

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!

NEWSLINE

October 2026

Operation Round Up pg 3 Dual Fuel Reminders pg 4

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL



Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit, community-led utilities. Because we are a co-op, we can adapt to our local members' needs, providing the programs and services you care about most.

That's the power of co-op membership.

Celebrate Co-op Month at the REA Office!

Stop by REA for a cup of coffee and Country Blossom Farm cookies during October.

Be Sure 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 listed below **before 12/31/26.**



Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center
320-762-1124

Beau Coffee Company
320-239-2078

Blairview Saddle Shop
320-762-5664

Brother's Market: Carlos
320-852-7331

Brother's Market: Miltona
218-943-3333

Burr Vineyards
651-726-4397

Carlos Creek
320-846-5443

Chet's Lakeside Inn
218-943-2471

Country Blossom Farm
320-334-1620

Doraisamy Farm
320-524-2513

Jim & Judy's
320-852-7604

Kadejan Market
320-460-8710

Lake Miltona Golf Club
320-852-7078

Lake Reno Bar & Grill
320-283-5030

LEtoile du Nord Vineyard
320-298-4686

Long Lake Lodge
320-808-3426

Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant: Jan Jablonski
320-815-7894

Miltona Greenhouses
218-943-3601

Rolling Forks Vineyards
320-634-7655

Selective TV
320-763-5924

Stivland Gardens
320-283-5227

Taylor's Market
320-805-0405

Tipsinah Mounds Golf Course
218-685-4271



Al Haman
CEO

A Note from the CEO

Tree cutting key to reducing power outages

In the August newsletter, I shared that we have reduced the number of power outages by using underground cable instead of overhead when possible and by replacing failing underground cable. However, over half of our system consists of overhead power lines, and trees and power

lines often share the same space. For this newsletter, I'll focus on the importance of tree cutting. Despite aggressive trimming and cutting, trees remain a primary driver of outages, especially this summer.

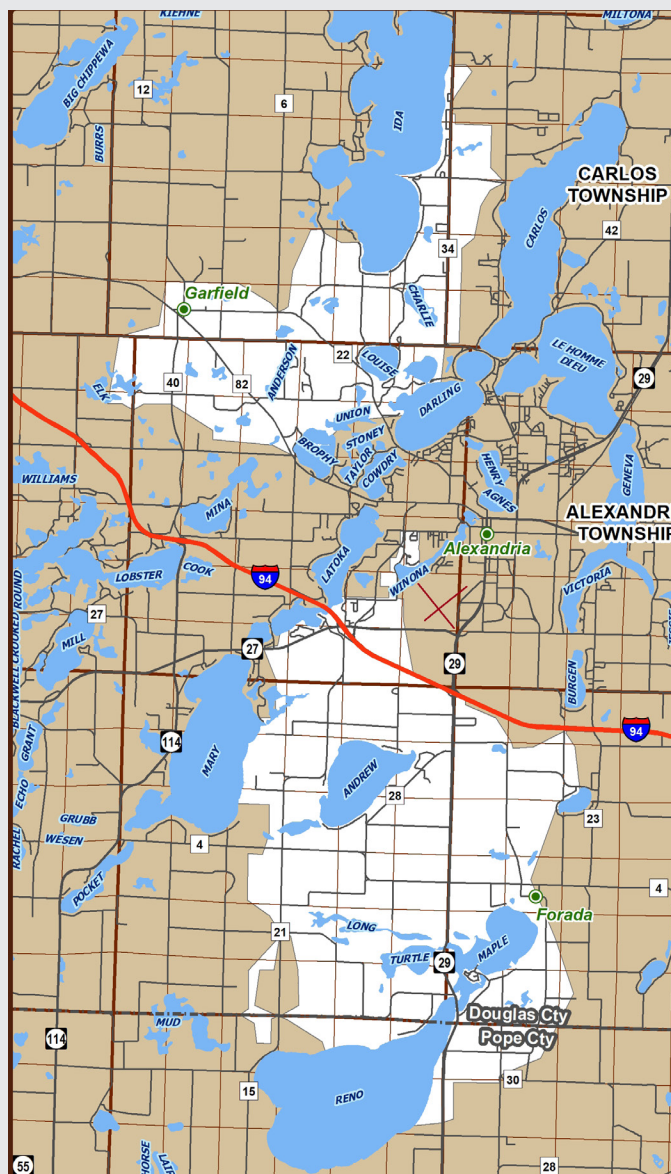
Currently, we use a contractor, Carr's Tree Service, for tree cutting/trimming and ground line maintenance. The standard right of way clearance is 30 feet wide, but the contractor will attempt to get permission for removal of dead trees outside the corridor that may present a hazard of falling into the line. Many trees outside the right of way are tall enough to fall onto the line during a storm, so it is nearly impossible to eliminate all tree outages.

Carr's Tree Service is currently working in areas served by the Lake Mary and La Grand Substations (see map) and will continue through the winter. If you have electric service in these areas, representatives from Carr's will identify trees requiring pruning or removal, and then communicate with affected property owners. Their goal is never to simply show up and start cutting trees. Good utility vegetation management starts with planning, communication, and making sure everyone understands why the work needs to be done.

The annual budget for vegetation management has been \$750,000 for several years now and will continue to be one of the largest items in our operating budget. Our average cost per mile of tree cutting is \$7,000. Our goal is to maintain a 10-year interval between visits to the same areas. Around lakes, we allow our tree contractor to negotiate reduced clearance on a case-by-case basis. However, reduced clearance means we must go back to these locations on a shorter interval.

We encourage you to please work with Carr's when they contact you. By doing so, you will help us reduce the number of outages caused by trees. Trees falling on power lines are also a public safety hazard. We recognize that trees are an important part of our rural lifestyle, and that proper vegetation management is critical to both safety and reliable electric service.

Right of Way Clearing Underway in REA Service Territory



Areas above highlighted in white are served by the La Grand Substation (top) and Lake Mary Substation (bottom). Carr's Tree Service is cutting and trimming trees and performing ground line maintenance in these areas now and through the winter.

Please contact REA at 800-473-1722 or rea@runestoneelectric.com if you have any questions.

REA Board of Director Meeting Highlights - August 2026

- » Reviewed the July 2026 Financial Report noting July kWh sales were 15% over budget. The July gross margin was a positive variance, but YTD gross margin is still under budget.
- » President Anderson reported on Great River Energy (GRE), noting that the board did not meet in August.
- » CEO Haman reported on replacing the cold storage building to replace the building damaged during a storm in June 2025.
- » With recent and anticipated retirement announcements, as well as employee attrition, CEO Haman led an extensive staffing discussion highlighting current and future plans to address these changes.
- » President Anderson, Directors Loken, Johnson, Staples, Seela, Winter, and CEO Haman reviewed the MREA Energy Issues Summit.
- » The regular October Board Meeting will be Tuesday, October 27, 2026 at 9:00

REA Members Support Their Communities

Operation Round Up Distributes \$14,100 in September!



Through contributions from Runestone Electric Association's participating members, the Operation Round Up® Trust Board recently approved **\$14,100** to support local community programs at 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 29 projects and programs this past quarter. Community-based projects and programs have received nearly \$1.3 million since the program's inception in 2003. On average, participating REA members contributed **\$6.50 in 2025**. Proof that small change adds up. Best of all, 95% of all funds collected are distributed as grants.



Representing some of the organizations receiving REA Operation Round Up grants in September include: Front row l to r – Pete Reishus, UCAN – United Communities Advocating Nonviolence; Cindy Solvie, Prairie Community Services, Inc.; Samantha Warncke, West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc.; Ali Tvrdik, Giving Grayce MN; and Amber Schmitz and Faith Hokanson, Ashby FFA. Back row l to r – Rich Moen, REA Operation Round Up Trust Board Member; Darrel Holverson, St. Petri Lutheran Church Cemetery; Michelle Walker, Vikingland Jr. Shooting Sports; Jeff Parkin, Alexandria Area High School Trap League; Steve Cook, Inspiration Peak Post 527 American Legion; Ken Voigt, Veterans Memorial Honor Guard; Sue Kulbeik, Beyond the Yellow Ribbon of Grant County; and Bonita Oestreich and Eleora Mathiowetz, Ashby FFA.

Fire Departments & First Responders:

- » Brandon Fire Department – Lighting project (\$500)
- » Lowry Fire Department – Pagers (\$500)

Community:

- » Veterans Memorial Honor Guard – Uniforms and supplies (\$1,000)
- » Beyond the Yellow Ribbon of Grant County – Ongoing support for veterans & first responders (\$500)
- » Prairie Community Services, Inc – CPR/First Aid AED instructor certification (\$250)
- » Alexandria Area Branch of AAUW – Project Bookshelf (\$250)
- » West Central MN Communities Action, Inc – Reach Out for Warmth project (\$1,000)
- » Inspiration Peak Post 527 American Legion Millerville – Entryway replacement (\$500)
- » UCAN-United Communities Advocating Nonviolence – Speaker for Domestic Abuse Awareness Luncheon (\$1,000)

- » Elk Lake Area Improvement Association – Safe Roads, Safe Shores project (\$600)

Youth:

- » Alexandria Area High School Trap League – Supplies (\$300)
- » Boy Scout Troop 491 – camping and projects (\$500)
- » West Central Area School – Intergenerational Connection at WCA (\$500)
- » Grant County Collaborative – Halloween carnival (\$500)
- » Life Connections – Buckle Up Baby! Program (\$1,000)
- » Giving Grayce MN – Youth center support (\$500)
- » Osakis Trap Club – New uniforms (\$250)
- » Vikingland Jr. Shooting Sports – Shooting supplies for kids (\$500)
- » Ashby FFA Chapter – Ashby Greenhouse Project (\$500)

Food Shelf:

- » Hoffman Kensington Area Food Shelf – AC update (\$750)

Cemeteries:

The following cemeteries received \$300 for maintenance and improvements:

- » Van Loon Cemetery Association
- » Hudson Cemetery
- » Ness Cemetery Association
- » St. Petri Church Cemetery

Quilters:

The following quilting organizations received \$300 for supplies:

- » Zion Lutheran Church Quilters
- » Alexandria Senior Quilters
- » Minnewaska Lutheran Church WMT

The deadline for the next round of funding is **November 6, 2026**
Application forms
can be completed at
www.RunestoneElectric.com



Winter Prep Starts Here: Dual Fuel Checklist

Schedule a tune up for both electric & fuel back-up systems

Summer storms can damage equipment controls within heating systems. Testing the systems to ensure they're functioning correctly avoids surprises when winter comes.

Sign up to be notified of control events

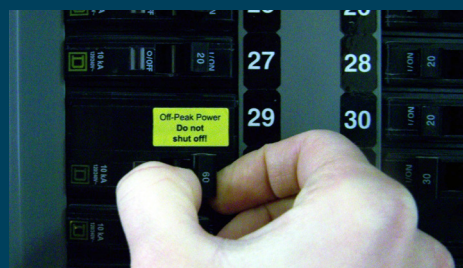
To get text messages on control days:
text #loadcontrol to 22300

Check the value of off-peak vs propane



Familiarize yourself with off-peak control

- » During the heating season, the electric heat portion of your dual fuel system is controlled and your back up keeps your space comfortable.
- » You can expect at least 4-5 control events per month during the heating season.
- » Control times can vary from morning to evening.
- » Control will not exceed 12 hours per control event.
- » Off-peak may be controlled up to a maximum of 400 hours, however this is rare.



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 during a long trip can save energy—but only if you do it the right way. Follow these tips to avoid losing your off-peak energy savings:

1. Check the Breaker First

Don't turn off the breaker if:

- » You see a yellow sticker (like the one shown in the photo), or
- » Your electrical panel shows the water heater is connected to an off-peak meter and controller. Turning off the breaker in this case will stop power to the off-peak meter—and you'll miss out on off-peak savings while you're gone.

2. Use a Disconnect Switch

Ask your electrician to install a disconnect switch next to your water heater. This lets you turn off the water heater itself, while still keeping power flowing to the off-peak meter and controller.

Still have questions?

Feel free to contact REA.

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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

Editorial Staff

Al Haman, CEO

Sue Lundeen, Editor

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



**Call 811 or visit
gopherstateonecall.org
before you dig**