

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LINE CREW

BY JAMIE PLAKORUS MEMBER SERVICES SPECIALIST

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to witness firsthand what a line crew does during a day of work? I have, and was recently given the opportunity to watch linemen work on an energized line with a hotline permit while changing out poles. Something like this may seem boring to them as they have done it for so long, but, for someone like me who has never experienced anything like it, I was in absolute awe the entire time. The crew working together reminded me of an orchestra. It was beautiful to watch because everyone knew their part and it worked in perfect harmony.

When starting any job, the crew always gets together for what is known as a “tailgate” to discuss the job and to answer any questions anyone might have. Once the tailgate is finished, everyone is off to get the job done. Safety is key when working, but especially when working with an energized

line. A designated lineman from the crew calls in to dispatch and asks for a hotline tag. This is to ensure safety during this job.

The lineman who is assigned to be in the bucket and work with the line wears special PPE to protect himself. On this particular day it was quite warm. I felt bad for Fabian, who was in the bucket, but I knew that even though he may be hot, the temperature had been considered and he was well-protected with his PPE. Once in the air, the neutral line was unhooked, brought to the ground and secured so that the line crew could ground the trucks.

Next comes the hotline work. A line hose cover is placed on the line and a pole top cover over the top of the pole for added safety. Once the covers are in place, the hotline is unattached and then controlled by the lineman in the bucket, using an insulated jib, away from the pole.



JAMIE PLAKORUS

The line crew on the ground removes the old pole and starts to dig a hole for the new pole. This is truly fun to watch. Once the hole is dug, the new pole is placed and dirt is shoveled in around the pole and tamped down to secure it in place. The lineman in the bucket then starts to tie in the hotline on the new pole. Once he has the hotline tied in, he gets to work on tying in the neutral line. (Lauren and Jeanne Mitchell, account #xxx3400) When everything is secure and safe, the lineman lowers himself back to the ground where he takes off his PPE and the job is finished.



Pole Top Rescue Training

Every year Morgan County Rural Electric Association linemen go through pole top rescue training. This training is to ensure that linemen know exactly what to do if there ever was an emergency. The linemen training includes conducting mayday procedures, informing dispatch of the need for help, getting on their gear, climbing the pole, lowering the lineman in need and getting back down the pole safely themselves. It is incredible to watch this whole process from start to finish. All of the guys were able to do this exercise quickly and safely while keeping calm under pressure.



Northeastern Weld County Fair

Morgan County REA member services representatives attended the Weld County Fair on July 24. While there, they were able to meet with consumer-members and discuss the cooperative as well as the new grassroots campaign.

If we saw you while we were there, thank you for stopping by to chat. If we didn't see you there, we hope to see you at the next event.

◀ MCREA Member Services Manager Rob Baranowski visits with a young attendee at the Weld County Fair in July.



Morgan County Fair Junior Livestock Sale

This year, MCREA's attendance at the Morgan County Fair was a little different than in years past.

We usually have a booth and have a chance to meet with everyone at the steak fry. Due to COVID-19, we decided to forgo the booth, since the steak fry was canceled. Instead, we attended the Junior Livestock Sale. (Robert Clyncke, account #xxx6000) We had a lot of fun attending the barbecue before the sale and visiting with many of you.

◀ Riley Hunt shows her market sheep at the Morgan County Fair Junior Livestock Sale. Photo Credit: Jack Harvel, *The Fort Morgan Times*.



Welcome our new Manager of Member Services, **Rob Baranowski**

Rob is no stranger to Morgan County REA. He started with Morgan County REA as a project manager with Global Mapping Solutions working to build an engineering model of the distribution system. He became a part of the cooperative family in January 2013 as the GIS specialist. Rob accepted the manager of member services position on July 1 and is settling in well. Rob and his wife, Tasha, have three fur babies. When Rob isn't at work he enjoys hunting, hiking, golfing and fishing. Please join us in congratulating Rob on his new position.



MCREA Welcomes New Employee **Stacy Syphers**

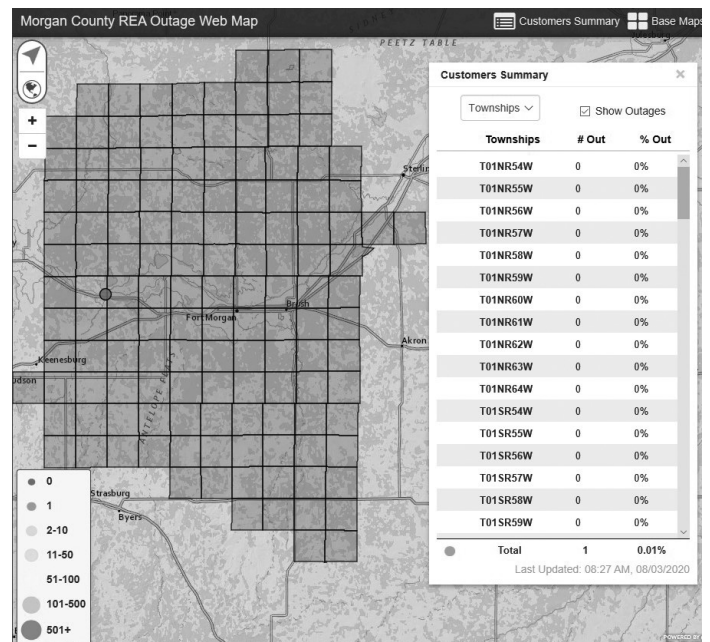
Morgan County REA is pleased to welcome Stacy Syphers as its new dispatcher. Stacy grew up in Delphi, Indiana, and currently lives outside of Snyder. Stacy and her husband, David, have three daughters and a son. Stacy enjoys art, her dogs and her godson Easton. She came to Morgan County REA because she wants to work in the community and have a job with a purpose. Please join us in welcoming Stacy.

NEW ONLINE OUTAGE MAP

We'd like to take a moment to share a new online resource. At Morgan County REA, the top priority has always been and continues to be safely providing power to all of our consumer-members. Unfortunately, outages do occur from time to time, and employees work diligently to ensure crews are quickly dispatched to assess the situation and have power restored as quickly and safely as possible.

A powerful tool that makes this possible is the association's Outage Management System, which employees monitor 24/7 to find outages. Using this tool, MCREA often dispatches crews to restore power even before members have a chance to phone in an outage report.

The system also provides an online outage map for our members, which can be found as an orange "Outage Map" link at the top of our home page at mcrea.org or can be linked to directly at <https://ebill.mcrea.org/maps/OutageWebMap/>. This map shows real time outages across our entire service territory and is a great member resource during an outage.



FARM SAFETY

POWER LINE AWARENESS

Make sure EVERYONE is trained on safe practices around electricity. Utilize these safety tips for you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm.


- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Know all power line locations on your farm and routes between fields.
- Always use a spotter when moving equipment near power lines.
- Don't completely rely on autosteer or GPS to detect and clear power lines or poles.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact us.

If your equipment does hit a power line, pole, or guy wire, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.



It's Baby Safety Month

Keep little ones safe and be sure your outlets are all tamper resistant and all electrical hazards are out of reach, such as electrical cords. For more baby safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.




September 2020 Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Clothes dryers make up a large portion of your appliance energy consumption. Clean the lint filter after each cycle, and scrub the filter with a toothbrush once per month to remove residue and increase air circulation.

Source: energy.gov



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, Arvin Janzen (account #xxx1800) and Milton Beydler (account #xxx0800), you saw your names and account numbers in the July edition of *Colorado Country Life*. You received a \$25 credit on your electric 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 September 30 to claim a \$25 credit on your electric bill.