

# MORGAN COUNTY RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

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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.

# CO-OPS POWER COMMUNITIES

BY DAVE FRICK GENERAL MANAGER

Simply put, Morgan County Rural Electric Association is an electric company. We work to deliver safe, reliable power to those we serve. On the surface, it doesn't seem like anything special, right? Fortunately, Morgan County REA is much more than just an electric company. We're an electric cooperative.

What's special about an electric cooperative, compared to any other power company? There are multiple answers to that question — seven, to be exact. During National Co-op Month, MCREA joins more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. in celebrating all the aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses. More importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities, built by the communities they serve. For MCREA, our mission has always been to provide you with reliable power. We care about your quality of life and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet your evolving energy needs.

Beyond the business of electricity, our employees and directors are equally invested in our local community. Why? Because we live here, too. That's why we work hard to support local efforts that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including MCREA, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

**1. Open and Voluntary Membership:** Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services. In other words, if you reside in our service territory, you can be an MCREA member.

## YOUR CO-OP NEWS



DAVE FRICK

**2. Democratic Member Control:** By way of an elected board of directors, members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.

**3. Members' Economic Participation:** By paying your electric bill, you and other members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. That's why, when MCREA's profits exceed our expenses for a year, money is returned to our members in the form of capital credit checks.

**4. Autonomy and Independence:** Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.

**5. Education, Training, and Information:** Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.

**6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives:** Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.

**7. Concern for Community:** All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them grow and flourish.

As we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize all that sets electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is safe, reliable power. Our purpose is people — the local communities we're proud to serve.

# UTILITIES AND FIRST RESPONDERS: AN IMPORTANT PARTNERSHIP

National First Responders Day, which is October 28, is an excellent time to recognize and honor the vital role of first responders. They make it their business to take immediate action when disaster strikes.

First responders protect public safety and are the first on scene to emergencies. These dedicated professionals include firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics. They face numerous challenges and make significant sacrifices for the wellbeing of others.

Utility companies and first responders often work hand in hand during emergencies. When natural disasters strike or accidents occur, utility workers are frequently also among the first on the scene, working alongside firefighters, police, and medical personnel to ensure public safety and restore essential services. (Kenneth Onufrak, acct. #xxx3000)

When traffic accidents, high winds, ice storms, and other events involve downed power lines or power outages, they can cause both



visible and hidden hazards that put everyone at risk. It's important for utility workers and other first responders to work together to minimize that risk.

First responders are one of the main components in keeping communities safe. National First Responders Day serves as a reminder of the importance of collaboration, preparedness, and mutual support in times of crisis.

To all who selflessly serve as first responders to keep us safe, we share our sincere gratitude on National First Responders Day and every other day of the year.

## Celebrate Co-op Month at Morgan County REA

It's Co-op Month, and as your local electric cooperative, Morgan County REA is excited to celebrate with you, the members who make our co-op possible!

Throughout the month of October, members can stop by MCREA's headquarters in Fort Morgan and enter to win this year's Co-op Month Giveaway. All month, MCREA will be drawing member names to receive bill credits and of course, there is a grand prize up for grabs!

In honor of Co-op Month, MCREA is giving away a Ryobi 40-volt cordless leaf blower with battery and charger — just in time for those falling leaves!

Stop by MCREA and celebrate Co-op Month with us. We look forward to seeing you! (Woodlin School, acct. #xxx5100)



## NEW EMPLOYEE: TRENT MOUNT

Morgan County REA is excited to welcome Trent Mount as our newest apprentice lineman. After completing power line school at Western Nebraska Community College, Trent returned to his hometown of Brush. Being a local, Trent's no stranger to our service area or membership. "MCREA is a good company," Trent shared. "Getting to work outside and knowing that every day brings something different is one of my favorite parts of the job."

Outside of work, Trent enjoys playing golf and spending time with his wife Hailey. Welcome to MCREA, Trent!



## NEW EMPLOYEE: NICK MOSQUEDA

Morgan County REA is happy to welcome Nick Mosqueda as our newest warehouseman. A Fort Morgan native, Nick brings over 10 years of warehouse experience in the utility industry. He is glad to be part of MCREA and ready for the opportunities to come. “I’m looking forward to helping manage a new type of inventory and materials,” Nick said. “I’m excited to learn new things.”

In his free time, Nick likes riding motorcycles and coaching club volleyball. Most of all, he enjoys spending time with his daughter and twin sons. Welcome to the team, Nick!


## TAKE THE STEPS FOR FIRE PREVENTION IN YOUR HOME

Electricity usually makes life easier by powering kitchen appliances, gadgets, and electronics we use for entertainment. However, that same electricity contains the potential to destroy homes and take lives. Electric fires are more destructive than any other type of fire, and they are twice as deadly.

The following information can help you keep your electric system and home safe.

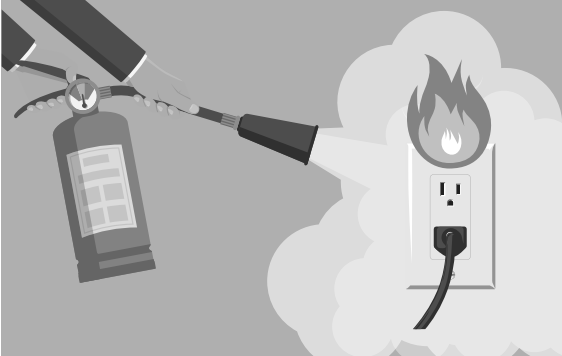
- Consider getting an electric inspection of your home — especially if it is an older home or you have never had an inspection.
- If an electrical fire starts in your home, do not use water to extinguish it. You could get an electric shock. Use an extinguisher that is approved for use on electric fires.
- Flickering lights, warm, cracked, or sparking outlets can indicate problems.
- If circuits trip, fuses blow, or someone gets a shock, your home has an electric problem. Get an electric inspection.
- Do not overload outlets, use an extension cord as a permanent wiring solution, or use light bulbs that are not rated for the socket.
- Contact an electrician about installing an arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI). An AFCI monitors the flow of electricity in your home. If the flow of electricity is irregular and could cause a fire, the AFCI shuts off electricity. An AFCI costs around \$35, plus the cost of professional installation. The cost also depends on the size of your home and how many circuit breakers you have.
- Inspect electric plugs and cords annually. If they are frayed or cracked, repair or replace them. Do not place cords under rugs or staple or nail them to the wall.

Fire Prevention Week™ is October 6-12 and the National Fire Prevention Association reminds us to install smoke alarms in every bedroom; outside each separate sleeping area; and on each level — including the basement — of the home. Test smoke alarms at least once every month by pushing the test button. Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or stop responding when tested.



### COMMON CAUSES

## of HOME ELECTRICAL FIRES



An average of 346,800 home fires occur every year, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Electrical issues (either failure or malfunction) account for 46,700 of those fires.

#### Common Causes


The most common causes of electrical fires are incorrectly installed wiring; overloaded circuits or extension cords; defective or improper plugs, switches or outlets; and the misuse or poor maintenance of lighting.

#### Warning Signs

Know the signs that indicate a possible wiring or electrical problem. These include flickering or dimming lights; discolored cords, outlets or switch plates; switches or outlets that are hot to the touch or emit an odor; and recurring blown fuses and tripped circuit breakers.

#### Prevention

Hire a qualified electrician to examine and repair any electrical issues in your home. Do not take on do-it-yourself electrical projects if you are not qualified.

Learn more: 

Sources: NFPA, The Hartford



## 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 listed in the August magazine called to claim their \$25 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 October 31 to claim a \$25 credit on your next bill.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH



If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency improvements to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Homeowners can save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%.

A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment, and other major appliances. If you completed an upgrade this year or you are considering one, visit [www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits](http://www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits) to learn if you qualify for a tax credit.

*Source: energystar.gov*

# TRICK OR TREAT

## Don't Let an Electrical Mishap Be Your Halloween Trick

As you ready your yard and porch for Halloween, make sure the decorations you plug in do not become hazardous. **To avoid a Halloween scare, take these safety precautions:**

- Discard any decorations that have **cracked or frayed cords** or damaged plugs.
- **Do not** put any decorations on power poles, padmount transformers or any other electrical equipment.
- Use decorations that are endorsed by a reputable testing laboratory such as **Underwriters Laboratories (UL)**.
- If you are using extension cords outdoors, make sure they are **rated for outdoor use**.
- **Secure all cords** so they do not become tripping hazards.

- Plug all cords into circuits protected by **GFCIs** to prevent electrical shock.
- **Do not use nails or tacks** to hang lights or other electrical decor.
- Keep decorations **away from flammable items** like bales of hay, cornstalks or witch's brew.

Have a safe and festive Halloween complete with safe tricks and tasty treats.

Learn more at:

