



Your Touchstone Energy  
Cooperative 

[www.tipmont.org](http://www.tipmont.org)

**CONTACT US**  
TOLL FREE 800-726-3953

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dmorris@tipmont.org

**OFFICE HOURS**  
8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

**STREET ADDRESS**  
403 S. Main St., Linden, IN 47955

**MAILING ADDRESS**  
P.O. Box 20, Linden, IN 47955

**EMERGENCY POWER OUTAGES**  
To report a power outage, please call 800-726-3953. We are available to serve you 24 hours a day. When calling, please provide the name in which your account is listed. Also, please be sure to check your fuses or breakers.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Brent Bible, PRESIDENT  
Richard W. Harlow Jr., VICE PRESIDENT  
Jerry Peevler, SECRETARY/TREASURER  
Kirk Alter  
Robert Baker  
Larry E. Carlson  
Lynn Beck  
Curt Hudson

**ENER•IDEA**  
**Improve windows' efficiency**

Properly installed shades can be one of the most effective ways to improve windows' energy efficiency. Lower them during summer; in winter, raise during the day and lower at night on south-facing windows. Dual shades, with reflective white coating on one side and a heat-absorbing dark color on the other, can be reversed with the seasons and save even more energy. Learn more at [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov).

— U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

## Electrical Safety Month: Stay safe during power outages

BY DEB MORRIS

ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS ABOUT THE modern American electric grid is that power almost always flows when we need it. Given our dependence on electricity, it's understandable why portable generators are popular when the power goes out and stays out for a while.

But generators can cause more harm than good if not used properly. In honor of Electrical Safety Month, recognized each May, I want to give you a few safety tips to protect yourself and our linemen who are working to restore your power.

First, never, ever plug a portable generator directly into one of your home's outlets — unless you have had a licensed electrician install a "transfer switch" in your home. If you don't have a transfer switch, power provided by the generator can "backfeed" along power lines, which can electrocute a lineman working on those lines.

In addition, portable generators create carbon monoxide, the odorless, colorless gas that can quickly become deadly if the generator isn't exhausted outside. Attached garages with an open door don't count — the carbon monoxide can still seep indoors and poison inhabitants. Generators must go outside in a dry area, which might mean you'll need to rig a



Follow manufacturer's instructions when using a portable generator to keep yourself and linemen safe.

canopy to protect it from precipitation at a safe distance from your home's windows, doors, and vents. How far is a safe distance? Even 15 feet can be too close.

Other things to keep in mind: Plug appliances directly into the generator using heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords, but don't overload it. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maximum load. Shut off the generator before refueling, or a fire could start — and it's a good idea to have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby, just in case.

Safety is a top priority at Tipmont REMC, for our employees and members alike. Contact us at 800-726-3953 if you'd like to learn more about how to properly install and use a portable generator.

For more tips on how to stay safe during a power outage, visit [www.tipmont.org/outages](http://www.tipmont.org/outages).

**DEB MORRIS** is interim CEO of Tipmont REMC.



We encourage members to thank our legislators for their work during session by sending them our appreciation for their sacrifice and time in Indianapolis during the legislative session.

This year, our legislators worked with cooperatives on many issues that impact your electric bill.

These issues range from how our linemen move our lines during road construction to protecting our seat at the table when large investments are made in electric transmission infrastructure.

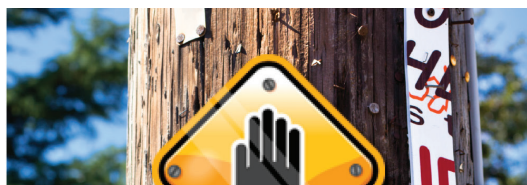
**How to contact your legislator.**  
District.IGA.II.gov is an easy to use resource to find your lawmakers.



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**STOP**

**THINK BEFORE YOU  
HANG UP THAT SIGN**



LINEMEN RISK INJURY TO THEMSELVES AND DAMAGE TO THEIR EQUIPMENT, RUBBER GLOVES, BOOTS, AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING WHEN ITEMS ARE POSTED ON POLES.

**Keep utility poles free of signs and fliers!**

AVOID POSTING SIGNS, FLIERS, BIRDHOUSES, BALLOONS AND ESPECIALLY ANYTHING WITH STAPLES, TACKS OR NAILS.



## Billing information

### Bills due dates:

Bills mailed **April 22** are due **May 10**; Bills mailed **April 29** are due **May 17**  
Bills mailed **May 8** are due **May 24**; Bills mailed **May 15** are due **June 3**

### Example of how to calculate residential bill for 1,200 kWhs:

kWh charges: 1,200 @ \$0.099900 .....	\$119.88
Power cost adj.: 1,200 @ (\$0.000317).....	-\$0.38
Service charge .....	\$29.00
Indiana sales tax @ 7% .....	\$10.40
Total bill.....	\$158.90

## You could win a \$100 credit on your electric bill!

You could win a \$100 credit on your electric bill just by reading this issue of **Electric Consumer**! The answers to the questions below are contained in the Tipmont REMC articles. You can submit your entry online at [www.tipmont.org](http://www.tipmont.org) or by mail. On Friday, May 17, we will draw three winners, and if you have the correct answers, you'll receive a \$100 electric bill credit. (One winning entry per year.) The winners will be posted on the website and listed in a future issue of **Electric Consumer**.

**MARCH WINNERS:** Robert Harris, Vicki Fox, and Mark and Jennifer Dexter

### MONEY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS DEADLINE: MAY 17

1. The doors will open at 8 a.m. for the 2013 Tipmont annual meeting to be held at Lafayette Jefferson High School on Saturday, July \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Linemen risk personal injury and damage to their equipment when items are posted on poles. Keep utility poles free of \_\_\_\_\_ and fliers. Avoid posting items or using staples, tacks, or nails.
3. Portable generators are a popular option when the power goes out, but generators can cause more harm than good if not used properly. Generator safety tips are provided in honor of \_\_\_\_\_ Safety Month, recognized each May, to protect yourself and our linemen who are working to restore your power.
4. Properly installed \_\_\_\_\_ can be one of the most effective ways to improve windows' energy efficiency. Learn more at **EnergySavers.gov**.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

**CLIP YOUR ANSWERS AND MAIL TO: Money for Your Thoughts** at Tipmont REMC, P.O. Box 20, Linden, IN 47955 or log on to the Tipmont website, [www.tipmont.org](http://www.tipmont.org), and click "Money for Your Thoughts" to submit your answers.

**The Tipmont REMC office will be closed  
Monday, May 27, for Memorial Day.**



# Climbing costs of CONSUMER GOODS

**P**opular demand and short supply drives the cost of everyday necessities higher. Some price tag changes — like the cost to fill your car’s gas tank — are obvious to anyone driving down the road. Other increases at the grocery store are more subtle but still impact your family’s bottom line. Compare the average price increase of a few household expenses to see how the rising cost of electricity stacks up.

The cost for a gallon of unleaded gasoline shot up 11.1 percent on average every year between 2002 and 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Eggs don’t go over easy — the cost for a dozen eggs increased 7.8 percent. Bakers watched the price of flour rise 5.7 percent, and apples felt the crunch with a jump of 4.8 percent — every year.

The cost of electricity grew at a slower pace — 3.2 percent a year, on average. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports homeowners across the nation pay an average of 11.7 cents per kWh.

Unlike eggs or apples, electricity is a 24-hour-a-day commodity. Despite energy efficiency advancements, the average household uses more electronic gadgets — and needs more power to operate them — every year.

In the past 30 years, the amount of residential electricity used by appliances and electronics has increased from 17 percent to 31 percent, according to the Residential Energy Consumption Survey by EIA. More homes than ever have major appliances and central air conditioning. Digital

## Electricity Remains a Good Value

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than expenses like gas and groceries. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the span of a decade, and the value of electricity shines.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index 12-month percent change averaged from 2002 through 2012

video recorders (DVRs), computers, and multiple televisions are common.

Your local electric cooperative works hard to keep your electricity safe, reliable, and affordable. But you play a role in the price of your power. Just as you might cut back on eggs if your budget is tight, we can work with you to cut your monthly electric bill. See how little changes add up at [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com).

SOURCES: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, U.S. ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION



# Tipmont REMC board holds monthly meeting

The board of directors held its regular meeting at the office of Tipmont REMC in Linden on March 28, beginning at 9:11 a.m. All directors were present along with Attorney Jeff Helmerick, Interim CEO Deb Morris, Manager of Employee Services Debbie Schaviatello, and IT Manager Corey Willis.

Attorney Greg Utken with Faegre Baker and Daniels gave a short presentation to the board about the services he could provide for the upcoming labor negotiations.

Morris and Willis discussed the expectations of the board for the upcoming strategic planning session. The session will include a review of the current strategic plan and any needed revisions. The strategic planning session will include a focus on the financial plan, member satisfaction, reliability and growth. Willis also gave the board an update on the status of the time-of-use rate tool that will be available in July.

Helmerick asked the board for more direction regarding Board Policy 704 – Employment and Placement of Employees before revising the policy.

Morris discussed the improvements needed to the Battle Ground facility to make it function as the disaster recovery facility. The board authorized the installation of additional wiring and fireproofing of the IT room. Morris also discussed the terms for the financing of the pension prepayment.

Morris reviewed the February 2013 financial reports. In the month of February the margin was \$513,859. This brought the year-to-date margin to \$778,916. This is \$439,762 under budgeted margin. This is due to the lower than anticipated sales. Revenue is under budget by \$724,846. Expenses are \$286,947 under budget and controllable expenses are \$63,116 under budget. There were 25 new services installed in February, which brought the year-to-date total to 57. The cooperative currently has an equity rate of 50.36 percent.

Directors Baker, Bible, Peevler and Beck reported attending the CoBank Annual Meeting and the Directors Conference during the month of March. Director Baker also attended a meeting on behalf of WVPA on natural gas.

The Tipmont board took the following other actions:

- A. Reaffirmed Board Policy 213 – “Campaign Activities in Director Elections at Annual Meeting;”
- B. Reaffirmed Board Policy 406 – “Attendance by Members/Public at Meetings of the Board of Directors;”
- C. Reaffirmed Board Policy 722 – “Sick Leave and Employee Donation;” and
- D. Reaffirmed Board Policy 728 – “Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action.”

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

for the  
Tipmont REMC Annual Meeting  
**Saturday, July 27**  
Lafayette Jefferson High School



- Doors open at 8:00 a.m.
- Registration and breakfast from 8-9:30 a.m.
- Business meeting starts 9:30 a.m.

The meeting will include director elections for districts 1,3, and 7, efficiency information, kids' area, prize drawings, and **GRAND PRIZES!**

*Watch for your official invitation in July's mail.*

ALWAYS  
CALL  
BEFORE YOU  
DIG

