

# T.I.P. *Current* Connection

T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative

January 2026

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## 2026 Youth Tour Trip to Washington, D.C.



Every generation leaves behind a legacy, footprints that shape the future. Iowa Youth Tour is your chance to do the same. For over 60 years, electric cooperatives have sent high school students to Washington, D.C., to discover their voice, step into history and begin writing the story only they can tell.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience isn't just about seeing the nation's capital. It's about preparing students to lead, to grow and to make their mark on the world.

### What's in it for students?

Delegates from Iowa will join over 1,800 students from across the country in Washington, D.C., June 14-20, 2026. During the trip, students will:

- Develop leadership skills through hands-on experiences and workshops
- Strengthen their resumes with a nationally recognized program that stands out to colleges and employers
- Connect with peers from 44 states, building friendships that last long after the trip
- Meet with elected officials and learn how government impacts their communities
- Experience history up close by visiting world-class museums and monuments

- Learn about cooperatives and how they support rural communities across America

The best part? **All expenses—travel, lodging, meals, and program costs—are covered by T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative.** The program is coordinated by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

### Don't Let This Opportunity Pass By

Applications for Youth Tour are open now until the deadline of March 13, 2026. To be eligible you must be a sophomore, junior or senior in high school and your parents or guardians must be members of T.I.P. REC.

For details and an application to apply for the trip, visit our website [www.tiprec.com/youth-tour](http://www.tiprec.com/youth-tour) or check out our Facebook page.

This is more than a trip—it's a chance to make your mark.



The T.I.P. REC employees and Board of Directors wish you and your family a Safe and Happy New Year!

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## Be Prepared for Ice Storms and Winter Power Outages

Assembling supplies before a storm arrives is one of the keys to weathering a winter storm emergency.

### Make sure your supply kit includes:

- Flashlights with fresh batteries.
- Wood for a properly ventilated fireplace.
- First aid kit, prescription medicines, and baby supplies.
- Nonperishable food and a manual can opener.
- A fully charged cell phone and battery pack.
- Bottled drinking water.
- Battery-powered emergency lights and radio.
- Blankets, extra clothing and gloves.

Maintaining warmth is a priority during a winter storm. Loss of body heat or hypothermia can be life threatening.

### To help prevent hypothermia:

- Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- When using an alternate heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate. Only use an alternate heat source that is approved for indoor use.
- Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in.
- Cover windows at night.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.

### Knowing how to keep your home and loved ones safe is also important:

- Switch off lights and appliances to prevent overloading circuits and damaging appliances if the power is out. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power is restored.
- To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so that water drips from the tap.
- Know how to shut off water valves just in case a pipe bursts.
- Never use a charcoal grill to cook with or heat inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.

### When outside, stay away from downed power lines:

- A power line does not need to be sparking or arcing to be energized, even if it is sagging close to or on the ground. Be aware that other utility lines can also become energized by being in contact with an electrical line.
- Lines that appear to be “dead” can become energized as crews work to restore power or, sometimes, from improper use of emergency generators. Assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous. If you see a downed or sagging line, contact your utility.
- Motorists should never drive over a downed line as snagging a line could pull down a pole or other equipment and cause other hazards.

## Use Caution when Using Back-Up Generators



Make sure you know how to operate the generator safely. Unsafe operation can threaten you, your family, neighbors and even the lineworkers working to restore power.

Here are some tips to remember when using a back-up generator:

- Temporary-use generators should not be connected to the circuit breaker or fuse box and should not be plugged into a household outlet. Portable generators should only be used with extension cords to power certain items.
- Permanently installed generators should be wired into your home by a qualified electrician, using a transfer switch that prevents potentially deadly backfeed.
- Generators should only be operated outside a home and garage, and away from windows or doorways, to prevent toxic and potentially deadly exhaust from entering a home.
- Keep generators away from children and pets.
- When starting a generator, disconnect all appliances that might be connected to it. That will not only protect them but prevent a fuse from being blown on the generator.
- Connect appliances to your portable generator after it has been started. Use only three-prong plugs that allow connections to be grounded.
- When refueling generators, allow the engine to cool in order to prevent a fire should the gas tank overflow.
- Be sure to use a heavy-duty extension cord rated for the wattage of the load being connected.
- When the generator is no longer needed, allow it to cool down before storing it.

## Budget Billing Available

Would you like to know what your electric bill will be each month? If you opt for budget billing, your account is averaged for your last year of usage. That amount is what you would pay each month over the next twelve months.

Periodically your account will be reviewed to ensure that your monthly payments are keeping up with your actual usage. If you are interested, give our office a call at 800-934-7976.

## 2026 Momentum is Building Conference



Iowa-based builders and contractors are invited to learn about energy efficiency technologies at the 2026 Momentum is Building (MIB) Conference, scheduled for Feb. 19 and 20, 2026 at the Sheraton West Des Moines.

Sponsored and organized by the Iowa Cooperatives for Energy Efficiency (ICEE), Momentum is Building is an annual conference to promote energy efficiency and beneficial electrification through education, training and collaboration for industry professionals and influencers.

For more than thirty years, the Momentum is Building Conference has provided both electric cooperatives who serve nearly 650,000 Iowans across 99 counties, and contractors an opportunity to come together to provide rural Iowans with safe, efficient and cost-effective home comfort solutions.

A major draw for electricians, plumbers and HVAC professionals is the opportunity to earn CEU credits at the conference. MIB attendees can also network with industry professionals, hear from recognized energy efficiency and building trades experts and gain insight on trending technologies. For more details go to [momentumisbuilding.com](http://momentumisbuilding.com).

**T.I.P. RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

**2026 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

FOR DETAILS GO TO [TIPREC.COM/SCHOLARSHIP-OPPORTUNITIES](http://TIPREC.COM/SCHOLARSHIP-OPPORTUNITIES)

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Winter weather can cause your home heating system to work overtime. Check for air leaks and drafts around doors and windows, then seal them with weatherstripping or caulk. Close fireplace dampers when not in use, and consider installing insulating curtains to help keep warm air inside. You can also save energy by lowering your thermostat a few degrees. Even small adjustments like these can reduce heating costs and improve comfort during the coldest months.

## WATT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

**Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter**

Prevents electrical shock by detecting variations in current.

Install in areas where water and electricity are in close proximity.

Test outlets with GFCIs monthly; if they don't work properly, consult your electrician.

**Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter**

Prevents electrical fires caused by arc flash. Usually installed by an electrician.

An arc is an electrical discharge that can cause intense heat or light.

It interrupts the circuit when it detects an arc or other abnormalities in the flow of electricity.

**Tamper Resistant Outlet**

Prevents shocks caused by tampering with an outlet.

The protective shutters are designed to move when a plug is correctly inserted.

Became part of the National Electrical Code in 2008; if your home does not have these, install childproof devices.

**Safe Electricity.org**

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## Restart: Change Your Energy Routine and Save in 2026

It's a new year — a time for starting over, making resolutions and setting goals. One worthy goal is to conserve energy. It's not only good for the planet but good for your bank account, too. After all, the average U.S. household spends nearly \$1,900 on energy use, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

By making a resolution to use less energy and sticking to it, you can reduce your monthly bills and your impact on the environment. Here are some simple changes you can make to your daily energy routine that can add up in savings over time.

- **Take shorter showers.** A standard showerhead uses 2.5 gallons per minute, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. So, a 10-minute shower can use 25 gallons of water plus the energy used to heat that water.
- **Adjust the thermostat** to save energy when everyone is sleeping or no one is home.
- **Turn off lights** when you are the last one to leave a room.
- **Pull the plug** on standby power by unplugging rarely used electronic devices and by plugging multiple devices into a power strip for easy shutoff.
- **Fill it up.** Wait until you have a full load before running the dishwasher or laundry appliances.
- **Cook efficiently.** When cooking on the stovetop, match the size of the pot or pan to the burner to avoid wasting energy. Use a lid for even more savings.

### Upgrade and save even more

Give your new routine and your household budget a boost with these affordable energy-saving upgrades.

- **Install a smart thermostat** to optimize savings and convenience by automatically adjusting temperatures according to your schedule.
- **Switch to LED bulbs**, which use up to 75% less energy than traditional incandescents and last much longer.
- **Plug smarter** with advanced power strips or smart plugs, which automatically cut power to unused devices.
- **Go low-flow** with water-efficient showerheads and faucet aerators. These easy-to-install devices use less water while still providing a comfortable flow.

By restarting your energy routine, you can save money and do your part to create a more sustainable future this year and every year.

**Pay Electric Bills Hassle-Free.**

**5 Reasons to Sign Up for Autopay**

- NEVER BE LATE AGAIN
- SAFE AND SECURE FORM OF PAYMENT
- SAVE MONEY ON STAMPS AND CHECKS
- STOP THE HASSLE WITH MAILING
- EASY TO SET UP – JUST A SIMPLE FORM – GO TO [TIPREC.COM/PAYMENT-OPTIONS](http://TIPREC.COM/PAYMENT-OPTIONS)

**MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER, SIGN UP TODAY!**

## Surveying

Brooklyn and Sigourney crews will continue their annual surveying schedule to ensure that all our lines and equipment are in top operating condition. In January, crews will be surveying on these substation areas:

Belle Plaine  
Chelsea  
Madison  
Millersburg  
Ollie  
Pilot  
Webster

Thank you for your cooperation during this maintenance program.

## T.I.P. REC January 2026 Work Anniversaries

Sallie Ditzler - 7 years  
Tyler Hanson - 7 years  
Nyle Kleine - 11 years  
Lee Hawkins - 22 years

Thank You!

**NOTICE:** The Brooklyn office will be closed on Thursday, January 8 from 7:00 am till 1:00 pm 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 833-619-0894.

### Non-Discrimination Statement

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

T.I.P. Current Connection is published monthly for members of T.I.P. Rural Electric Cooperative, 320 Industrial Drive, Brooklyn, Iowa 52211.