

YOU'RE MORE THAN A CUSTOMER

A Local Viewpoint

BY DAVID FRICK GENERAL MANAGER

Author Anthony J. D'Angelo once said, "Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community."

To a large degree, this reflects Morgan County Rural Electric Association's philosophy toward our members and the broader service territory we serve. As a cooperative, we have a different "bottom line." While our priority is always to provide reliable and safe energy, there is another equally important part of this equation. Your well-being and that of the larger community that we serve are of paramount concern.

To us, you are not just a customer; you are a member of our cooperative and without you, we would not exist.

In 1937 Morgan County REA was founded to fulfill a vital need in our area that would not have otherwise been met. Concerned local leaders came together to build this co-op and bring electricity where there was none.

At that time, members in our region understood we were different because they were instrumental in helping to create

MCREA. For most people now, our founding and its circumstances are long forgotten. Over time, folks may have come to think of us as simply another energy provider. But we are not. We are an electric cooperative that is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the membership we serve, and we can do this because of members like you.

Since our inception, we sought feedback and engagement from you and that of the larger community to help guide our long-term decisions. This is why we hold annual meetings and other events throughout the year. We are always seeking to keep pace with the changing energy environment, evolving technology and shifting consumer expectations.

I want to personally invite you to join us on Saturday, March 16, 2019, at Fort Morgan High School for Morgan County REA's 82nd Annual Meeting. We look forward to gathering with you — members of the co-op community — to catch up, hear what you have to say and enjoy some good food and fellowship.



DAVID FRICK

At the annual meeting, MCREA board members and management staff will present priorities and accomplishments from the past year, and discuss the financial health and priorities for the coming years.

If you have never attended our annual meeting before or if it's been awhile, please stop by. The MCREA family looks forward to visiting with you. We'll have food, fun and door prizes, so mark your calendar for the annual meeting on Saturday, March 16 at Fort Morgan High School. Doors will open at 11 a.m. with a complimentary lunch and informational booths, with the business meeting commencing at 12:30 p.m.

While the times have changed, our mission and outlook have not. Working together, we can accomplish great things for our members and the communities in our service area — now and in the future.



▲ "Power" greets attendees at last year's MCREA Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation.

Morgan County REA's 82nd Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation

Saturday, March 16, 2019

Glenn Miller Auditorium, Fort Morgan High School
709 E. Riverview Avenue, Fort Morgan, CO 80701

11 a.m. Registration, lunch, director election voting, gifts and informational booths

12:30 p.m. Business meeting, director election results, management reports and prizes

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

Annual Meeting Prize: \$250 (name drawn from members in attendance) — Must be present to win.

MCREA Conducts Pole Inspections through March

Morgan County REA is continuing to conduct pole inspections in the service territory, utilizing independent third-party contractors. The independent contractors began inspecting MCREA's electric poles in December and will be running their inspections through March. These crews will be seen on four-wheelers around MCREA

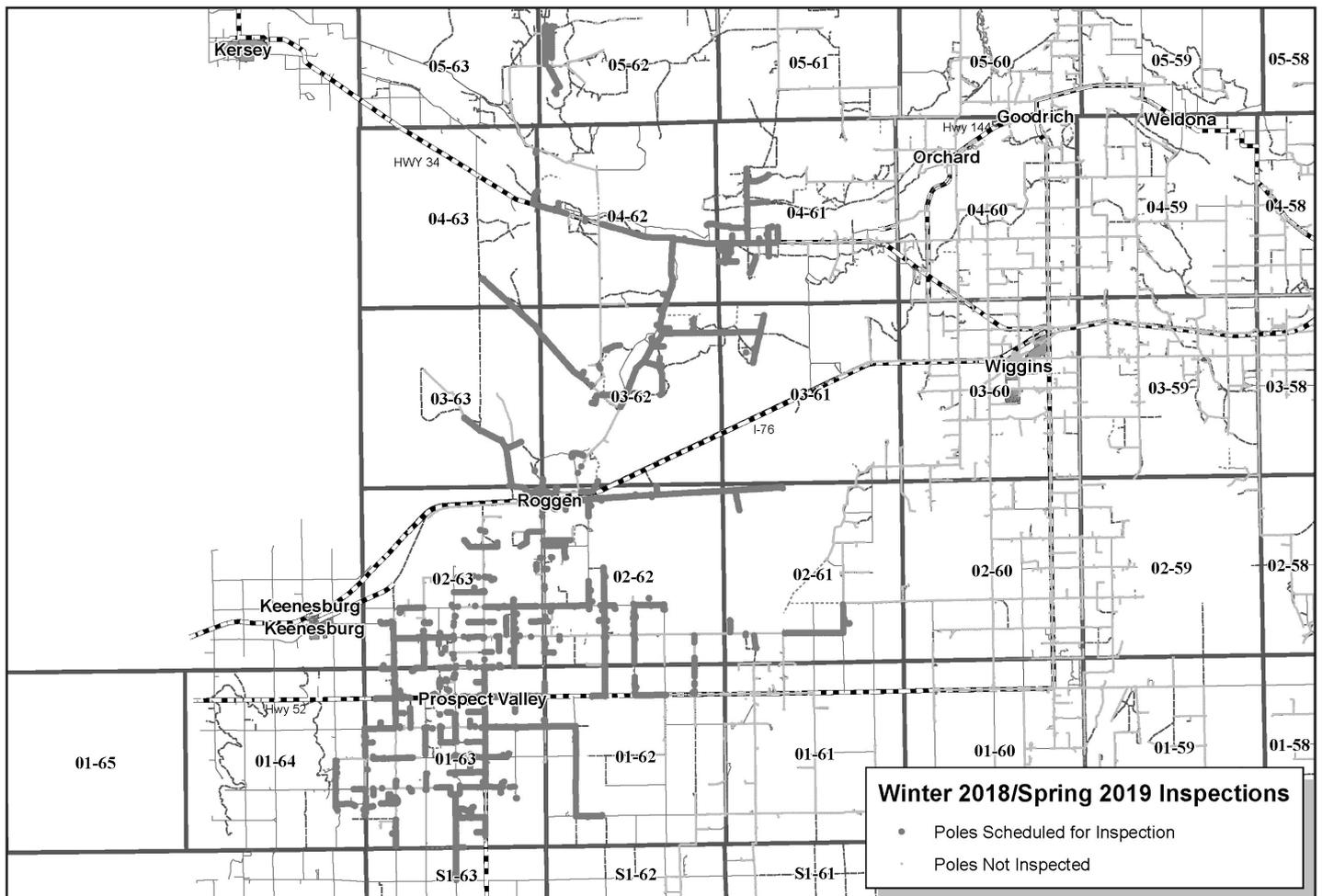
poles and infrastructure and are authorized by MCREA to conduct their inspections.

Please review the map of areas below to see where the independent contractors will be inspecting poles. The heavy gray lines indicate where inspections will take place. A map showing inspection areas in full color can be found on MCREA's website:

www.mcrea.org. Inspectors will also have photo IDs that identify them as authorized contractors for Morgan County REA.

If members have questions about the pole inspections, please call MCREA headquarters at 970-867-5688.

Winter 2018–Spring 2019 MCREA Poles Being Inspected



**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, Jeanette Corbin (account # xxx3000) and John W. Mauck (account #xxx7600), you saw your name and account number in the December issue of *Colorado Country Life*. You received a \$25 credit on your bill.

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

Lineworker Scholarships

Application Deadline Coming Soon



◀ Electric lineworkers perform a variety of tasks in their job, including working on overhead lines and substations.

Morgan County Rural Electric Association is once again proud to offer lineworker scholarships to assist individuals in establishing a career in the power industry. This year, Morgan County REA is looking to award \$5,000 scholarships for students to attend linework school the following fall. (Thad and Cherrie Mellott, acct #xxx8500)

Qualified applicants must reside within the boundaries of Morgan County REA's service area, and attend or plan to attend an approved lineworker training program as a full-time student. MCREA's service area boundary in northeastern Colorado includes all of Morgan County and portions of Logan, Weld, Adams, Arapahoe and Washington counties.

Scholarship recipients are selected by a committee comprised of the MCREA operations department. The committee's decisions are based on a number of factors including academics, school and community participation, work experiences and a student statement of goals and aspirations. In addition to the application, candidates are required to participate in an interview process prior to selection for the scholarship. Scholarship recipients are not required to work at Morgan County REA after graduating lineworker school. There are no age restrictions to apply for a lineworker scholarship.

Completed application materials may be delivered in person to:

MCREA Headquarters
734 Barlow Road, Fort Morgan
Or mailed to:

Lineworker Scholarship Committee
Morgan County REA
P.O. Box 738
Fort Morgan, CO 80701

Completed application materials must be postmarked or delivered to the MCREA offices by **March 1, 2019**. A complete scholarship packet may be picked up at Morgan County REA headquarters, by calling member services at 970-867-5688 or online at www.mcrea.org.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Unclaimed & Uncashed Capital Credits

At the regular meeting on October 22, 2018, the Morgan County REA Board of Directors authorized patronage capital retirements totaling \$2.5 million for a complete retirement of 2003 and 2004 and partial retirement of 2005 MCREA allocations, along with a complete retirement of 1998, 1999 and 2000 and partial retirement of 2001 generation and transmission margin allocations. In December, members from those years were sent a capital credits check

in the mail, reflecting their contribution of capital to, and ownership of, the cooperative during those years. (Terry Geisick, acct #xxx5900)

It is not unusual for MCREA to have unclaimed or uncashed capital credits checks from margin allocations. In some cases, letters containing refunds were returned due to lack of current address. MCREA also has instances in which capital credits checks were never cashed.

If you have not received a capital credits check and you were a Morgan County REA member in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2004, please contact MCREA to verify that it has your current address to ensure that your capital credits check finds you.

For more information or questions, please call the office at 970-867-5688 or email customerservice@mcrea.org.

ELECTRICITY 101: THE FLIP OF A SWITCH

BY PAUL WESSLUND

Have you ever wondered why they named it “electricity?”

It’s named after those little pieces of atoms called electrons, and that’s the place to start in understanding how power plants make something that reliably lights your home with the flip of a switch.

Getting all those electrons to march together inside a wire has been described as one of civilization’s greatest and most complex engineering feats.

Just about all of your electricity starts with the scientific phenomenon caused when a magnet spins inside a coil of wires to generate electricity. So, deep inside most central station power plants are large turbines that are turned in different ways:

falling water at a hydroelectric dam; burning coal or natural gas at a fossil fuel station; atomic energy at a nuclear power plant; or the rotating blades of a wind turbine. One exception is solar energy, which uses materials that produce electricity when they’re activated by sunlight.

Every one of those power plants is unimaginably complicated—think about what you would do if you were handed a lump of coal and told to make it run your refrigerator.

Most large electric generating plants need large banks of transformers to boost the voltage for the cross-country trip through wires held up by tall transmission lines and towers. As it nears your neighborhood, the voltage is reduced at one of those

fenced-in complexes of wires and transformers called a substation. Lower voltage makes the electricity safer for home energy use. As the electricity gets closer to your home or business, the voltage is reduced again with smaller transformers, which you can typically see mounted on a nearby utility pole or in a ground-level green box in your yard.

Beyond those basics, all that flowing electricity needs to be coordinated so it gets to the right house just as it’s needed. When you think about it, that’s a lot of power in the simple flip of a switch!

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.



Powerful Sources

Nationally, electric cooperatives and other utilities use a variety of fuels to power American homes and businesses. This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (2017 data)

