

GET TO KNOW MORGAN COUNTY REA'S AREA SERVICEMEN

BY JAMIE PLAKORUS MEMBER SERVICES SPECIALIST



Our area 2 serviceman is Rodney Rhoades.

Rodney grew up in Platteville, Colorado, and went to lineworker school at Mesa Hotline School in Grand Junction. Rodney will be celebrating his 39th year with Morgan County REA on June 1. Rodney became the serviceman for area 2 on

February 2, 1993. Rodney has five children: Adam, 34, Jacob, 32, Emily, 31, Isaac, 29, and Dominic, 27. Rodney and his wife, Monique, have been married for nine 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 and he thought he could do that.



Our area 8 serviceman is Colton Unrein.

Colton grew up in Brush, Colorado, and went to line school in Alliance, Nebraska. Colton has worked at Morgan County REA for six years and just recently in January of this year (David Bender, acct #xxx904) became a serviceman. 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.



Our area 5 serviceman is Brandon Ryff.

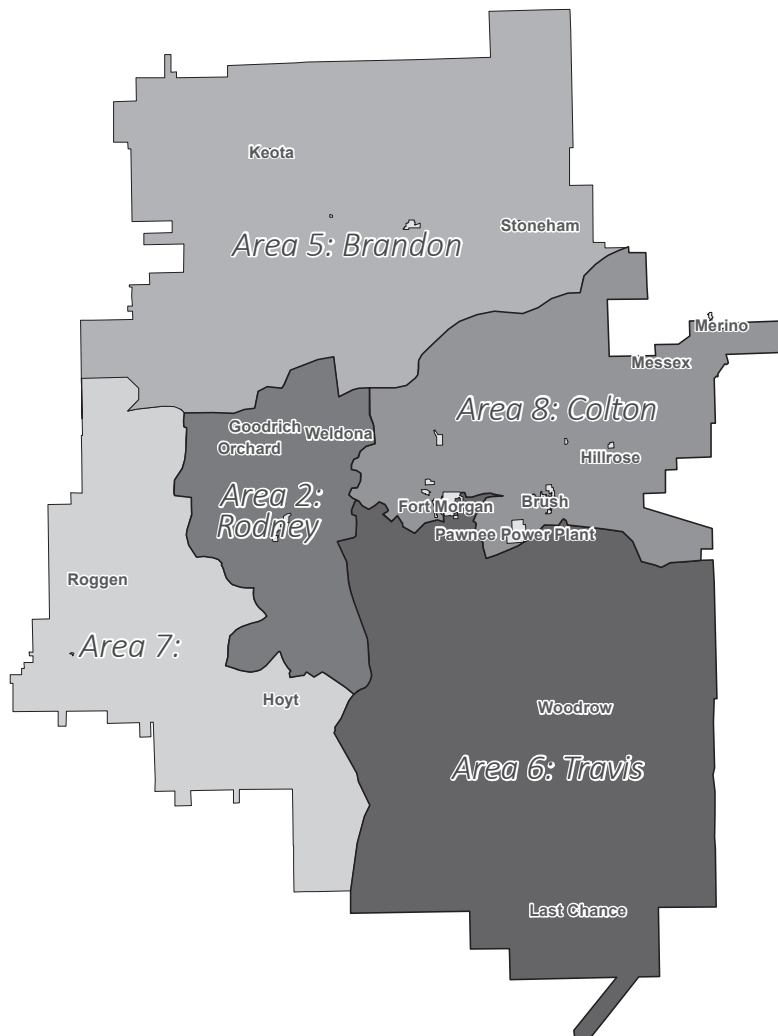
Brandon grew up in Hope, Kansas, and went to line school in Manhattan, Kansas, also known as "The Little Apple." Brandon was hired as a serviceman with Morgan County REA on June 1, 2016. Brandon will celebrate his fourth year (Teresa Andrews, acct #xxx8800) with MCREA on June 1. Brandon has several hobbies including hunting and fishing, with restoring and working on antique motorcycles being one of his favorites. Brandon decided on this line of work because he had several friends in the trade and sort of fell into it.



Our area 6 serviceman is Travis Varelman.

Travis grew up in Brush, Colorado. Travis became the serviceman for area 6 on March 2, 2020. Travis has five children: Autumn, 11, Hunter, 9, Layla, 9, Haedyn, 8, and Laramie, 3. Travis and his wife, Katie, own a gym in his hometown of

Brush. When not in the gym or working, Travis enjoys all things Morgan County in his spare time, which include hunting and fishing. Travis chose to come to Morgan County REA because he wanted to be back in the area he grew up in.



 Morgan County REA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Farm and Ranch Safety

We don't have to remind those who work the land and raise livestock that they have a potentially dangerous occupation. However, due to the nature of the job and because of long days of tiring work, some safety precautions are worthy of repeating. Here are some reminders about electrical dangers on the farm or ranch.

If you make contact with a power line, don't get out

If you make contact with a power line, guy wire, power pole, electrical box or any other electrical equipment, do not get out of your cab or truck. Stay put and call 911 to dispatch our utility crew to de-energize the power.

If you must get out due to smoke or fire, make a solid jump out without touching any part of the tractor or vehicle, and hop away as far as you can, keeping both feet together as you hop. Or, after you make a clean exit, shuffle or waddle away while keeping your feet together and on the ground.

Once you are out, never try to re-enter the cab or truck until it is cleared by the utility crew.

Remember: If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line or other utility equipment, do not get out of the cab. Stray power could energize your equipment and the ground. Call 911 and wait for us to arrive and cut the power so that you can safely exit your tractor or vehicle.

Determine proper clearance

Contact us to measure power line heights; do not do this yourself. Once you know the heights, you can determine safe clearances of your equipment. Always maintain at least 10 feet between the power line and the tallest height of the equipment that will be transported. Keep in mind that, due to wear, age and even weather conditions, power lines can change height. Please contact us with any concerns. It's good to know power line clearance, but always have a spotter.

Call us before moving or adding a grain bin

The National Electrical Safety Code addresses grain bins and their proximity to power lines with extremely specific requirements. The requirements are in place to help keep farmers safe — to decrease the chances of farming equipment and machinery coming in contact with power lines. If you are planning on building a new grain bin or remodeling around an area that already has one, contact Morgan County REA at 970-867-5688. We can help with specific code requirements. The taller a grain bin, the farther it must be placed from a power line.

Always dig safely

Whether you are installing new fence posts or using large tillage tools, call 811 before you dig to have underground utilities marked. Even if you think you know where buried gas, power and other lines

are, don't rely on your memory. Get all utilities marked so you know for sure. (Note: Utility locators dispatched by 811 do not mark private lines.)

Use standby generators with care

If you have a standby generator to provide essential power during an outage, be sure to correctly use the transfer switch. Once you properly engage the switch, it stops your farm's generated power from entering utility lines (backfeeding), which can electrocute lineworkers who are working to restore power.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

GENERAL FARM SAFETY

- Check and maintain equipment, especially electric cables and hydraulic hoses that have cracks or show other signs of wear.
- Always have someone nearby when entering grain bins or other high-risk areas.
- Check all buildings and grounds for fire hazards and hazardous materials.
- Assess how any chemicals are stored, and make sure children and animals can't access them.
- Make a list of chemicals for firefighters in case a fire breaks out on your farm or ranch.
- Establish a safety boundary around gas and fuel tanks.
- Don't skimp on safety: Wear eye and ear protection and gloves and, when appropriate, face masks and respirators.
- Shield all power takeoff machinery and keep others away.
- Outfit tractors and trucks with fire extinguishers.
- Never exit a tractor or truck without placing it in park or engaging the emergency brake.
- Discuss safety concerns with children and explain safe operating procedures. You can never start too young — they watch what you do.

General safety tips source: Hobby Farms

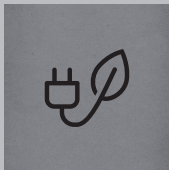
 **WIN \$25 OFF YOUR ELECTRIC BILL**

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

Congratulations, Robert and Karen Kelley (account #xxx2500). You saw your names and account number in the April edition of *Colorado Country Life*. You received a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

Sorry, Kati Huber (account # xxx4200); we didn't hear from you. Your name and account number also appeared in April's *Colorado Country Life*.

There are two more MCREA member 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 June 30 to claim a \$25 credit on your electric bill.



June 2020

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

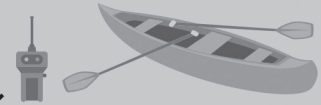
Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save.

LOVE THE  OUTDOORS?
BE SAFE OUT THERE



$\frac{2}{3}$

of lightning fatalities are associated with outdoor **recreational activities**.



Pay attention to weather forecasts **before you go canoeing or boating**. Get off the open water as soon as you **hear thunder**.



Do not use generators in enclosed areas. The same goes for grills, camping stoves or other small appliances that produce carbon monoxide.



Look up for power lines while fishing or sailing.

FACT: Fishing is the most common outdoor activity associated with lightning-related deaths.



Going for a hike?

If you hear thunder or see lightning, **do not seek shelter under a tree.**



Tent camping? Plan ahead, seek shelter in a hard-top vehicle or four-sided building during a storm or at the first sight of lightning.

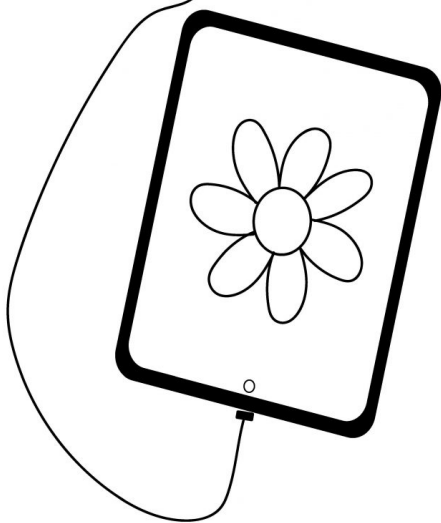
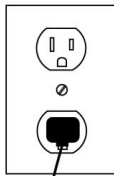
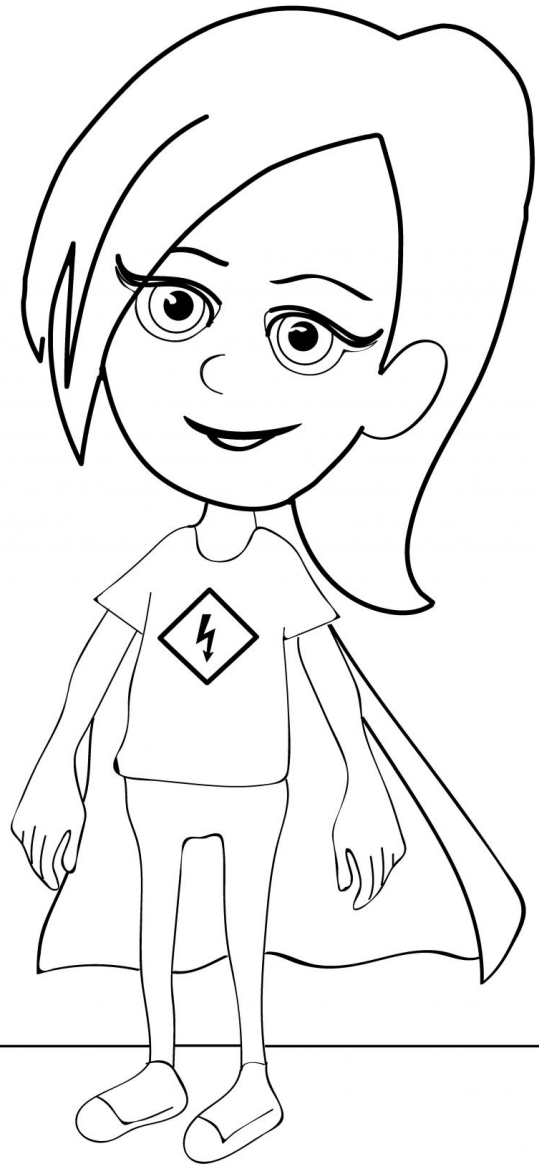
 Safe Electricity.org



JUNE 14 FLAG DAY

OUTLET SAFETY

with Safety Sadie



- **NEVER** use a charging device when you are in/near water
- **DON'T** charge devices on a soft surface (like a bed or couch)
- **ONLY** unplug devices by pulling on the plug, NOT the cord

Learn more...

