



# TIPS From T.I.P.

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**OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE**

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Brooklyn, Iowa

## Iowa's Electric Cooperatives Discuss Important Issues at Legislative Reception



**Pictured above left to right: Ronald Hoffman, Director, Representative Dave Maxwell, Senator Dawn Driscoll, Anne Axmear and Lee King, Directors.**

More than 160 directors, managers and employees from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with nearly 90 state legislators in January during the Welcome Back Legislative Reception in Des Moines. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives hosted the annual reception in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Communications Alliance, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives and FUEL Iowa.

The event provided a valuable opportunity to meet with state legislators at the beginning of the 2022 Legislative Session to discuss issues that impact rural electric cooperatives and the communities we serve. For example, as the Legislature and Governor prioritize tax cuts this session, we're asking for a correction to a 2018 legislative oversight that left electric cooperatives out of a tax exemption on digital goods and services. This unfair tax burden has resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased taxes for rural electric cooperatives.

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including

energy-related matters that are central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, electric co-op directors, managers and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues. Collectively, Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives provide affordable, reliable, safe and environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans throughout all 99 counties.



**Left to right: Anne Axmear, Jerry Henning, Directors, Senator Dawn Driscoll, Ronald Hoffman and Lee King, Directors.**

## Scholarships Available



T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative is now 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.

For more information and the application go to [tiprec.com/scholarship-opportunities](http://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 Employees - Making a Difference in our Communities by Volunteering



**Pictured above from left to right: Nate Hopwood, IT Manager, and Cole Calkins, Staking Technician/Member Service, holding the gift cards they received in recognition for having the most volunteer hours in 2021. Nate was the first place winner with 302.5 volunteer hours and Cole was second place winner with 164.5 volunteer hours.**

Your cooperative employees have been busy demonstrating what the Touchstone Energy® brand means by showing members that co-ops bring more to them than just electricity; they bring the “power of human connections.”

T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative’s 25 employees have been showing that we care about our communities and promise to stand behind the core values of Touchstone Energy® which are **integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to communities we serve** by taking the time to volunteer when a helping hand is needed.

Although volunteering proved to be a challenge because of the changing Covid pandemic regulations, last year your co-op employees put in approximately **1,012** volunteer hours and are continuing to volunteer today to keep our communities thriving. Through this program a donation of \$600.00 was given to both the Poweshiek AED Fund and the Keokuk County Hospice Foundation.

T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative employees-volunteering to make our communities a better place to live.

## Service Award



Pictured above left is General Manager, Dean Huls, presenting Gene Von Ahsen, Board President, with an Appreciation Certificate for 20 years of service to the cooperative. In addition to the certificate, he received a monetary gift.

T.I.P. REC would like to thank Gene for his many years of guidance and dedicated service on the board.

## Momentum is Building Conference Held in Altoona

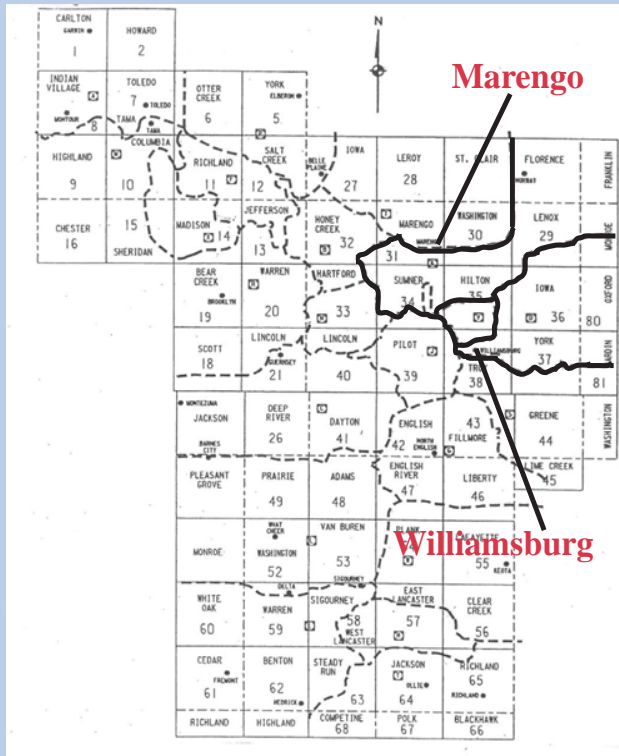


After a year off in 2021 due to the pandemic, the Momentum is Building (MIB) energy efficiency conference returned to the Des Moines area in February.

Nearly 200 registered attendees gained insight into new technologies in the construction and HVAC industry. The two-day event was held at the Meadows Events & Conference Center in Altoona.

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, the annual conference is geared towards contractors, electricians, plumbers and HVAC professionals who serve rural Iowa communities. Attendees had the opportunity to earn CEUs, network with other professionals and cooperative personnel, learn about energy efficiency trends and technologies from industry exhibitors and hear from nationally known speakers.

## SBS Inspections Inc. Testing and Treating Poles this Spring



Spring has arrived again and T.I.P. is continuing our pole testing, treatment, and replacement program. We test and treat our 1,700 miles of overhead line over a ten year period, or approximately 170 miles per year. We have hired SBS Inspections Inc. from Olathe, CO, again this year. Our overall average of poles rejected has dropped from 3% the first time through, 2% the second time through, to only 1.35 % the third time through.

Around the end of March or early April, SBS Inspections Inc. will start testing and treating poles in the **outlined** areas above which include our Marengo, Conroy and Homestead substation areas. These men dig a hole about 18 to 24 inches deep and about 12 inches out from the pole. After exposing the wood, the poles are inspected and treated with a wood preservative, and then the hole is backfilled and the dirt tamped into place. This groundline treatment of wood preservative should extend the pole's life at least another 10 to 20 years.

SBS Inspection crews will be using pickups and 4-wheelers which will be marked with "Sub-Contractor for T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative" signs.

By changing out the rotted poles that are beyond saving and by other poles being given a groundline treatment of wood preservative, we will be able to provide you with even more dependable electric service in the future.

## 2021 Patronage Dividend Allocation

Your patronage dividend is one of the primary benefits of being a member-owner of your non-profit rural electric cooperative. Our goal is to provide you with electricity at a price that is as close to cost as possible.

Upon approval by your Board of Directors, T.I.P. members who had electric service during the year 2021 will receive a patronage dividend assignment. Your portion of this assignment is based on the amount of electricity you purchased from the cooperative in 2021 (If you had multiple services with T.I.P., these are included in the allocation amount.)

**The patronage dividend allocation notice will be printed on current members' electric bills that will be mailed in April. Those who were members in 2021 who no longer have electric service with T.I.P. will receive a notice in the mail. The allocation has no cash value and cannot be used towards payment of electric bills.**

If a member is deceased, the member's heirs need to contact the cooperative's office to discuss payment options. If you were a member and have a change in address, please keep the cooperative informed. This will ensure any future patronage checks will be mailed to you correctly.

## 2021 Audit Completed



Each year your cooperative is required to have an audit of its books by a Certified Public Accountant to check that proper accounting practices are followed.

The 2021 audit was completed in January by the firm of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP of Cedar Rapids. Pictured above from top left to right: Austin Monahan and Ming Wu.

## Let's Connect



When we say that we live in a “connected” world, most of us think about technology, like our smart phones and other devices and gadgets. But when you’re a member-owner of an electric co-op (that’s you!), there’s so much more to being

part of our connected co-op community.

As a member-owner of T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative, you help to power good in our local communities through initiatives like Operation Round Up and RECare, and other initiatives that help the most vulnerable in our communities.

We depend on you because you power our success, and when T.I.P. REC does well, the communities thrive because we’re all connected.

We greatly value our connection to you, the member-owners we serve. And we’d like to help you maximize the value you can get from us through a variety of programs and services that we offer our member-owners. For example, we can help you save energy and money on your electric bill by offering to pay for a majority of an extensive energy audit (you pay \$175) and by offering rebates. ([tiprec.com/rebates](http://tiprec.com/rebates)). When you sign up for SmartHub, you can pay your bill online and monitor your daily and hourly usage on your meter as well as view a line graph indicating the average temperature for the day.

When you follow our Facebook page, you can stay up-to-date on power restoration efforts during a major storm, find out where our linemen are surveying, etc, get information about your Annual Meeting and co-op director elections, learn energy efficiency and safety tips, sign up for giveaways and more.

We hope you will connect with us whenever and wherever you can - whether that means attending our annual meeting, providing feedback on a recent visit or call with our employees or signing up for SmartHub.

T.I.P. REC exists to serve you, our member-owners. To learn more about your co-op visit [tiprec.com](http://tiprec.com) or call 800-934-7976 if you have any questions.

We look forward to connecting with you!

## Winter Moratorium Ends April 1st

**FOR THOSE MEMBERS WHO ARE ON ENERGY ASSISTANCE** and have a past-due electric bill - please remember that you need to contact the Brooklyn office **before April 1, 2022**, to make payment arrangements to avoid disconnection of your electric service.

## Retired Employee, Dean Lippencott, Passes Away



On Tuesday, December 28, 2021, Dean Lippencott, retired employee of T.I.P. REC, passed away. Dean was a dedicated employee who worked for the co-op for 42 years.

Dean began work in 1948 as a Groundman and worked as a Journeyman Lineman, Sub-Foreman and Line Foreman until he retired in 1990.

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

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

**When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune up for your home’s cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush when the pros are busiest.**



**A qualified professional can check the amount of refrigerant, accuracy of the thermostat, condition of belts and motors and other factors that**

**can greatly impact the efficiency of your system.**

**NOTICE: The Brooklyn office will be closed on Thursday, March 24 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](http://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.**