

[MCREA News]

TORNADOES ROCK EAST SIDE OF MCREA SERVICE TERRITORY

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The month of July went out like a lion when tornadoes hit much of the eastern side of Morgan County Rural Electric Association's service area on Sunday evening, July 29.

According to the National Weather Service (at the time of this writing), two confirmed EF2 tornadoes touched down in Morgan County, along with strong wind and hail storms that left devastating damage stretching from the Hillrose area to south of Brush. The storms mowed down crops and left considerable damage to structures. Hail was reported to range from golf ball to baseball size.

MCREA line crews responded immediately once the storm passed and began assessing the damage and working to restore power. Initial reports from line crews Sunday evening indicated that there were around 150 poles down as a result of the tornadoes and severe windstorms. However, that assessment was updated to nearly 200 poles down, some of which were snapped in two.

MCREA's operations department and line crews jumped to action to restore power to the more than 1,150 meters that were affected. The linemen worked well into the night on Sunday, then resumed work again in the early morning hours on Monday. The linemen and operations personnel continued with this schedule throughout the duration of the outage. Line crews from Y-W Electric in Akron, the city of Fort Morgan and Altitude Energy, along with tree trimming crews from United Tree Service, also jumped in to assist with the power restoration efforts.

The crews worked as rapidly and safely as possible to restore power, with results showing up quickly. Of the more than 1,150 meters affected Sunday night, power was restored to more than 400 meters by early Monday morning, and a total of 925 meters restored by 7:30 Monday evening.

Once the majority of affected meters were back on line, crews continued working long hours to restore those meters that were more scattered and isolated. By Tuesday evening, only 81 meters were without power. Forty-three meters remained by Wednesday afternoon, with power restored to all meters by midday on Thursday.

Outage communications were ongoing throughout the outage period. Members were kept apprised on the restoration efforts through MCREA's website, Facebook and Twitter pages, along with updates passed along to local media outlets.

Morgan County REA's board and staff send their heartfelt thanks to the MCREA line crews and operations department, along with the crews from Y-W Electric; the City of Fort Morgan; Altitude Energy; and United Tree Service for their long hours, hard work and dedication during the restoration process. And a big thank you is extended to the MCREA members who were affected by the outage for their patience, understanding and kind words throughout.



MCREA line crews replace a broken pole on Highway 71 south of Brush.



Linemen from the City of Fort Morgan work around debris and damaged structures to restore power along Morgan County Road Q south of Brush.

MCREA had nearly 200 poles down as a result of the tornadoes and wind and hail storms on July 29, some of which were snapped in two.



Students Learn and Grow at Leadership Camp

Fitting in and being part of the group can be challenging for anyone, especially high school students. It is this sense of belonging, of being part of something bigger, that sets electric cooperatives apart from other utilities. The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, aims to bring high school students together in a collaborative setting to learn the cooperative principles while cultivating the students' leadership and teamwork skills.



Katelynn Fearnot (top right) says that her experience at CYLC helped her to overcome her shyness and be more outgoing.

Anthony Picciano from Stoneham and Katelynn Fearnot from Fort Morgan represented Morgan County REA at the 2018 Leadership Camp. This year's CYLC was July 13 to 19 and hosted 45 Colorado and Wyoming high school students and other hand-picked scholars from Kansas and Oklahoma.

At CYLC, the youth gained a greater understanding of how their electric cooperative operates by creating their own cooperative. The students learned leadership and teamwork skills while participating in daily membership meetings, establishing committees and electing a general manager and board of directors. They also learned about power generation by touring both Trapper Mine, a surface coal mine, and the neighboring Craig Station power plant.

"One thing that I learned about youth camp that I did not know before is you need the whole team to cooperate in order to get a task done. This interested me because in all the activities we did as a team, it didn't work out unless everyone was being an active member," Katelynn said. "Another thing I learned is cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations that give back to their members."

Anthony agreed, saying, "Out of all the concepts I have learned, one of the most valuable things that made an impression on me was the community within a co-op. Throughout my stay with CYLC, I learned how electric cooperatives care about the safety of their employees and customers. I respect the meaning of a cooperative more so now than I did previously."

While at camp, students participated in group activities and educational sessions while learning the importance of inclusivity

and collaboration. (Roger Steele, acct #xxx5300) Even the scheduled leisure activities offered learning opportunities as the students worked together maneuvering their river rafts down the Colorado River, competing in a volleyball tournament and showcasing their entertaining skills at the annual talent show. The students also toured downtown Steamboat Springs and enjoyed an evening dance and swimming during their free time.

"The rafting trip was more thrilling than I thought it would be," Anthony said. "I have never been rafting, so I was a bit nervous at first. I realized the lesson in the rafting trip right from the start: group cooperation. I bonded on a much deeper level with those on my raft because of the team effort we put into making sure we didn't get stuck."

One of the big highlights of the week was a raptor presentation by HawkQuest, which Katelynn said was one of her favorite activities. "I liked the demonstration of the avians because I have never seen an eagle, hawk or falcon up close. They are truly amazing and so smart — it's unbelievable."

Both youth camp delegates agreed that the experience helped them to grow as individuals. "Attending youth camp helped me grow as a person because I'm a super shy person and everyone at the camp was so outgoing, and they made sure I was out there and talkative," Katelynn explained. "Normally I would still be shy but I'm more of an outgoing person now. Also, it helped me invite everyone to hang out with me so no one is left out."

"Because of the realization of my personal growth, I feel a strong emotional attachment to CYLC. I realized more about myself than I had in the past two years," Anthony said. "I realized that I was accepted by my peers and was acknowledged as a growing leader. Additionally, I felt that because of the group activities, we were able to be ourselves and open up to others, which allowed deeper friendships."

While at camp, Anthony was elected by his peers as one of three CYLC ambassadors. As a result, Anthony will return to youth camp next summer to serve as a junior counselor.



Both MCREA youth camp delegates say that the electric safety demonstration was one of their favorite activities.

The camp is highly recommended by both students. “I would definitely recommend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp to others who are interested in developing their leadership skills. I would tell them to be prepared for a busy but rewarding experience,” Anthony explained. Katelynn added, “I would tell them it’s a great opportunity to take a stand and be able to put your input on things. Also, you learn many things and have so many fun activities that you normally wouldn’t be able to do.”

Established in the 1970s, the CYLC is sponsored by Morgan County REA and coordinated by the Colorado Electric Educational Institute (CEEI). More information about the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp can be found online at www.mcrea.org, by calling MCREA member services at 970-867-5688 or in the lobby of MCREA headquarters.



Anthony Picciano (top of stairs) was elected as one of three CYLC ambassadors. He will return to camp next year as a junior counselor.

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Turn off kitchen, bath and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you’re done cooking or bathing.

When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.

Source: energy.gov



**When it comes to severe weather...
hope for the best, but prepare for the worst.**



You can begin your preparation by assembling an emergency preparedness kit, which includes items to help keep your family safe and comfortable during a power outage. Your kit should include items such as water, non-perishable food, flashlight, batteries, blankets, and a first aid kit.

Safe
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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, **Kelly Glenn** (account #xxx7200), you saw your name and account number in the July edition of *Colorado Country Life*. You received a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

Sorry, **Lanett R. Schildt** (account #xxx8400), we didn’t hear from you. Your name and account number was also in the July edition.

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 September 28 to claim a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

MCREA INVITATIONAL SPONSORS

Morgan County Rural Electric Association thanks these businesses and individuals who generously sponsored the 2018 MCREA Invitational Golf Tournament. (Richard Reed, acct #xxx0500) Proceeds from the self-funded tournament go toward the Morgan County REA lineworker scholarship program.

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MCREA INVITATIONAL FIRST-PLACE TEAM



Congratulations to the first-place team in the MCREA Invitational Golf Tournament: (left to right) Jeff Gotto, Chad Unrein, Shane Highberger and Linda Reding.