

MORGAN COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

APRIL 2023



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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.

■■ This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER: APRIL 18 IS COLORADO LINEWORKER DAY

BY DAVID FRICK GENERAL MANAGER



DAVID FRICK

Morgan County REA serves all or parts of six different counties in northeastern Colorado, meaning many of you have likely seen MCREA crews at one time or another, working on power lines and other electrical equipment across our service territory. Lineworkers are essential to our communities, helping to keep our homes and businesses running. In light of Colorado Lineworker Day, which we celebrate on April 18, now is the perfect time to talk about all that MCREA lineworkers do to serve our members.

Being a lineworker is not just a career—it's a lifestyle. Lineworkers work sometimes long, nontraditional hours, in all kinds of weather conditions. Because of the hazards associated with working with high-voltage equipment, lineworkers must have specialized skills, knowledge

and experience. They must possess a mental toughness that allows them to maintain sharp attention to detail. Shortcuts are not an option, as there is no room for error or complacency in this line of work.

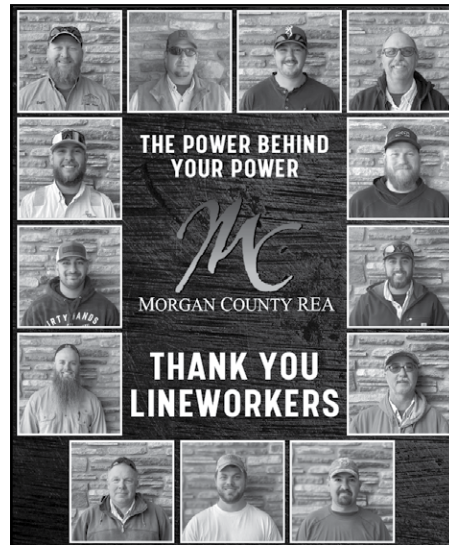
Being a lineworker is a job that requires technical skills learned through more than 8,000 hours (four years) of on-the-job training. After completing this apprenticeship, lineworkers "crack out" as journeymen. In today's world, lineworkers must be information experts, using technology to pinpoint outages from miles away. Line crews often use laptops, tablets, and other technologies to map outages, survey damage and

troubleshoot problems.

Despite the many challenges, MCREA's lineworkers are committed to powering our communities. During major power outages that often accompany severe weather, lineworkers are among the first to be called. They willingly leave the comfort of their homes and families, knowing they won't return until the job is done. That's why the lineworker's family is also dedicated to serving the community;

they understand the importance of the job.

MCREA has 13 lineworkers responsible for keeping the lights on 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, this group maintains 2,928 miles of power lines across our vast service territory. Linework may not seem like



a glamorous job, but it plays a huge role in keeping our communities running. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking individuals, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we depend on for everyday life.

The next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, they are truly the power behind your power. At Morgan County REA, we are especially proud of our group of lineworkers and ask our members to join us in recognizing them on April 18.

On the Move: Hotline Safety Demonstration Trailer

▶ (Left to Right) MCREA linemen Rodney Rhoades, Sergio Baquera, and Fabian Vigil present the hotline safety demonstration trailer in Wiggins.



Last summer, Morgan County REA unveiled its brand-new hotline safety demonstration trailer to its membership. The trailer was designed and built by MCREA's linemen and mechanics to show the importance of powerline safety and to demonstrate how outages can occur.

Since its debut at MCREA's Member Appreciation Event last June, the trailer has been presented to schools and other groups across MCREA's service territory.

The trailer operates at 7,200 volts — the same as MCREA's distribution line — allowing linemen to pull large arcs from the trailer. A mannequin is positioned on the trailer to show the consequences of contact with a powerline. With an orange for a heart and uncooked hot dogs for fingers, the mannequin demonstrates how electricity travels through the body and its vital organs.

Linemen also demonstrate how outages may occur due to things like high wind or animals interfering with MCREA equipment. The hotline safety demonstration presents an opportunity for members to ask linemen questions and get answers about electrical distribution, what to do if a powerline is down or how power outages are restored.

MCREA is excited to continue sharing the demonstration trailer with our members. (J.C. Chapin, acct #xxx9800) If you are interested in having MCREA present the hotline safety demo trailer to a class or other organized group, please call the MCREA office.

New Journeyman: Roger Wunsch

Morgan County REA is happy to welcome journeyman lineman Roger Wunsch to our team. Roger comes to MCREA after previously working at City of Fort Morgan Light & Power. A Morgan County native, Roger is excited to continue linework and helping keep the lights on in his community.

"Being a lineman is an exciting job," Roger said. "I enjoy learning about and being part of the electric distribution system."

Welcome to Morgan County REA, Roger!



New Journeyman: Ryan Dunker

Morgan County REA is excited to welcome journeyman lineman Ryan Dunker to our electric co-op. Before coming to MCREA, Ryan worked at Ward Electric. Originally from Brush, Ryan is glad to be back near family and looks forward to getting involved in the community.

"I had heard good things about MCREA," Ryan said, when asked what made him want to come to the association. "Being a lineman is a fun, interesting job and I'm looking forward to continuing that back here."

Welcome to the MCREA team, Ryan!



**WIN \$25 OFF
YOUR ELECTRIC BILL**

Each month, Morgan County REA gives two lucky members a chance at a \$25 bill credit, just by reading *Colorado Country Life*. Congratulations, McEndaffer Cattle Co.! You saw your name in the February magazine and received a bill credit. There are two MCREA member names and their account numbers hidden somewhere in this issue. If you find your name and account number, call MCREA member services at 970-867-5688 by April 28 to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill.



Submit Your Photos for Morgan County REA's Calendar Contest

Morgan County REA is once again holding a photo contest for its membership. MCREA encourages members to submit their best photos taken from across our service area, which extends to all or parts of six different counties in northeastern Colorado.

A committee of MCREA employees will select the 12 best photos submitted to the contest. Those 12 photos will be featured in MCREA's 2023-2024 calendar, which will be given out at MCREA's Member Appreciation Picnic on June 15. Last year's contest and calendar was a hit among our members, and MCREA is excited to again showcase some of the great talent and scenery throughout our service territory.

To submit your photos, please visit mcrea.org and click the Calendar Contest button. **All entries must be submitted by Sunday, April 30.** One member may submit up to four photos. Photos from fall, winter, spring and summer are encouraged. High-resolution photos are preferred, as they are better suited for printing in the calendar.

Members who submit photos to this year's contest will be entered to win a \$25 gift card as well. If you have any questions about this year's contest or have issues submitting your photos, please call MCREA member services at 970-867-5688.

Morgan County REA Member Appreciation Picnic: Thursday, June 15

Save the date for MCREA's second annual Member Appreciation Picnic on Thursday, June 15, from 5-7 p.m. Join us at MCREA's headquarters for food, giveaways, and a chance to learn more about all the great things happening at your electric cooperative. Those in attendance will get to see the new Ford F-150 Lightning, a fully electric pickup, and be entered to win prizes.

If you have any questions regarding this year's picnic, please call MCREA's office at 970-867-5688.



2023

MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC

JUNE 15 5-7 PM

MCREA HEADQUARTERS



MORGAN COUNTY REA
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Dial 811 Before You Dig this Spring

April is National Safe Digging Month and a popular time to take care of those spring projects including tree planting and landscaping. However, digging without locating underground utilities could leave neighborhoods in the dark, cause thousands of dollars in damages, or result in severe electrical shock.

This is true regardless of how much area your project will cover or whether you consider the job to be large or small. To help you stay safe, always call 811 before digging and make use of the free national underground utility locating service.

The 811 “Call Before You Dig” number will route you to your local utility locating service. Make sure to tell the operator where and when you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for someone to come mark your public utilities with flags or spray paint.

There are different colors of paint and flags that mark underground utilities, and each color is universal to what utility is buried. The colors are listed to the right.

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift and it is important to be certain of where they are before putting a shovel in the ground.

It is also important to understand that 811 locators do not locate privately installed facilities. If you have any private utilities, you will need to hire a private utility locator. Examples of private utilities include underground sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems or gas piping to a garage.

Once all underground utilities are located, it is time to start digging. (Julie Boecking-Rowell, acct. #xxx5000) Be sure to wear the proper protective gear before getting started. For more information about 811 and digging safety, visit Call811.com and SafeElectricity.org.



COLOR-CODED SPRAY PAINT MARKS UNDERGROUND UTILITIES

Red – Electric

Orange – Communications, Telephone/CATV

Blue – Potable Water

Green – Sewer/Drainage

Yellow – Gas/Petroleum Pipeline

Purple – Reclaimed Water

White – Premark site of intended excavation

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This planting season, include energy efficiency in your landscaping plans. Adding shade trees around your home can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 6 degrees. To block heat from the sun, plant deciduous trees around the south side of your home. Deciduous trees provide excellent shade during the summer and lose their leaves in the fall and winter months, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Source: energy.gov

