



## Regulated Rate Option

December Regulated Rate Option (RRO)

Energy is will be: 6.8 cents/kwh

Variable (non-energy) will be: 0.499 for a total of 7.299 cents/kwh

The monthly RRO rate changes on the 1st of each month and is always on the home page of our website.

Regulated Rate Option (RRO) is a legislated calculation and price setting mechanism that allows the electric distributor (in your case, Tomahawk REA) to recover its costs from you, the consumer/member. This recovery of costs is done by a business called an electric retailer. This retailer can be chosen for you (default regulated option), or you can choose for yourself and comes from the Alberta government wanting to make sure that you can choose who bills you, and what possible competitive advantages you might have with different retailers.

The Utilities Consumer Advocate (UCA) has user-friendly information online if you are interested in exploring your options. It's important to know that everyone has a retailer: either by default or by choice. You have to get electricity, and we have to bill! How you choose to be billed can be up to you! If you are interested in exploring your options, please go to the UCA website at: <https://ucahelps.alberta.ca/retailers.aspx>.

### AFREA News Release brings hope for Alberta REA's

A private member's Motion to change legislation offers hope to the 32 rural electrification associations (REAs) in Alberta, serving approximately 40,000 members. REAs have been distributing electricity in Alberta since the late 1940's and operate under a cooperative business model. However, the number of REAs has steadily declined since the 1970's because legislation has limited their ability to grow and compete while enabling the growth of large corporate entities like ATCO and FortisAlberta. To read more go to AFREA's website at: [www.afrea.ab.ca](http://www.afrea.ab.ca)

## What's on the go?

### Asset Evaluation

We are currently in the process of our asset evaluation and will update you at the AGM in 2019.

### Pole Testing

The number of power poles tested and the results. The pole testers tested 359 poles. Three (3) poles were not tested by the pole testers due to access. These 3 poles will be tested by EQUUS personnel. Of the 359 poles tested, 82 have been identified by the pole testers for change.

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|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1A – Single Phase Tangent     | = 41 Poles |
| 1B – Single Phase Dead End    | = 19 Poles |
| 1C – Single Phase Transformer | = 22 Poles |

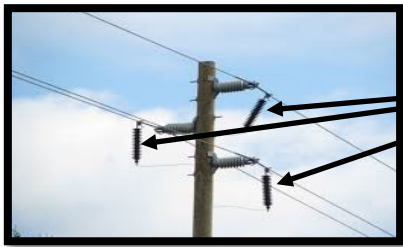
EQUUS will now review all poles identified as 1(X) poles. 1(X) poles are potential fails (machine damage, cracks, surface rot) that a power line technician (PLT) will determine if it the pole is required to be changed now or will last until the next pole change cycle. All 1(X) poles not changed in the current cycle, will be identified and changed in the next cycle.

### Removed Power Poles

If you or someone you know is interested in acquiring one or more of the old poles you can track EQUUS personnel down as they are being removed or contact the North office. EQUUS only charges \$5-\$10 per pole and you will have to sign a release. All proceeds are donated to charity!

### Lightning Arresters

All new power poles installed are required to have lightning arresters. The Board understands that this policy is only a few years old and that we may have some members who do not have lightning arresters on their poles. We are currently in the process of finding out which members are without. This process will take up to 3 months to complete and we will update you with our findings as soon as possible.



Lightning Arresters

## Tips from our Distribution System Operator, EQUUS

### Winter Power Usage

With winter and the holidays quickly approaching, now is a great time to consider some of the seasonal factors that can increase your electricity usage and some small changes you can make to help save money and make your home more energy efficient. Alberta Energy states that the typical Alberta household uses about 7,200 kWh of electricity annually with a significant increase in the winter months when the cold temperatures and short days mean electric furnaces and space heaters are running and lights are on for much of the day and night. So how can you keep your home warm and cozy without running a big bill?

- \* If you are headed out of town for holidays, turn your thermostat down and unplug unnecessary appliances and electronics. Many use power even when not turned on.
- \* Swap out old light bulbs for LEDs and make sure lights are not left on when they are not needed.
- \* Use timers on your Christmas lights to ensure they aren't accidentally left on during the day.
- \* Check your furnace filter. Your furnace has to work harder to push air through a clogged, dirty filter.
- \* Minimize use of space heaters. Repairing and replacing drafty windows and doors that often necessitate the use of space heaters can save you in the long run.
- \* Choose to air-dry laundry when possible. Dryers are one of the highest power consumers in the home. While hanging clothes to dry can take longer it can save you when your bill comes.
- \* Install motion detector lights in storages areas, on porches and outdoors so that the light doesn't have to be left on all the time.



#### **Motions Passed at the 2018 AGM – Status Update**

**Costs of early termination of the EQUUS JV** - After discussion with legal counsel the pros and cons of pushing this issue it was decided by the board to leave this issue. The major reason for this is that to pursue it will result in costly legal battle that will run in duration longer than what is left on the actual term of the JV Contract.

**Membership Registry, Use, Access and Good Standing** - The use of the membership registry at present is as per the guidelines in the regulations. As they are very basic it was decided in the best interest of the TREA to update the TREA bylaws and memorandum so that the membership's information is protected from abuse.

**Records Management** - The records are now maintained at an independent office rather than someone's personal residence. This takes away a good majority of the risk of a person removing all the records. The administrative staff have signed Code of Conduct agreements that allows for legal action should the misuse of membership information and confidential business of the TREA is abused. It was also discussed with legal counsel that the cost of future action against past administration for cost recovery of the legal costs to gain the past information was not cost beneficial and had no tangible gain.

**Future details on Note 9** – Due to the legal ramifications we can still at this point not disclose any additional information on this.

**Options for RRO Providers / DSO Providers** - We are working on having the options available come the expiration of the JV Agreement. The choices to be presented to the membership allowing time for implementation upon the expiration of the agreement.

**Unfunded Liability** - Our current insurance policy doesn't expire until November 2019. Currently the AFREA is looking at group type of insurance that all REA's can join. This will allow for broader coverage as the coverage will be lumped together with all areas. So if one area suffers a large loss it will come out of the whole part not just an insurance company which would increase our premiums and actually not cover all types of losses. As there isn't a complete coverage for all types of losses such as wild fire. We will continue to keep you posted as AFREA researches this more and makes information available to the REAs.

#### **TREA Investment in New Service Policy**

In 2015-2016 the TREA Board of Directors, as it then was, put into effect EQUUS Policy 3.2.3 called "Investment in Construction".

This policy's purpose was to ensure affordable construction of new services and compete with Fortis. The "Capital Cost Recovery" of this investment was through a monthly investment rider that was added to the monthly bill of the members that installed these new services. This rider ranged from \$10.00 - \$30.00 per month depending on the size of the service. This recovery is NON-INTEREST bearing to the member. The (then) board funded this investment via an interest-bearing loan thru EQUUS for the portion of the service install not covered by the new install member portion making the interest portion of this loan paid for by all members.

In 2017, the (then) board ended this investment program and it is no longer in existence for TREA members.

Earlier this year, the 2018 – 2019 Board of Directors reviewed our paperwork for members who have had construction under this former investment program. Upon further review with legal counsel, it was noted that none of the lands with these new services were properly registered to protect TREA's interest in securing re-payment for the investment program. We are informed that this poses some legal risk and transparency issues.

As the goal of the 2018-2019 TREA board is transparency, the Board communicated with members directly and requested cooperation with them, rather than issuing a caveat without their knowledge. This communication has caused some confusion. We apologize for the confusion and frustration felt by the members that this affects. We are informed that we have a duty to protect the association as a whole, and that we have a right to protect our assets and investment with a registration at land titles as the appropriate due diligence to protect the association as a whole. We are not changing the terms of the policy that was in effect when your service was installed – your IRDR payment continues to be Non-Interest Bearing and the payment amount will stay the same. Members affected have been provided the option of paying out the outstanding investment – again with no interest or penalties, as per documentation sent to the affected members.

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## **AFREA**

Look for information on our website from the Alberta Federation of REA's under COMMUNICATIONS.

## **TREA Rate Schedule**

Look for our rate schedule now posted on the website under MEMBER SERVICES.

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You may have been in touch with our office recently to find another Administration person handling office duties—please welcome Melanie deJong. Mel is stepping in for our permanent Administrator on a part-time basis while Tracy takes some time off for family. Mel has shown to be an excellent addition and is skilled in all aspects of our operations.

All members are free to purchase electricity services through TREA's regulated rate tariff or from a retailer of their choice. The delivery of electricity to you is not affected by your choice. If you change who you purchase electricity services from, you will continue receiving electricity from TREA. For a current list of retailers you may choose from, visit <http://www.ucahelps.alberta.ca> or call 310-4822 (toll free in Alberta).

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Hours of Operation: Wednesday 9 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. by phone)