You David!

REA recognizes David Lundy, Alexandria, for serving on the Operation Round Up Trust Board and completing a six-year term. The REA Board of Directors has appointed Anne Wiener, Osakis, as a new director in District 6. Thank you, David, for your time and dedication to the Operation Round Up program!

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Residential, Seasonal, and Small Commercial Rates as of January 1, 2026

Information on other rate classes available at www.runestoneelectric.com

2025 General Service (GS1) Rates

Fixed Charge	kWh	Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA) Base	Combined rate per kWh
\$52.50	9.69¢	1.63¢	11.32¢

2026 General Service (GS1) Rates

Fixed Charge	kWh	Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA) Base	Combined rate per kWh
\$55.00	11.70¢	\$0	11.70¢



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from the CEO

Thank you for participating in Energy Management programs!

The weekend of January 23rd demonstrated the importance of load control programs. Electric utilities across the Midwest faced a perfect storm - very high electricity demand, extreme weather, and power

generation outages. Combined, these factors put stress on the electric grid and drove up electricity prices.

For the first time in many years, dual fuel systems were controlled for extended periods, as were other programs such as water heaters and commercial and industrial accounts.

We know this may have been difficult for some of you, and we thank you for your patience and participation in our energy management programs. While getting a discounted energy rate, your participation helps

provide significant economic relief to the overall membership by reducing our peak energy demand when market prices for electricity are extremely high.

Managing rising costs in 2026

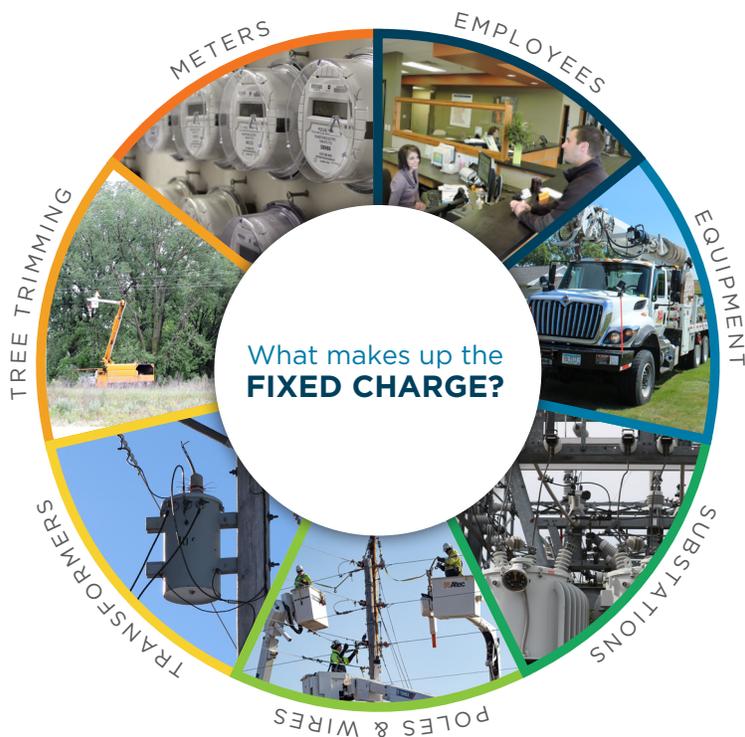
Nearly four years ago, the REA Board of Directors made a historic decision to align the monthly fixed charge more closely with the cost of service for each REA account. Since that time, it has been necessary to increase the fixed charge twice, including the increase you will see on your bill this month. If you are a residential, seasonal, or small commercial business, you will see that the fixed charge went from \$52.50 to \$55.00. You will also notice a small increase in energy rates (kWh). These increases took effect on January 1.

On average, a residential or seasonal account will see an increase of approximately 3.8% or \$5.58 a month. Information on other rate classes is available on our website or by calling our office.

I'm often asked, "What is the fixed charge?" In simple terms, the fixed charge is the monthly cost of powering one light bulb on REA's system for each member account. As you will see in the graphic to the left, many factors contribute to the fixed charge, all of which have been adversely impacted by inflation.

As I've mentioned in previous months, the primary drivers for this rate increase are rising wholesale power costs and inflation. After cutting spending significantly in 2025, the 2026 budget restores some programs that directly impact reliability, such as tree clearing. Our goal is to maintain a ten-year rotation through our system.

Here's the other question I'm asked, "Is off-peak heating still the best option?" The answer is yes. When propane is \$1.79 per gallon and higher, REA's dual fuel rate (with automatic backup) of 7.67¢ remains competitive. The REA Energy Management Department is here to assist you, so please don't hesitate to contact us by phone, email, or in person to discuss how we can help you evaluate your usage and energy costs.



REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - December 2025

- » Mrs. Nelson reviewed the Financial Report for November 2025 noting the monthly margin was close to budget, and the year 2025 REA margin is expected to be close to budget. Year-to-date kWh sales are about 3.5% under budget.
- » Approved transferring the 2025 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.
- » Approved Anne Wiener, Osakis, to represent District Six on the Operation Round Up Board of Directors.
- » President Anderson reported on the December Great River Energy (GRE) Board Meeting and reviewed major regional transmission projects and their progress. He informed the

Board that a new 765-kV substation will be named the Hjelle Substation in southern MN, in honor of former GRE and REA Board Member Audrey Hjelle.

- » Approved fully refunding the oldest membership allocation in April for the years 1998 and 1999. Bill credits will be applied to active accounts with retirements of \$500 or less. Checks will be sent if the retirement exceeds \$500, if the account is inactive, or if the member is on budget billing.
- » Approved the 2026 Budget with \$5.8 million in capital plant expenditures and an REA operating margin of \$1.3 million.
- » **The regular February Board Meeting will be Tuesday, February 24, 2026.**



HOME LIGHTING GUIDE

Improving the efficiency of your lighting is an easy way to save on energy costs!

ENERGY USE

LEDs provide the same brightness (lumens) while using less energy (watts). To find an LED with similar brightness compared to your current incandescent bulb, pay attention to the lumens. To save the most energy, choose an LED with the lowest wattage suitable for its use.

Incandescent Bulbs (Watts)	ENERGY STAR® Qualified LEDs (Watts)	Minimum Light Output (Lumens)
25W	4 - 9w	200 lm
40w	9 - 13w	450 lm
60w	13 - 15w	800 lm
75w	18 - 25w	1,100 lm
100w	23 - 20w	1,600 lm
125w	28 - 40w	2,000 lm
150w	30 - 52w	2,600 lm

BRIGHTNESS = LUMENS

ENERGY = WATTS

THE KELVIN SCALE

The Kelvin scale measures light color, or appearance, of light bulbs. The lower the value, the warmer or more yellow the light output. The higher the value, the cooler or bluer the light output.



LUMENS

Lumens measure the total amount of visible light from a light bulb. The higher the lumen rating, the brighter the lamp will appear. LEDs provide more light output with much less power use. To achieve the same light output of a 60 watt conventional bulb, you will need an LED with around 800 - 850 lumens.



LUMENS VS USEFUL LUMENS

For non-directional bulbs, such as a globe or candelabra, the total lumen output is calculated in all directions. With a directional bulb, such as a spotlight, the light is emitted in many directions, some of the light (spill light) may not be useful but it is counted in the total lumen rating.



Useful Lumen rating is a measurement of useful light emitted in a standardized 90-degree cone. The Useful Lumen rating is usually lower than the total lumen output but has more relevance to a spotlight bulb where useful light is in a forward focused direction.

Common Home Energy Hogs

High Bill? These might be the culprit!

Replacing inefficient appliances helps, but cold-weather equipment and everyday devices can quietly rack up energy costs, especially when left running.

Remember: multiple units multiply costs!

Engine Block Heaters

Plugging in a vehicle or tractor during frigid temps can quietly add up. Use a timer so your engine block heater only runs a few hours before starting—not all night.

Typical Wattage: 1,000W

Cost breakdown*:

1 Hour: 11.7¢

1 Day: \$2.81

1 Month: \$84.24

Space Heaters

Space heaters are one of the biggest winter energy users, especially when used for extended periods or in uninsulated spaces like porches.

Typical Wattage: 1,500W

Cost breakdown*:

1 Hour: 17.6¢

1 Day: \$4.21

1 Month: \$126.36

*Cost assumptions: costs assume 24/7 continuous use, one month equals 30 days, and the electric rate is 11.70¢ per kWh.

Want to calculate your own energy costs?

Wattage × Hours Used × REA electric rate (11.70¢) ÷ 1,000 = Cost

How to I find the wattage of my appliance?

Simply locate the informational label and look for the “watts”. Check out the example to the right.

The “Lights Left On” Myth

A 12-watt LED light bulb is not what’s driving your electric bill.

Cost breakdown*:

1 hour: .0014¢

1 Day: 3.4¢

1 Month: \$1.01

Even nonstop, an efficient LED barely makes a dent—your real energy hogs are elsewhere.

Livestock Tank Heater

Keeping livestock water from freezing is essential, but tank heaters can run nonstop. Choosing a model with a built-in thermostat to reduce unnecessary energy use.

Typical Wattage: 1,500W

Cost breakdown*:

1 Hour: 17.6¢

1 Day: \$4.21

1 Month: \$126.36

Heat Lamps

Heat lamps are effective for farm or home use, but running 24/7 can significantly increase your electric bill.

Typical Wattage: 250W

Cost breakdown*:

1 Hour: 2.9¢

1 Day: 70¢

1 Month: \$21.06



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Board of Directors

District 1: Gary (Andy) Anderson, President

District 2: Barbara Johnson, Director

District 3: Jon Winter, Director

District 4: Dave Staples, Secretary

District 5: Mike Loken, Vice President

District 6: Joel Seela, Director

District 7: Matthew Mattson, Treasurer

Al Haman, CEO

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

**This Month's Safety Tip...
Stay Alive. Stay Inside.**

