



[MCREA News]

[what's inside]

- We Are Looking for Story Ideas
- Help Us Communicate With You
- Dutch Oven Cook-Off
- Cool Energy Costs

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Morgan County Rural Electric Association is a member-owned cooperative that exists to provide goods and services that enhance the quality of life in rural America.



Lineman Curtis Berg prepares to replace a “blown fuse” during one of the Utah Lineman Rodeo events.

MCREA Crew Competes at Rodeo

“It’s an opportunity for us to compete against some of the best linemen in the country, which helps us do our jobs better at home.” That’s how Morgan County Rural Electric Association Serviceman and Journeyman Lineman Curtis Berg explained his experience participating in two lineman’s rodeos recently.

Berg, Serviceman and Journeyman Doug Cook and Journeyman Rob Whitman comprise the team from Morgan County REA that competed in two rodeos, one in Mitchell, South Dakota, in April and another in West Valley City, Utah, in June.

At the rodeos, working linemen compete in several different categories. At the Utah Lineman Rodeo, the team from MCREA engaged in events such as the bell run (or pole speed climbing and decent), a hurt man rescue (with a life-size dummy) and two mystery events.

The first mystery event included a scenario of burned through electrical over-

head wires and blown fuses. Teams had to replace the fuses and tie in and replace the conductor and lines. The event was timed, and deductions were given for improper work and safety.

The other mystery event was more creative. Competitors were to save a rubber chicken, nicknamed Pinky. In the event, a lineman quickly climbs a pole then maneuvers across an orange metal “baker board” and into a metal trolley, which rolls across two parallel power lines on pulleys.

The lineman powers the trolley to midway between two poles, collects Pinky, drops two eggs to a teammate waiting below (who must catch the eggs without breaking them), then maneuvers himself to the other pole. This event was timed as well, with deductions for failing to belt off at transition points and broken eggs.

While individual and team results were not available by press time, Berg estimated that the MCREA team did pretty well at

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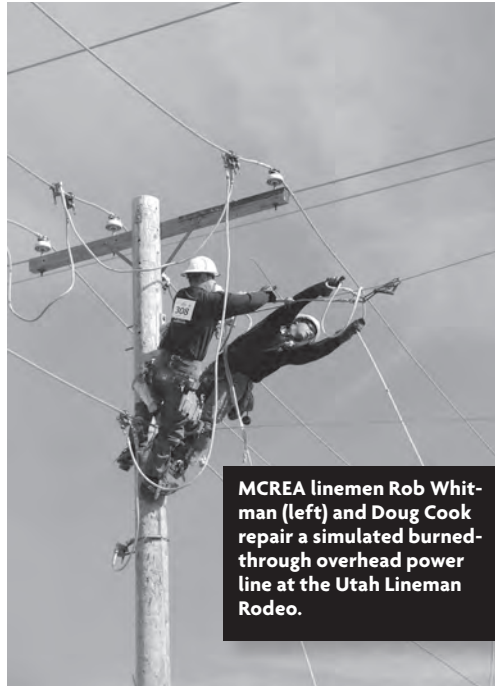
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the Utah rodeo, adding that there was some pretty stiff competition there.

The other rodeo the team participated in was hosted by the Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, South Dakota in April. Many of the same events as the Utah rodeo were scheduled, including the hurt man rescue and fuse change out. Other events at the Mitchell rodeo included an obstacle climb and three-phase framing.

The Mitchell rodeo was a two-man team competition, with Berg and Cook teaming together and Whitman partnering with a student from the Mitchell Institute. All three MCREA linemen fared extremely well at the Mitchell rodeo, with Cook taking first place in the obstacle climb, first in the hurt man rescue and third in the three-phase framing events; Berg winning first place in the fuse change-out event; and Whitman placing third in the hurt man rescue. Berg and Cook received second place overall in the team standings.

Morgan County REA congratulates Whitman, Cook and Berg for representing the cooperative with distinction.



MCREA linemen Rob Whitman (left) and Doug Cook repair a simulated burned-through overhead power line at the Utah Lineman Rodeo.

Looking for Story Ideas

Morgan County REA is looking for human interest stories from the membership to spotlight in future editions of *Colorado Country Life*.

Story ideas could be just about anything involving our members, from interesting businesses or occupations to compelling historical stories to fun and exciting things our members are doing. We would prefer that submissions be focused around Morgan County REA members. (Leo and Pearl H. Johnson, acct # 2003800)

Please submit all story ideas to MCREA Communications Specialist Geoff Baumgartner by calling 970-867-5688 or emailing geoff@mcrea.org.

Tip of the Month

Consider using solar lights for outdoor lighting. Solar cells convert sunlight into electricity that can be stored in a battery and tapped at night to make light. Check manufacturer's instructions to make sure your solar lights are situated to receive sufficient sunlight to recharge each day.

Source:
U.S. Department of Energy

Win \$25 Off Your Electric Bill

Each month Morgan County REA gives two lucky members a \$25 credit on their electric bills, just for reading *Colorado Country Life*.

Congratulations Leslie and Carole Hoff (account # 691402). You saw your names and accounts number in the May edition of *Colorado Country Life*. You received a \$25 credit on your bill.

Sorry Carl and Carla Gabel (account # 2291000). We didn't hear from you. Your names and account number were also in May's *Colorado Country Life*.

There are two MCREA member names and account numbers hidden somewhere in this issue. If you find your name and account number, call member services at 970 867-5688 by July 29 to claim a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

Help Us Communicate With You

To ensure top quality service for our members, we are updating our membership contact information—including cell phone number and email address—so we can better communicate with you. Just cut out this form, fill it out and return it to us with your payment. Or better yet, fill out the information on our website at www.mcrea.org. Everyone who responds will be entered into a drawing to be held in August. Four lucky members will receive a \$25 credit on their MCREA bill. Don't worry, we won't load your inbox or cell phone with unnecessary emails or provide your information to anyone for any reason. We just want to communicate things like planned or unplanned outage information, emergency safety details, member surveys and other information quickly. Thanks for your participation.

Name _____ Account # _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Preferred Contact (circle one) Home Cell

Email Address _____

Medical apparatus/necessities that require electricity (i.e. oxygen) _____

By returning this form, you are entered to win a \$25 credit on your electric bill!

MCREA in Action



The judging for last year's Dutch Oven Cook-Off draws an impressive crowd.

“Cast Iron Chef” Dutch Oven Cook-Off Coming Soon

GET READY TO FIRE UP THE COALS.

The Morgan County Rural Electric Association — Stagecoach Meat Company “Cast Iron Chef” Dutch Oven Cook-Off will be here before you know it. This year's cook-off will be held at the Morgan County Fairgrounds in Brush on Wednesday, August 3. Whether you have entered in years past, are a new contestant or just want to watch the show, you can count on excellent food and a great time (Larry A. and Chad E. Lorenzini, acct # 1917400).

We would like to welcome Stagecoach Meat Company, LLC, in Wiggins as the premiere sponsor for the 2011 “Cast Iron Chef” Dutch Oven Cook-off. And we are adding a new wrinkle to this year's event. Stagecoach is generously donating the meat for the main dish category. The kicker is — none of the teams will know what variety or cut of meat they will be preparing until the competition.

Just before the competition, each team

will choose a closed cooler that contains the meat they will be preparing for the main dish competition. The “secret ingredient” will be either beef or pork, but competitors will not know which or what variety of either, until they select a cooler and open it. It could be just about anything, from ribs to roast.

The cooking starts at 9:30 a.m. with judging at 12:30 p.m. The public is invited and encouraged to tour the cook-off area anytime during the competition and, once the judging is finished, sample some of the fantastic food whipped up by the skilled contestants.

**Stagecoach
Meat
Company, LLC**

The deadline to enter is Monday, July 25. If you'd like to enter the cook-off or if you have any questions, please contact Member Services Representative Carla Krueger at 970-867-5688.

DUTCH OVEN HEATING TIP

The general rule of thumb to produce about a 350 degrees heat is to take the size of the Dutch oven in inches, double the number and use that many total briquettes. So, for a 12-inch oven you would use 24 briquettes, for a 14-inch oven you would use 28 briquettes ... Remember this is just a rule of thumb and does not work for all makes of ovens.

Cool Energy Costs With a New Refrigerator

BY BRIAN SLOBODA || COOPERATIVE RESEARCH NETWORK

It sits in the kitchen, quietly humming away to keep your food cold. Most people don't think much about their refrigerator — as long as it's working. A particular fridge will operate for a long time without any problems, but that doesn't mean it's performing at maximum efficiency.

If your refrigerator dates from the 1980s, replacing it with a new model could cut your electric bill by \$100 per year, according to Energy Star. Savings could be as much as \$200 annually if you bought your refrigerator in the 1970s — but only if you dispose of the old unit. (Recycling an old appliance is preferable because it allows the metal, plastic and glass to be reused and prevents toxic chemicals from ending up in landfills.)

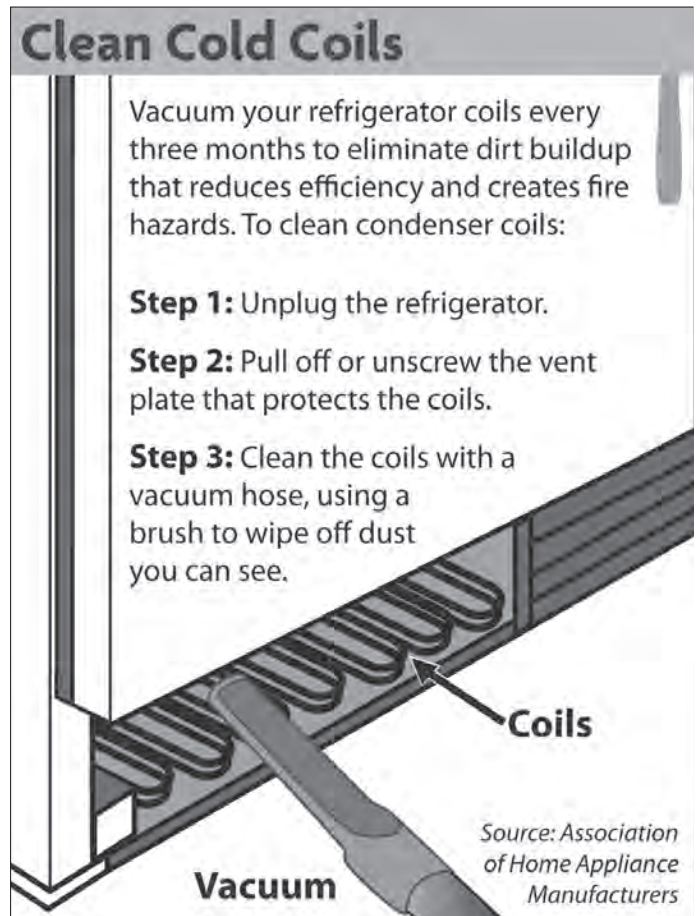
To estimate how much energy your refrigerator consumes, visit www.energystar.gov and search for "Refrigerator Retirement Calculator." Type your refrigerator's model number into the calculator and you'll receive an estimate of how much energy it uses and how much money a new one may save.

Hidden energy gobblers

More than a quarter of U.S. households own a second refrigerator, a number that increases by one percent per year, according to a 2009 U.S. Department of Energy report. However, these appliances are often older and less efficient refrigerators manufactured prior to 1993 that use two to three times more energy than today's Energy Star-qualified models.

In addition, a second refrigerator will increase your air-conditioning costs since it produces heat. And because fridges are designed to operate in conditioned rooms, keeping one in an area more exposed to temperature extremes, such as porches, garages and basements, will force it to draw more power to operate properly. In winter, you even run the risk of damaging the compressor because it will not be able to complete defrost cycles.

Although convenient, a second refrigerator can mean \$420 to \$750 in additional energy costs over the lifetime of the appliance. If you can't live without your second fridge, reduce its energy use substantially by plugging it in just to keep drinks and food cold



during parties or other special events. However, you may want to consider a cheaper alternative — fill a large bucket or cooler with ice and let it melt slightly since icy water cools soda and beer faster than ice alone.

Buying a new fridge

When shopping for a new refrigerator, look for one with a top-mounted freezer. It typically uses 10 percent to 25 percent less energy than bottom-mount or side-by-side models, according to Energy Star. Also, a larger refrigerator will require more energy, so purchase the size you really need to fit your lifestyle.

Once your new refrigerator is up and running, you can do some simple things to keep it operating as efficiently as possible. Cooling coils, on the back or underneath the unit, act like dust collectors. So make sure to vacuum them once or twice a year.

Over time, the gasket around the fridge door will loosen. If you notice that the gasket seal is loose or discolored, replace it.

Just being more aware of your refrigerator and how it operates will help you make sure it operates as efficiently as possible, saving you energy and money.

Brian Sloboda is a senior program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the Cooperative Research Network.