

MORGAN COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

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734 Barlow Road
P.O. Box 738
Fort Morgan, CO 80701



970-867-5688



customerservice@mcrea.org



www.mcrea.org



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MCREA Mission

Morgan County REA, a member-owned cooperative, is dedicated to serving our members by providing safe, reliable energy with a strong tradition and vision for the future.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS SIGN UP FOR MCREA'S GRASSROOTS EFFORT

Very few of us give much thought to how and why our lights turn on — just as long as they do. Electricity is such a common part of our daily lives that we rarely think about the processes and policies that are in place to ensure that power is distributed in a reliable and affordable manner. Legislation at both the state and federal level can impact the electric utility industry, so it is important that your voices be heard when decisions are being made.

That is why Morgan County REA encourages members to join our grassroots effort to support the community, economy and our rural way of life. Signing up for our grassroots program does not require a lot of work. (Jacquelyn Flemal, acct. #xxx9700) It simply means that when legislation concerning electric cooperatives is being discussed, MCREA can reach out to you via text or email, asking you to return prepared letters and emails to elected



officials in support of affordable energy, the local economy and our community.

This helps MCREA continue our mission of providing safe, reliable energy to our members, with a strong tradition and vision for the future. Your voice can help MCREA and other rural electric cooperatives remain strong for future generations.

Visit www.mcrea.org/GrassrootsSignup to join our grassroots effort today!

MCREA HOSTS MEMBERS FOR FIRST-EVER CUSTOMER APPRECIATION EVENT

Nearly 200 people gathered at Morgan County Rural Electric Association's headquarters for the co-op's first-ever Customer Appreciation Event on Thursday, June 16. Members enjoyed a free barbecue dinner, MCREA giveaways, and the opportunity to learn more about their local electric cooperative.

One of the event booths was dedicated to informing customers about electric vehicles, which included a Tesla Model Y for guests to explore. A second booth was centered around beneficial electrification tools and home upgrades, which

help members save money on energy costs. MCREA offers rebates on certain items, including appliances, electric outdoor power equipment and air source heat pumps.

"This event was a great opportunity to not only gather with our members again, but also to inform them on what MCREA is doing to benefit them," said Dave Frick, MCREA general manager. "We are also excited to demonstrate for the first time our hotline safety demonstration trailer, which some of our linemen have been building for the last few months."

The trailer helps MCREA linemen demonstrate, on a large scale, the power of electricity and reasons why outages may occur. It also shows members the importance of power line safety. MCREA is excited to share this trailer with the community, so give the office a call to schedule a demo for schools, first responders and other groups.

Another popular booth was the Colorado 4H Energy Lab, which was hosted by representatives from Colorado State University and Morgan County Extension. The Energy Lab is a mobile trailer full of hands-on activities that help kids (and adults) learn more about how energy is generated and used. The trailer travels across the state and is sponsored by Colorado's electric cooperatives, including MCREA.

In addition to educational opportunities, MCREA held a drawing for a

brand-new electric chainsaw, which one lucky customer walked away with at the end of the event. The drawing saw members win many other prizes throughout the evening, including \$25 MCREA bill credits, camping gear and tool sets.

This year's Customer Appreciation Event was a success, and MCREA is looking forward to hosting more events for its membership in the future.



▲ Tesla Model Y On Display
Members were given the opportunity to sit behind the wheel of a Tesla while learning about the EV experience.




▲ Customer Appreciation Event
Morgan County REA members gather inside MCREA's warehouse for its first-ever customer appreciation event.



▲ Hotline Demo Trailer
MCREA linemen (left to right) Sergio Baquera, Fabian Vigil and Zeque Chenoweth present the hotline safety trailer to members at MCREA's warehouse on June 16.



▲ Energy Trailer
The Colorado 4-H Energy Lab trailer, sponsored by Colorado's electric cooperatives, was on display for MCREA members attending the event.



**Win
\$25 Off
Your
Electric Bill**

Each month, Morgan County REA gives two lucky members a chance at a \$25 credit on their electric bill, just by reading *Colorado Country Life*. Sorry to the two members who didn't spot their names in the June issue and call to claim a \$25 bill credit each. There are two more MCREA member names and account numbers hidden somewhere in this issue. If you find your name and account number, call MCREA member services at (970) 867-5688 by August 31 to claim a \$25 credit on your bill.



**MCREA OFFICES
WILL BE CLOSED FOR
LABOR DAY,
SEPTEMBER 5.**



2022 Youth Tour

Caleb Siegling visits nation's capital

Each summer, Morgan County REA selects one student from our service area to attend the National Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. Youth Tour is an opportunity for high school students from all over the country, sponsored by their local rural electric cooperatives, to learn about our government in a week of educational and fun events. Caleb Siegling from Fort Morgan High School was chosen to represent MCREA at this year's tour. While on the trip, which included a visit to the Colorado State Capitol before departing for Washington, D.C., Caleb had the opportunity to speak with politicians at both levels of government.

"I enjoyed talking with leaders from my state and learning more about the people who represent the state of Colorado," Siegling said. "I appreciated that many of these leaders had different opinions, which helped expand my horizons and views of Congress."

In addition to meeting government leaders, students on the tour also had the chance to see many of the memorials and museums that Washington, D.C. is known for.

"The memorial I enjoyed visiting most

was the Vietnam Memorial," Siegling mentioned. "And my favorite activity, hands down, was touring the Smithsonian [Museum of Natural History]. I absolutely love history and artifacts, making the Smithsonian a perfect place for me."

While showcasing our nation's history and government, Youth Tour is also focused on teaching students more about electric cooperatives and how electricity is distributed to their members.

"I learned a lot about electric cooperatives. To be honest, electricity in my house was something I hadn't given much thought to before," explained Siegling. "This trip taught me that there is quite a lot more to electricity and the REA's operations than meets the eye: from the benefits available for members, to the politics involved with ensuring that state and national governments meet the needs of local REAs and NRECA."

Each year, applications to attend Youth Tour are open to high school students, who will be at least 16 years old by the tour. Applicants must reside within MCREA's service territory and their parents or grandparents must be MCREA members. Selection



▲ Above: Siegling and other Youth Tour participants visit the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Top left: Siegling in front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C.

is based on application, essay and interview.

"Students should apply for Youth Tour because it is an opportunity to become a leader, learn and make lifelong friends. It also gives you an understanding of what it means to be an American, something that cannot be taught in any book," Siegling pointed out. "I would like to give a huge thank you to Morgan County REA for giving me this opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C."

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

An easy way to save energy is to seal air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls in your home. You can also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back.

Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.

Source: Dept. of Energy



MCREA Employee Memorial Scholarship Awarded to Local Youth



Ray Mann

Last December, Morgan County REA experienced the unexpected loss of our coworker and friend, Ray Mann. Ray was a lineman for many years and most recently worked in MCREA's operations department as its SCADA/AMI lead. To honor his memory, Ray's family and friends established the Belt and Hooks Scholarship.

The scholarship is awarded to an individual, selected by Ray's wife, Tess Mann, who is attending school to become a lineman. The winner of the first-ever Belt and Hooks Scholarship is Joel Muller from Fleming,

who is currently attending the Powerline Construction and Maintenance Technology Program at Western Nebraska Community College.

"Joel was chosen because of his excellent academics, his work ethic and his love of hunting—everything Ray was passionate about," said Tess. "Joel's dream is to become a lineman and I believe Ray would be proud of this kid and what he has accomplished this far. I also would like to thank Quinton and Stacey Dobbins and Buckingham Manufacturing, for all their help in keeping Ray's memory alive through this scholarship."

Ray's smile and friendship is sincerely missed at MCREA, and our thoughts continue



Tess Mann presents scholarship to Joel Muller.

to be with Tess and their family. As this scholarship honors Ray's love for being a lineman, it is only fitting that it will help future generations of electrical lineworkers, like Muller.

"Congratulations, Joel," added Tess. "I can't wait to see the places you will go!"

IRRIGATION ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and keeping farmland well-irrigated is crucial for any agricultural producer. Farm irrigation methods can make a huge difference when it comes to maximizing productivity while minimizing costs.

Energy-efficient irrigation methods help farmers curtail unnecessary water use, helping to reduce operating costs and increase overall productivity. When choosing between different irrigation methods and technologies it is important to consider the overall cost, return on investment, convenience and minimization of risks.

One of the easiest ways to maximize energy efficiency, as many farmers already do, is to use electric motors in place of old, inefficient diesel irrigation motors. Typically, electric motors are about 90% efficient, while diesel motors have much lower efficiencies (between 30% and 40%). This means cost savings in the long run for farmers. Electric motors also have lower maintenance needs and can make use of a variable-frequency-drive irrigation system to help reduce costs.

VFD systems allow farmers to pump water at different rates, which maximizes irrigation throughout the day. A VFD system can control the speed of the electric motor by controlling the electric power frequency supplied to the motor. (Durwood Darbin, acct. #xxx3300) Since there are many benefits of using electric irrigation motors, the majority of U.S. farmers have switched their diesel motors to electric ones. However, pairing the motor with a VFD system is still a relatively new agricultural trend.

If you are installing electric motors for irrigation, be sure to give Morgan County REA a call. The cooperative offers rebates on commercial/industrial and VFD motors. MCREA's rebate program also offers incentives for irrigation audits, which can save you money and reduce energy costs.

As a proud supporter of agriculture and our area's farmers, MCREA is happy to offer rebates not only on motors, but also on many energy-saving products. To learn more about the rebates we offer, visit www.mcrea.org/energy-efficiency-rebates.