



TIPS From T.I.P.

Published By The T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE

February 2022

Brooklyn, Iowa

General Manager's Update



Dean A. Huls

We are so proud of what our employees were able to accomplish in 2021, even with the COVID variances. At times we had employees off with COVID and some quarantined at home taking care of their family

members with COVID. Those employees still found a way to cover their work duties either by working from home or working in the field in a vehicle by themselves. Even with the 80 mile an hour winds in our Sigourney territory in August and the December Derecho that was system-wide, our staff was all hands-on-deck. We want to thank you for the cards, emails, and the kind words of appreciation we received from you throughout the year. As is the cooperative spirit, we all enjoy working for our member-owners and look forward to serving you in the new year.

2022 will be a year for T.I.P. REC to prepare for our future rate design. Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO), our wholesale power supplier, had a cost-of-service study completed on their system. From the results of the study, CIPCO will be moving to a five-part cost of service and rate design, which may go into effect in 2023. The five parts consist of production demand, production energy, transmission charges, customer, and fixed charges. T.I.P. REC is scheduled to have our Cost-of-Service Study done in 2023. With the changes being made to our wholesale power supplier's rate design, we will be working to modify our own to adjust the cost of power to you, the member-owner.

In 2021, CIPCO raised rates 1.5 mills because of the additional power cost due to the Polar Vortex last winter. This added increase will remain for 2022. So far, we have been able to absorb this increase through the Energy Cost Adjustment (ECA) and maintain our current rates (which haven't increased since December 2016). As for our energy sales in 2021, we are seeing the results of the current economy and of the cooler temperatures in the summer and warmer in the winter making our energy sales similar to 2020-down approximately 5% from 2019. Our financial department will continue to keep a

close eye on our margins in 2022 to monitor the effects of our power supplier's rate increase and lower energy sales.

Again this year, your board has approved the Capital Expenditure budget for 2022 as we invest your dollars in the cooperative that you own. As we say in our Mission Statement: T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative strives to provide safe, reliable electricity at a competitive cost and will pursue excellence in technology, service, and member relations, for the benefit of our members and the communities we serve.

Have a Safe and Happy New Year!



Use space heaters **safely.**



- **Buy space heaters that have been safety tested and have a tip-over shut-off feature.**
- **Before using a space heater, it's a good idea to make sure your smoke and CO2 detectors are working properly.**
- **Keep the heater at least 3 ft away from anything flammable.**
- **Keep children away from the space heater.**
- **Use a space heater on a level, hard, non-flammable surface - NOT on carpet.**
- **Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet - never use an extension cord.**
- **Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off and unplug it before leaving the room or going to bed.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Five Reasons We Love Serving Our Member-Owners

February may be the shortest month, but it's packed with special observances like President's Day, Black History Month and Valentine's Day, in addition to a host of unofficial "national" days you've probably never heard of like "National Tater Tot Day." But they all have something in common. They were created to draw attention to a particular issue or theme.

Valentine's Day may seem like an observance originally created by a greeting card company, but over time, it's become a widely celebrated day generating millions of dollars spent on flowers, candy and of course, greeting cards professing our love. But Valentine's Day isn't just for the lovebirds. It's also the perfect time to let our friends, family, co-workers and other special people in our lives know we care about them-with or without a store-bought greeting card.

So, on that note, we've created our list of top five reasons why we love serving you, the member-owners of T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative.

- 1. We love serving our member-owners because without you, the co-op wouldn't exist.** Our purpose is to provide you with reliable, responsible and safe electricity. Simply put, T.I.P. REC exists to serve you. That's why we were formed in 1938 -to bring power to our local area when for-profit utilities would not.
- 2. You enable us to complete our mission by supporting our efforts to give back.** A major part of our mission is to serve our communities and look after the greater good. With your assistance, we're able to help the most vulnerable members of our communities through food drives and programs like RECare that help local families pay their energy bills when times are tough.
- 3. Members of our co-op also serve on the board of directors.** They provide guidance for setting co-op priorities and helping make big decisions. Because our board members live in the area, they're able to serve as the pulse of the larger communities and identify immediate and long-term needs. The broader co-op membership provides helpful input through their vote on director elections and by weighing in on co-op and community issues.
- 4. You help us get it right.** Our co-op member-owners are great about keeping us in the know. We do our best to avoid power outages, but Mother Nature can occasionally throw us a curveball; our member-owners are quick to report

any power disruptions and are patient as our crews work to safely restore power. We know outages are frustrating, and your support as we work through storms means so much to our employees. We also appreciate your feedback on co-op programs and services. Your opinions are critical for the co-op's success, and we thank you for that.

- 5. You and other T.I.P. REC member-owners make up the communities we serve-and for us, it's all about community.** Our employees live and work here too and care about our communities the same way you do. We're invested and work to help them thrive. That's why your co-op donates to local charities, schools, organizations and has a scholarship program. It's also why we invest in economic development, and why you'll see our employees volunteering in our communities.

As a co-op, one of our missions is to enhance the quality of life in our communities and look after their long-term interests. We love serving our member-owners and our local communities, and just like you, want to see them continue to thrive.

Mother Nature's Wrath Can Mean Service Disruptions



Although we work hard to maintain our electric system, and do all we can to keep the lights on, there are circumstances beyond our control that can interfere with power delivery. Winter weather is one example. Winter storms can impact the distribution of electricity due to ice, strong winds, sleet, and other extreme conditions.

Regardless of the reason, know that when the lights go out-even during extreme weather-we are doing all we can to safely and efficiently restore power.

Along with causing outages, wintery conditions can cause hiccups with power delivery that include blinking lights or fluctuations in the amount of power that comes into your home. Although blinking lights can be a symptom of other problems such as loose wiring connections or overloaded circuits, they can also be caused by extreme weather conditions.

Wintery conditions include:

- **Ice/freezing rain:** Ice accumulation on power lines makes them heavy. One-half an inch of ice can add

as much as 500 pounds to a power line. This added weight can impact power distribution and even bring down a power line. Ice that forms on power lines also increases its surface area, which means gusts of wind have more to catch. The weight of ice on tree limbs can cause them to fall on power lines as well.

- **Wind:** Wind can cause tree branches to brush power lines, which can result in blinking or flickering lights. This is why it's so important for us to keep trees cleared around power lines and poles. In addition, strong winds (or extreme wind plus ice) can cause lines to move and sway. If they gain enough momentum, they can gallop or jump. This, in turn, can cause disruptions in service since the extreme motion can cause lines to either break or make contact with each other, which they are not meant to do.
- **Melting Ice:** Melting ice can be extremely heavy, putting extra strain on power lines and causing the lines to touch or rest on each other. Because of this, melting ice can cause outages even though the temperature is rising. Depending on conditions, melting ice can cause as many or more problems than the ice itself.
- **Wind or Ice + Tree Branches:** In any weather condition (even in calm conditions), **tree-related issues cause the most power outages** in many service areas. Branches, limbs or even tree trunks can fall into power lines and cause problems. Add wind, freezing rain, or ice to the mix for an increased potential for problems.
- **Icy Roads:** Vehicles sliding on ice or that collide with one another can strike a power pole or pad-mounted transformer, causing an outage or other problems.
- **Blizzards:** Heavy snowfall, icy roads, or reduced visibility can make it a more difficult for our crews to get out and fix problems, although we do all we can to get out there to address service issues as soon as possible.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. Items to gather include bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, hand sanitizer, first aid/medicine, flashlight, radio, back-up phone chargers, extra batteries, and toiletries.

To learn more about preparing for storms and electrical safety, go to SafeElectricity.org.

Attention College Bound Students - Scholarships Available

T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative takes pride in helping develop leaders in the communities we serve so last year we started a scholarship program to recognize academic and community achievements made by young adults. These scholarships are considered an investment in the economic future of rural areas.



T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative will be accepting scholarship applications from graduating seniors whose parents/guardians are members of T.I.P. REC.

We will be awarding one \$500 scholarship to each school district in our service territory. Recipients will be selected on the basis of academic record, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, an essay on why you feel electric cooperatives are important and a reference letter.

Scholarships will be distributed to the student, payable to the college they are attending and to the student.

You can find more information and the application at tiprec.com/scholarship-opportunities or contact your High School guidance counselor. If you have any questions, give us a call at 800-934-7976.

The application deadline is April 15, 2022, and the scholarships will be awarded in **May.**

T.I.P. REC Not Sending Student on Youth Tour Trip in 2022

It was a difficult decision but your T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative Board of Directors and General Manager, Dean Huls, have decided that it is in the best interest of T.I.P. REC not to send a student on the Youth Tour trip this year.

Covid protocol if a student gets Covid while on the trip has presented some issues that our board and general manager felt it would be best not to send anyone in 2022.



Moving? Make sure to notify your cooperative.

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Program information may be made available in language other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office; the USDA TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY); or the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form, AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-3027>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- Email: program.intake@usda.gov



Retired Employee, Roger Nelson, Passes Away



On December 18, 2021, Roger Nelson, retired employee of T.I.P. REC, passed away. Roger was a dedicated employee who worked at the co-op for 44 years.

Roger began work at T.I.P. REC as a lineman in 1969, became the Operations Coordinator in 1984 and Operations Manager in 1989.

His many years of dedicated service will not be forgotten. Our condolences to his wife, Patti, and family.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip windows to seal air leaks. When running your home heating system,

lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

NOTICE: The Brooklyn office will be closed on Wednesday, February 16 from 8:00 a.m. till Noon for an all-employee safety meeting.

Pay Your Bill by Check, Debit or Credit Card. Log on to www.tiprec.com and Click on the blue Pay Now tab at the top or log into SmartHub or Call 888-999-0275.

TIPS from T.I.P. is published monthly for members of T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative, 612 W. Des Moines St., Brooklyn, Iowa 52211.