

MORGAN COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

AUGUST 2024



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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.

ELECTRICITY PROVIDES POWERFUL VALUE

BY DAVE FRICK GENERAL MANAGER



DAVE FRICK

Most of us have some form of a daily routine. Many of us wake up in the morning, get ready, hop in the car, and head to work. Some have the habit of pulling through the local coffee shop for a morning brew. Then, come lunch, it's time to drive to the nearest fast-food joint for a midday meal. When you end the day at home, you probably stream an episode or two of your favorite show before bed.

As we all look for ways to save money in this age of increasing inflation, it leads us to think about those daily routines and how much value they provide compared to the money spent. A morning latte is about \$6, a fast-food combo with a burger, fries, and a drink is close to \$10, and streaming service subscriptions are around \$16 per month. All these daily expenses total around \$85 for the week, or about \$340 monthly. You may wonder — is this the best value for my money?

The average cost to power your home each month as a Morgan County REA member is about \$140. The price of those morning coffees alone could almost power a home for a month. Now that's real value.

Electricity provides benefits that we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. In addition to these perks, electricity has also remained relatively cost-stable even amidst rising inflation.

As a member-owned cooperative, MCREA does everything in its control to ensure your costs stay reasonable and that electricity remains a great value for members. It's not always easy, as there are several factors beyond inflation that impact the price of electricity — some within our control, but most beyond it.

The cost of electricity can fluctuate due to supply and demand, infrastructure

investment, maintenance, and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation capabilities; extreme conditions lead to heightened energy use or disruptions. Government policies — including subsidies for renewable energy or taxes and regulations on emissions — shape electricity costs, too. MCREA considers all these aspects when adjusting rates, and because we're a cooperative, we consider the impact of those costs on our members as well.

As our community continues to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, hospitals, and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured, MCREA always puts you top of mind.

What is MCREA's daily routine, you might ask? It's working hard each day to ensure safe, reliable electricity is delivered to our members — and that it remains the best value for your money.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

This message is public notice pursuant to CRS 40-9.5-106(1) that, effective September 1, 2024, the Morgan County Rural Electric Association is amending and restating its Rules and Regulations and adopting Service Installation Guide, which establishes standards for electric installation and use. The amended and restated Rules and Regulations and Service Installation Guide are posted on the Association's website at mcrea.org/rules-and-regulations and available for review at the Association's Headquarters, located at 734 Barlow Road, Fort Morgan, CO 80701.

Where Do You Find Value?

Did you know the average daily cost of electricity is \$4.60, or about \$140 per month?

Electricity fuels our daily life essentials, from heating/cooling equipment to entertainment devices and appliances. Think of how vital power is compared to other everyday purchases. **That's real value.**



Morning To-Go Latte



Fast-Food Combo Lunch



All-Day Power

Sources: Energy Information Administration, MoneyGeek and CNET

NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING DAY: CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

August 11 (8/11) is National Safe Digging Day, also known as 811 Day. The observance reminds anyone considering an outdoor project that breaks ground to get underground utilities marked in advance. Having them marked is free and easy to do; simply call 811 at least two full business days prior to starting a digging project. Utility companies generally have a few days to respond to your request. (Paul Catanzaro, acct. #xxx0700)

If you don't take the time to call before you dig, you could become the person who digs in an unmarked yard and strikes an underground line; this happens every nine minutes.

There are five steps to safe digging:

1. Mark the proposed dig area with white paint or flags.
2. Call 811 or go online to submit your locate request before you dig. There is no charge for the service.
3. Wait the required amount of time (typically two business days).
4. Respect the marks and do not move any flags.
5. Dig with care. Avoid digging on top of or within 18–24 inches on all sides of utility marks, which may mean moving your digging project to another part of your yard.



For more information about electrical safety, visit safeelectricity.org. For more information about 811, visit www.colorado811.org. Locate requests can also be submitted online at this website.

YOUTH TOUR 2024

In June, hundreds of students from electric cooperatives across the country gathered in Washington, D.C., for the National Rural Electric Youth Tour — a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Students were selected by and represented their local electric cooperatives in the nation's capital, where they visited special memorials, met with congressional representatives, and met lots of new friends — all while learning more about how electric cooperatives work.

Valeria Escalante from Brush High School was chosen to represent Morgan County REA at this year's Youth Tour. Joining students from Colorado and Wyoming, the group visited famous sites including Mount Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, and Capitol Hill. Among many other activities, the students also visited the World War II, Vietnam War, Korean War, and Lincoln memorials. They even went to a Washington Nationals baseball game.

Youth Tour is a fantastic opportunity for local students who want to travel, learn, and meet new people. MCREA is happy to sponsor a student from its service territory to attend Youth Tour each year. Applications are available in November and open to local sophomore, junior, and senior students whose parents or grandparents are MCREA members.

For more information about Youth Tour, visit MCREA's website at www.mcrea.org/colorado-youth-tour.



▲ The Colorado Youth Tour students visit the Capitol in Washington, D.C.



▲ Youth Tour students visit the World War II Memorial as part of their weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., in June.

HAPPY

LABOR DAY

Morgan County REA's office will be closed
Monday, September 2.



**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 Arrowhead Trash Services. You spotted your name in June's magazine and received a bill credit.

There are two more 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 August 30 to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill.

POWER UP YOUR LAWN CARE WITH ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT

The landscape of lawn and garden care is evolving, and electric equipment is at the forefront of this change. While electric lawn tools aren't new, advancements in technology and more options mean prices have become more competitive, making electric equipment an accessible option. (Ray Polencheck, acct. #xxx7600)

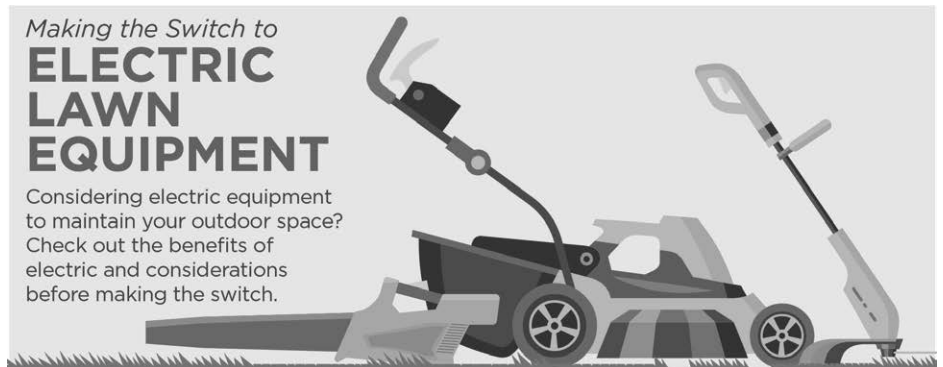
Benefits of electric equipment

Electric lawnmowers have come a long way since the days of extension cords tethering you to an outlet. Battery-powered mowers offer the same freedom of movement as gas-powered models but with reduced noise and maintenance.

Battery life was once a major drawback to making the switch to electric lawn tools. But today's growing demand for electric equipment has resulted in major advancements for lithium-ion batteries, making them more reliable, cost-effective and efficient. For most consumers, electric lawn tools can get the job done just as well as gas-powered models.

Many electric mowers offer push-button starts, and because they are lighter, they are easier to maneuver around tight turns. Electric mowers are available in push, self-propelled, walk-behind, and riding models. And there's no need to refill gas cans or change oil and air filters, resulting in less hassle and maintenance.

Like mowers, electric blowers, string trimmers, and chainsaws have fewer moving



parts, require minimal maintenance, and are quieter. Because electric tools are generally lighter in weight, they're also more ergonomic and easier to maneuver. This feature is especially handy for projects that require tools for precise work.

Choose electric equipment to meet your needs

Electric lawn tools have some limitations — the size and terrain of your outdoor space are important considerations when purchasing new equipment. When comparing gas-powered and electric mowers, consider the torque rating — this is the driving force behind a blade's rotation. On average, electric lawnmowers generate less torque than gas mowers. If you have a challenging outdoor space that includes overgrown brush, tall grass, or hills and dips, torque is a key factor.

Choosing the right type and size mower is particularly important for spaces larger than half an acre. If you have a large property, consider purchasing an extra battery to ensure uninterrupted workflow.

Many manufacturers offer interchangeable batteries and chargers, providing flexibility and convenience. Choosing a single brand can ensure charging compatibility across your lawn tools and streamline charging.

While both gas and electric lawn tools can get the job done, electric equipment generally requires less maintenance, and is less expensive to operate.

Get rebates for switching

Electric tools are quietly redefining the way we approach lawn care. If you're planning to make the switch to electric lawn equipment, visit Morgan County REA's website at www.mcrea.org/energy-efficiency-rebates to explore available rebates.

As your source of power and information, MCREA's energy advisors are available to discuss rebates and other cost-saving energy tips and tricks. Give us a call at 970-867-5688 to learn more.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Placing heat sources, such as lamps, computers, or TVs, near your thermostat can result in false temperature readings, increased energy use, and inconsistent cooling/heating. Make sure your thermostat is installed in an area clear of obstructions, electronic devices, direct sunlight, and drafts.

Ensuring your thermostat is free from these types of interferences optimizes energy efficiency, improves indoor comfort, and reduces wear and tear on your cooling/heating system.

Source: energy.gov

