



▲ Rodney Rhoades  
Area 2



▲ Brandon Ryff  
Area 5



▲ Francisco Sanchez  
Area 6



▲ Alan Mason  
Area 7



▲ Colton Unrein  
Area 8

## GET TO KNOW MORGAN COUNTY REA'S AREA SERVICEMEN

BY JAMIE PLAKORUS MEMBER SERVICES SPECIALIST

Your area serviceman is an important part of daily operations at MCREA. Each of them concentrates his work primarily in his service territory, although all of them provide service throughout the entire system. Some of a serviceman's duties include line maintenance, line patrol (looking for possible future maintenance issues), outages, meter changes, underground locates, service upgrades, changing transformers and change orders, just to name a few. Servicemen are in tune with their area members and are familiar with how to get to issues quickly, knowing the territory as well as they do.

**Our Area 2 Serviceman is Rodney Rhoades.** Rodney grew up in Platteville, Colorado, and went to line school at Mesa Hotline School in Grand Junction. Rodney will celebrate his 38th year with Morgan County REA on June 1. Rodney became the serviceman for Area 2 on February 2, 1993. Rodney has five children: Adam, 33, Jacob, 31, Emily, 30, Isaac, 28, and Dominic, 26. Rodney and his wife, Monique, have been married for eight years. Rodney's hobbies are working in his yard and hanging out with his family. Rodney chose this line of work because when he was in high school he saw a handbook for a lineman technician and saw that it only took nine months to complete training and thought he could do that.

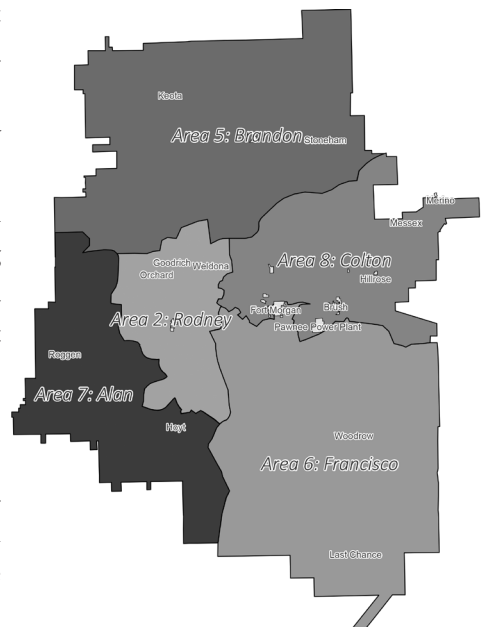
**Our Area 5 Serviceman is Brandon Ryff.** Brandon grew up in Hope, Kansas, and went to line school in Manhattan, Kansas, also known as "the little apple." Brandon was hired as a serviceman with Morgan County REA on June 1, 2016. Brandon celebrated his third (Ambrosita Romero, acct #xxx800) year with us on June 1. Brandon has several hobbies including hunting and fishing. Restoring and working on antique motorcycles is one of his favorite hobbies. Brandon decided on this line of work because he had several friends in the trade.

**Our Area 6 Serviceman is Francisco Sanchez.** Francisco grew up in Mexico and completed an apprenticeship program in Oklahoma. Francisco has worked at Morgan County REA for three years and became a serviceman on January 30, 2019. Francisco has been married to his wife Nancy for 28 years. He has three children: Javier, 33, Jacquelin, 31, and Jonnatan, 26. When Francisco isn't working he enjoys hanging out and watching TV. Francisco became a lineman because he thought it was a great career.

**Our Area 7 Serviceman is Alan Mason.** Alan grew up in Fort Morgan and graduated from Mesa Hotline School in Grand Junction. Alan has worked for Morgan County REA for eight years and became a serviceman on December 1, 2014. Alan has been married to his wife Karisa for


four years. Alan has one son, Rhett, 1 1/2, with a second baby due in July. Alan enjoys hanging out with his family when he's not working. Alan decided to pursue a career as a lineman because of his summer job at Morgan County REA.

**Our Area 8 Serviceman is Colton Unrein.** Colton grew up in Brush and went to line school in Alliance, Nebraska. Colton has worked at Morgan County REA for five years and (David Bender, acct #xxx904) became a serviceman in January of 2019. Colton enjoys hanging out with his friends when he's not working. Colton became a lineman because he thought that it looked like a fun job.



# Take Control of High Summer Bills

BY DERRILL HOLLY

Try time-shifting energy-intensive chores to off-peak hours, when energy demand is lower.   
Photo Source: Steve Buissonne



**W**e expect summers to be hot, but most of us do all we can to keep our homes as comfortable as possible, even as outdoor temperatures edge thermometers upward.

When it comes to electricity, each of us has the power to help control our costs—we just have to make thoughtful choices to make energy savings pay off in dollars and cents.

Look toward the west. If you don't have trees, a porch overhang or awnings shading windows exposed to afternoon sun, there's a good chance radiant heat could be driving up indoor temperatures and adding to your overall cooling costs.

Window coverings can help. Blinds or shades can deflect intense sunlight, and draperies lined with a thermal radiant barrier can block up to 95% of sunlight and 100% of ultraviolet rays.

Comfort and cooling are easier to maintain when we take advantage of airflow. A ceiling fan can pull warm air up above your living zone, making a difference during summer months. The evaporative effect of circulating air blowing across our skin makes us more comfortable, but that benefit completely disappears when we leave the

room, so turning fans off in unoccupied rooms will save energy.

Filters have a lot to do with airflow through your heating and cooling systems. Dirty filters restrict circulation through the returns, requiring the cooling system to work harder. If you can see dirt in a filter, it's likely 50% clogged. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on replacing disposable filters or cleaning permanent ones. If you have pets, consider checking them more frequently.

Save money and electricity by time-shifting some of the most energy-intensive activities away from peak energy use periods that normally occur during the hottest hours of the day. Cooking, doing laundry and using power tools can increase both heat and humidity inside the home, making it harder to reach or maintain a comfortable temperature.

Controlling energy costs always works better when everyone in the household makes the effort. Remember:

- One open window anywhere can be like an uncapped chimney, pulling the conditioned air you pay to cool the inside of your home to the outdoors.

- A gaming system, computer or big screen television left on but unwatched will unnecessarily heat your home.
- Lighting and ventilation fans add convenience and provide benefits when they are needed but waste energy when left on and unattended.
- A bag of ice poured into a cooler will chill summer beverages as effectively and less expensively than an aging refrigerator in a hot garage.

Check with your local electric cooperative for details on programs that can help you control energy costs and avoid seasonal billing challenges. Your co-op may also offer energy audits or additional information that can help you identify and correct problems that might be contributing to higher bills and increased energy use in your home.

Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Morgan County REA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# PREPARE YOUR HOME BEFORE VACATION

Your bags are packed and you're ready to leave your humdrum routine for a much-needed vacation. As you pack for your destination, remember your home needs a little prep, too.

Along with the usual tasks, such as having your mail stopped, here are other steps you can take to help deter burglars and even save you a little green:

- Adjust your hot water heater. For a natural gas water heater, turn it to low or vacation mode. For an electric version, turn it down or off at the circuit breaker panel.
- Set or program your thermostat to a temperature that mimics the outside temperature (about 80 to 85 degrees). This still protects your wood floors and furniture, and saves on energy costs, too. Do not completely turn off your air conditioning during vacation, however, so the air in your house continues to circulate.
- Unplug small appliances and electronic devices, such as gaming systems and toaster ovens, so they don't draw power. Also do not leave chargers plugged into an outlet. (This tip is important when you're home as well. Do not leave chargers plugged in when they're not in use since they can overheat. Unplug charging devices after electronics are fully charged.)
- Make sure your sump pump is working. Give potential burglars the impression you're still home:
  - If you have a smart home, regulate lights in your home remotely. Turn various lights on and off intermittently or have them timed to do so.
  - If you do not have smart lighting, put lights on timers.

## 5 EASY WAYS TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR Vacation



<b>1.</b>	Set or <b>program your thermostat to 85 degrees</b> while you are away.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Unplug</b> small appliances and electronic devices including gaming systems so that they don't draw power.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Adjust your hot water heater.</b> For a natural gas water heater, turn it to low. For an electric version turn it off at the circuit breaker.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Shut all your curtains and blinds.</b>
<b>5.</b>	Make sure your <b>sump pump is working.</b>





- Ask a trusted neighbor to park in your driveway occasionally while you are gone.
- Use motion detectors on outside lights.
- Before you leave, check all windows and doors to make sure they are locked.

Take electrical and plumbing precautions by turning off water valves to the dishwasher, refrigerator, washing machine and all sinks. Or consider shutting off the main water valve, which cuts off water to the house but still allows water supply to an outdoor sprinkler system. Finally, remember to clean out your refrigerator before leaving so you don't come home to moldy leftovers.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

### WIN \$25 OFF YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

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

Congratulations Brian Goedert (account #xxx3100) and Wesley Elliott (account #xxx7000). You saw your names and account numbers in the April edition of *Colorado Country Life*. You both received a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

There are two more MCREA members 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 August 31 to claim a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

# Before You Hit the Road, Consider RV Safety

You may hit the road to enjoy a little time away or maybe even to take in a car race or football game. If you are traveling there in a recreational vehicle or converted bus, keep in mind using generators to power them can turn deadly.

Today's higher-end RVs provide many of the creature comforts of home, such as microwave ovens, refrigerators and other small appliances. We can now vacation or "leisure" with more conveniences than ever, and generators are often used to power all those appliances, electronics and other gizmos.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is produced any time fuel is burned. Along with generators, devices or appliances that produce the invisible gas include vehicles, small engines, grills, fireplaces, camping stoves, gas ranges and furnaces. CO can build up indoors or in any enclosed space and it poisons people or animals who breathe it in.

Reports of people getting sick and in some cases dying from RV-related carbon monoxide poisoning have hit the news in recent years. In 2018, one racing fan died and another was hospitalized after they were exposed to CO in a converted bus at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth. The CO poisoning was caused by a gasoline-powered generator that was not properly ventilated.

In 2016, two men died at the Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama. They were found dead in a camper in the campground



section of the speedway. The confirmed cause of death for one of the men was CO poisoning.

Safe Electricity and White River Electric provide these tips to keep in mind while enjoying your RV or other mobile digs, whether your generator was factory installed or you are using a portable one:

- Inspect the exhaust system on the generator before using it and make sure it is in good working order.
- Do not operate a generator with a damaged exhaust system, or one that needs repairs or has other problems.
- If you are using a portable generator, always make sure the exhaust is directed away from the camping area.
- Listen for problems, such as a surging

sound, when starting your generator, especially if it has been inactive for several weeks. For that reason, run the generator at least once a week. This decreases moisture in the system and lubricates the engine seals and components to prevent carbon buildup. Properly maintain your generator.

- Do not use it at night.
- Although many people are aware carbon monoxide poisoning can occur in homes, they may not stop to consider it can happen in any enclosed space, including a zipped tent or an RV.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



June 2019  
**Energy Efficiency**  
 Tip of the Month

Want to light up your outdoor space without increasing your energy use? Try outdoor solar lights. They're easy to install and virtually maintenance free.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)