

MORGAN COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

JUNE 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.



DAVID FRICK

KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON: MCREA PRIORITIZES RELIABILITY & RESILIENCY

BY DAVID FRICK GENERAL MANAGER

Our world is more electrified than it has ever been — just take a look around your home. From kitchen appliances to our many smart devices, so much of what we use is powered by electricity, and not just indoors. Outside, electricity may keep barn animals warm in the winter, and it drives well pumps and irrigation sprinklers in the summer. Electricity truly powers our lives, which is why having safe, reliable power and a resilient electric grid is so important.

At Morgan County REA, we understand the key role electricity plays in your life and the lives of all our members. You may see MCREA crews out and about and wonder what they are working on. Often our crews are completing different projects that will improve the overall reliability and resiliency of our electrical system. Here are just a few ways that MCREA works toward this goal:

POLE MAINTENANCE

Did you know MCREA inspects each power pole in our service area every 12 years? By doing so, MCREA can replace old, weakened poles before they cause problems to our grid. Replacing these poles also helps strengthen the distribution system against storms and other elements.

REBUILDING LINE

On May 11, 1938, MCREA energized its first 175 miles of power line. Today, the co-op services 2,928 miles of line, reaching parts of six different counties. Over time, sections of both overhead and underground power line need replacement. New poles and larger conductor increase reliability and make our grid well-suited for load growth across our service area.

Sometimes overhead line is converted to underground to be better protected from the elements. For example, MCREA is planning on converting 3 miles of overhead power lines crossing rivers in our territory to underground. Doing so reduces the chances of flooding, washouts, and inclement weather impacting power for our members.

SUBSTATIONS

At most of MCREA's substations, electricity is reduced from 115,000 volts to 12,470 volts so it can be carried by distribution lines to our members. MCREA has 23 substations located across its service territory, each responsible for powering its respective area. MCREA prioritizes substation maintenance and makes improvements such as upgrading substation breakers. The co-op also works to bolster tie-lines, which connect subs to each other. In case there is an issue at one substation, strong tie-lines enable MCREA to conduct "switching" — where one sub can temporarily supply power to another. This reduces outage times and increases grid reliability.

These are just a few of the ways MCREA works to maintain reliability and resiliency of our electrical system. All of our employees, from our linemen to our office staff, are dedicated to ensuring that safe, reliable electricity is delivered to you — our members. MCREA is proud to have kept the lights on for more than 80 years, and we are looking forward to a bright future.

SAVE THE DATE



2023

MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC

JUNE 15 5-7 PM

Morgan County REA | 734 BARLOW ROAD FORT MORGAN

Join Us for Morgan County REA's Member Appreciation Picnic

Please join us for this year's Member Appreciation Picnic on Thursday, June 15, from 5–7 p.m. at Morgan County REA headquarters in Fort Morgan. Last year's inaugural event was a huge success, and MCREA's board of directors and employees look forward to gathering with our members again. Members can see the brand new Ford F-150 Lightning and enter for a chance to test drive it. Those in attendance will also have a chance to win the grand prize: **an electric string trimmer and leaf blower**. There will be food, giveaways and fun for the whole family.

Planning on coming? Feel free to call MCREA's office or visit mcrea.org and click on the **Member Appreciation Picnic** button to submit an RSVP. While RSVPs are not required, submitting one will enter you to win one of 10 available \$25 bill credits. Winners will be drawn at the event and must be present to win.

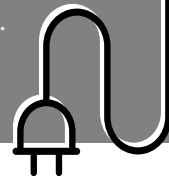
If you have any questions about this year's picnic, please call MCREA member services at 970-867-5688.

We hope to see you there!

MCREA's office will close at 3:30 p.m. on June 15 before the event.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for additional ways to save energy this summer? Your laundry room is a great place to start. Wash clothes with cold water, which can cut one load's energy use by more than half. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up when you can. Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.



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*. Unfortunately, neither of the members whose names were hidden in April's issue called MCREA to receive their \$25 credit. There are two more members 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** to claim a **\$25 credit** on your next bill.



Want to drive the new Ford F-150 Lightning? Here is your chance!

The Ford F-150 Lightning is one of the newest players in the electric vehicle game. Thanks to Tri-State G&T, Morgan County REA's wholesale power supplier, the fully electric pickup will make its way to Morgan County this month. It will be on display for Morgan County REA members to see at this year's Member Appreciation Picnic on June 15. But that's not all — MCREA members have the chance to drive the F-150 Lightning.

Want to enter for a chance to take this innovative truck for a spin? Call MCREA's office or visit mcrea.org/test-drive by June 15 to enter the drawing. Winners will be randomly selected to schedule test drives and must have a valid driver's license to participate.

If you have any questions about driving the Ford F-150 Lightning, don't hesitate to call MCREA's office.

Fire Department Uses Virtual Reality Safety Demo

Last month, Morgan County REA members learned about the newest addition to the co-op's safety program: virtual reality headsets. The VR headsets, popular among video gamers, are used by MCREA to share immersive, 360-degree safety demonstrations with members. While wearing the headset, the user can watch a 7-minute first responder safety video that puts them at the scene of an accident where a car has hit a power pole and a power line has fallen on top of the vehicle. (Robert Jones, acct. #xxx0900)

The video demonstrates the proper steps to take as a first responder, driver or passerby. Virtual reality presentations significantly increase the amount of information retained by the viewer, making the headsets an incredible asset for teaching about power line safety.

Members of the Southwest Washington County Fire Protection District were the first to use the VR headsets at their monthly meeting on April 18 in Last Chance. MCREA is a proud supporter of our community's first responders and appreciates SWCFPD's effort to increase power line safety and awareness within its district.

Interested in trying the VR headsets? Call MCREA at 970-867-5688 to schedule a demonstration for your group.



▲ Members of Southwest Washington County Fire use MCREA's VR headsets to learn about power line safety for first responders.

Energy-Saving Projects for the Weekend Warrior

BY ABBY BERRY



Are you a weekend warrior? If you're considering home improvement upgrades that save energy and money, we have a few project ideas for you which can be completed in a day or less.

Here are two energy-saving projects that you can easily tackle whether you're a weekend warrior pro or a DIY dabbler.

GET SMART ABOUT HOME COOLING AND HEATING

Cooling and heating your home typically account for a large portion of energy bills. Smart thermostats can help keep your cooling and heating costs in check, with certified models saving about 8% on annual energy costs.

Now that smart thermostats are more affordable (as little as \$70), this simple upgrade makes for a fun, efficient weekend project. Smart thermostats offer a variety of bells and whistles, but the average model will allow you to set custom temperature schedules, adjust the settings on your smartphone

from anywhere, and over time, learn your cooling and heating preferences.

Your new smart thermostat will come with step-by-step instructions, but this project typically involves shutting off your HVAC at the breaker panel, disconnecting and removing the old thermostat, installing the new smart thermostat, and connecting it to your home Wi-Fi. Remember to read the installation instructions carefully before you get started.

CREATE FRESH SAVINGS WITH A DIY CLOTHESLINE

If you have enough outdoor space available, install a clothesline. You will save on dryer costs. And in the summer, you may also save on cooling costs since unwanted heat from the clothes dryer won't be added to your home, which makes your air conditioner work harder. Additionally, air drying is gentle on fabrics and will keep your clothes

and linens looking fresh longer.

You can create your own clothesline with two T-posts, wire and hook-and-eye turn-buckles. (Ross Nachtigal, acct. #xxx4600) Depending on your soil, you may need a small amount of Quikrete to set the posts. Another option is installing the line between two trees. A typical load of laundry requires about 35 feet of line, so keep this in mind as you determine the best location.

If an outdoor clothesline isn't an option, no sweat. You can create an indoor drying rack that folds to save space. Home improvement websites like thespruce.com and hgtv.com offer step-by-step tutorials for a variety of indoor clothes drying racks.

These are just a few simple ideas to help you save energy and money. So, get out there, roll up those sleeves and tackle a few projects.

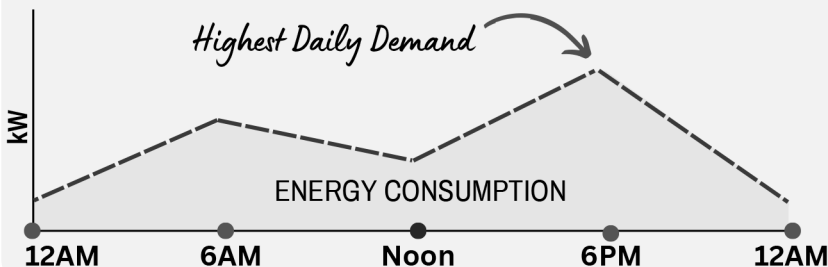
PRICE OF ELECTRICITY

Learn more about your power bill!

HOW MORGAN COUNTY REA PAYS FOR POWER

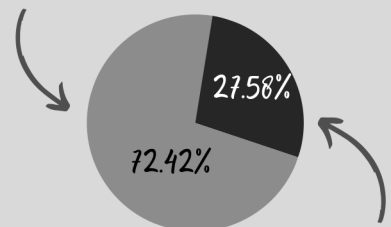
MCREA buys power from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, our wholesale power supplier. Our cost of power is broken down into two parts.

- kWh - quantity of energy consumed
- Demand - how much energy is consumed at one point in time



HOW MCREA MEMBERS PAY FOR POWER

Most of what members pay covers the cost of wholesale power that MCREA buys.



The rest covers the cost of delivering that power to you. This includes powerline maintenance, administrative costs, and more.

*Statistics from 2022 Annual Report.