



[MCREA News]

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Gayle Volz [Executive Assistant and Human Resources]

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.



Seventy-Five Years of Service Morgan County REA Plans to Celebrate in 2012

BY DAVID FRICK || GENERAL MANAGER

The year was 1937. The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco officially opened. The Boston Redskins moved to Washington, D.C., and later that year won the National Football League championship. The German airship Hindenburg burst into flames while attempting to moor at Lakehurst, New Jersey. Disney released the first ever feature-length color and sound cartoon movie "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," and Amelia Earhart mysteriously disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting an historic round-the-world flight. The average cost of a new house was \$4,100, average wages per year were \$1,780 and gasoline cost 10 cents a gallon.

There were other historic events that happened that year. On April 27, 1937, Morgan County Rural Electric Association was organized, only the third REA in Colorado. The first official meeting of the Morgan County REA Board of Directors was held on March 6, 1937, at the courthouse in Fort Morgan. The charter board of directors included H.W. Bigler, C.C. Daily, J.R. Henderson, O. E. Kinnaman, Ernest Rosener, W.F. Tormohlen, G.E. Trewet, N.C. Wagers and George T. White. Engineering plans were drawn shortly thereafter to bring electricity to rural Morgan County and surrounding areas. Construction of the initial line continued into the following year. On May 11, 1938, the first 175 miles of line were energized.

It's pretty amazing to think how far



David Frick

we've come as an electric distribution cooperative in 75 years. From that first 175 miles of line, we've grown to over 2,800 miles of transmission and distribution line serving nearly 8,000 meters in six counties. The advancement of technology has also forever changed the way we operate. Instead of using

typewriters and other manual equipment to fill out each member's bill, we now use computers that can do the billing in a fraction of the time. Now a computerized SCADA system and GPS mapping can pinpoint outages immediately, where for decades we relied on our members as our primary source of outage information.

While technological advancements have made us much more efficient, they also present their share of challenges. Computer systems can go down or experience software glitches. That's why we at Morgan County REA remember that a person-to-person

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Co-op Connections Announces New Health Care Benefits

Morgan County REA's Co-op Connections program is about to save you even more. The card that offers discounts at nearly 40 local merchants and has saved MCREA members thousands of dollars on prescriptions now offers members significant savings on lab and imaging services and chiropractic, dental, vision and hearing care.

Director of External Affairs Dave Henderson says the new Healthy Savings package is available at no cost to members who print a paper card from www.healthysavings.coop and show it at participating providers along with their plastic card (Dennis and Crystal Tweeten, acct. #2133100). This brand-new benefit is part of a commitment to helping members save money during challenging economic times. "The Health Savings package will help our members stretch their paychecks and underscore that Morgan County REA is always looking out for its members," Henderson said.

To locate providers that participate in the Healthy Savings program, call 800-800-7616 with your card handy or visit www.healthysavings.coop. Savings examples include 10 to 60 percent off eyeglasses, contact lenses and eye exams; 20 to 40 percent discounts on a range of dental care services; and 30 percent off chiropractic treatments.

"Many insurance plans do not include provisions for dental, hearing and vision care. With the new Healthy Savings package, MCREA members get no-cost access to five discounted health benefit areas: vision, dental, hearing, lab imaging and chiropractic care," said Henderson.

This paper card is a temporary option until new Co-op Connections Card back-facing stickers can be distributed. MCREA members can expect to receive a sticker soon, along with further information about how to use them. Detailed information on available savings and how to take advantage of the entire Healthy Savings package is posted at www.healthysavings.coop or on MCREA's website at www.mcrea.org.

Please note that the Healthy Savings discount applies to participating providers only and the old Co-op Connections Card will not be accepted for the Healthy Savings package without the temporary card or until the back-facing sticker is applied. Also a reminder: the Co-op Connections discount program is not insurance nor is it intended to replace insurance. This plan provides discounts at certain health care providers for medical services. This plan does not make payments directly to the providers of medical services. The plan member is obligated to pay for all health care services but will receive a discount from those health care providers who have contracted with the discount plan organization.

Morgan County REA is part of the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives brand, a nationwide alliance of more than 725 consumer-owned electric cooperatives dedicated to serving their members and communities with integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

Seventy-Five Years

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conversation and a handshake are sometimes more important — and effective.

As we celebrate our 75th Anniversary, we are planning a series of area meetings in our service territory in 2012. We feel that it's vital to keep our membership informed on key issues that are affecting your electric cooperative or will in the future. And we want to provide our members an opportunity to discuss these issues with us face-to-face. In the coming months we will be letting you know the schedule and details about the area meetings in the local media and here in *Colorado Country Life*.

Sometimes it's hard to believe that Morgan County REA has been providing quality service to our members for three-quarters of a century. As we commemorate our 75 years in existence, we celebrate those who worked diligently to get us here — boards of directors, employees and members — present and past. We thank all of you for your dedication and commitment to Morgan County REA, and we look forward to a bright future by continuing with the fine example of leadership shown to us by those that have come before us.

Deadline for Line Worker Scholarship Approaching Quickly

Morgan County Rural Electric Association is once again proud to offer line worker scholarship(s) to assist individuals in establishing a career in the power industry.

This year, Morgan County REA is looking to award \$7,500 scholarship(s) for students to attend line work school the following fall. Qualified applicants must reside in the MCREA service territory, which includes Morgan County and portions of Logan, Weld, Adams, Arapahoe and Washington counties. If tuition and fees are less than the scholarship

amount, students may use the remaining funds for living and/or working expenses. Scholarship winners are not required to work for Morgan County REA after graduation.

An electrical line worker performs many different tasks, including climbing poles or operating aerial lift devices to work on overhead lines 25 to 200 feet above the ground, erecting substations and digging trenches to string underground electric cable.

MCREA estimates that an apprentice line worker can typically expect a start-

ing wage upwards of \$20 per hour, with journeyman lineman earning potential of around \$32 per hour (Martin C. and Paul R. Brandt, acct. #1700501). Typically, line workers also receive medical insurance, a pension plan, life insurance and a retirement savings plan.

Completed application materials must be postmarked or delivered to the MCREA offices by March 1, 2012. A complete scholarship packet may be picked up at the Morgan County REA offices, by calling Member Services at 867-5688 or online at www.mcrea.org.

MCREA Employees Give for the Holiday Season

The employees of Morgan County REA opened their hearts and their wallets in 2011 through a yearlong campaign to help families that have fallen on difficult times.

Throughout the year, employees donated a dollar here and there to assist families in need during the holiday season. The goal set for the 2011 campaign was \$2,000. That was surpassed in late November, with the total amount donated by MCREA employees totaling \$2,165.

Several families in MCREA's service territory were selected by outside agencies to receive assistance this holiday season based on need. Many more families were also helped through Caring Ministries of Morgan County.

The funds raised by MCREA employees were used to purchase clothes, diapers, toys, food and other necessities and provide assistance with electric bills.

Thank you to Morgan County REA's employees for sharing during this holiday season and throughout the year.



MCREA employees wrap presents purchased by funds donated through a yearlong giving campaign.

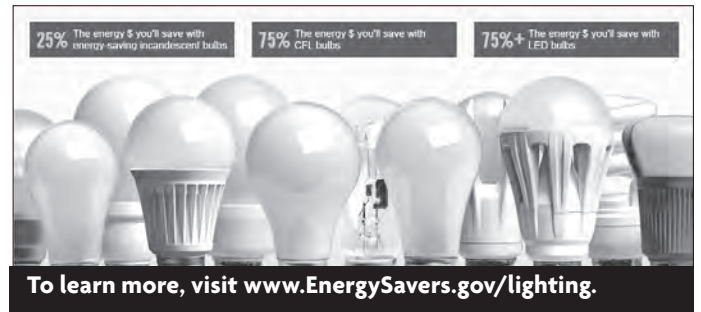
SHEDDING LIGHT ON LIGHTBULB CONFUSION

Under a 2007 law, traditional incandescent 100-watt lightbulbs were to be 30 percent more efficient starting this January. However, funding to enforce those efficiency standards was blocked by a provision inserted into the omnibus 2012 federal appropriations bill passed by Congress in December.

As written, the provision bars the U.S. Department of Energy from spending money to implement or enforce lightbulb efficiency standards through September 30. Despite the restriction, Congress did not repeal or adjust the standards themselves or change the timeline for implementation. Major lighting manufacturers like General Electric, Philips and Osram Sylvania have announced they will continue to comply with the 2007 law.

But worries about the opportunity for mischief abound. The National Electrical Manufacturers Association — a Rosslyn, Virginia-based national service organization of companies that fashion products used in the generation, transmission, distribution, control and end-use of electricity — claims the lack of funding puts law-abiding manufacturers at a disadvantage.

“The inability of DOE to enforce the standards will allow those who do not respect the rule of law to sell inefficient



lightbulbs in the U.S. without fear of enforcement, creating a competitive disadvantage for compliant manufacturers,” claims NEMA.

Contrary to some reports, the 2007 law does not ban incandescent bulbs — only those varieties that don't meet the improved efficiency standards. Consumers can choose halogen incandescent lightbulbs as well as compact fluorescent lamps and light-emitting diodes. All of them use less energy to emit the same amount of light, or lumens, as traditional incandescent lightbulbs.

KNOW YOUR LIGHT BULB OPTIONS

Energy-efficient bulbs come in a variety of money-saving options and can help the average family save at least \$50 each year. The three most common energy-efficient lighting options are:



Halogen incandescent lightbulbs

Energy savings:
25 percent

Life span:
Three times longer



Compact fluorescent lamps

Energy savings:
75 percent

Life span:
10 times longer



Light-emitting diodes

Energy savings:
75-80 percent

Life span:
25 times longer

Learn more at
EnergySavers.gov/lighting

Mark Your Calendars!

Morgan County REA's 75th Anniversary Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation

Saturday, March 17, 2012

Glenn Miller Auditorium, Fort Morgan High School

11 a.m. Registration, complimentary lunch, gifts
and informational booths

12:30 p.m. Annual Meeting, election of directors,
management reports and prizes

Looking
forward to
seeing you
there!

Grand Prize: \$1,000
(name drawn from total membership)
Must be present to win

Annual Meeting Prize: \$250
(name drawn from members in attendance)



Special presentation by
U.S. Rep. Cory Gardner



TEST BEFORE YOU TOUCH

Every year people are injured or killed by circuits they thought were safely turned off. Simply shutting off the power is not enough — hazardous conditions can still exist. Make sure to always test before you touch. You may not get a second chance to learn this important lesson.

Check on Insulation Before Buying a Home

Before you purchase a home, whether a new construction or an old farmhouse, it's smart to do two things: Ask for the previous years' electric bills and request a blower-door test.

A blower-door test will show you how much air flows in and out of the house each hour. And while the home is depressurized, you or your energy advisor can walk through the house with a special smoke pencil to see where you're having airflow. A thermal imaging camera is even more dependable for locating airflow.

Asking for the previous electric bills will help you determine whether you'll be able to afford the home once you're in it. It will also tell you whether or not you need air sealing or new insulation. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that only 20 percent of homes built before 1980 are well-insulated.

You can also contact your local electric cooperative for energy efficiency guidance.

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, Wayne Moseley (account #1594800) and Gaylon Edson (account #995900). You saw your names and account numbers in the December edition of *Colorado Country Life* and received a \$25 credit on your bill.

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