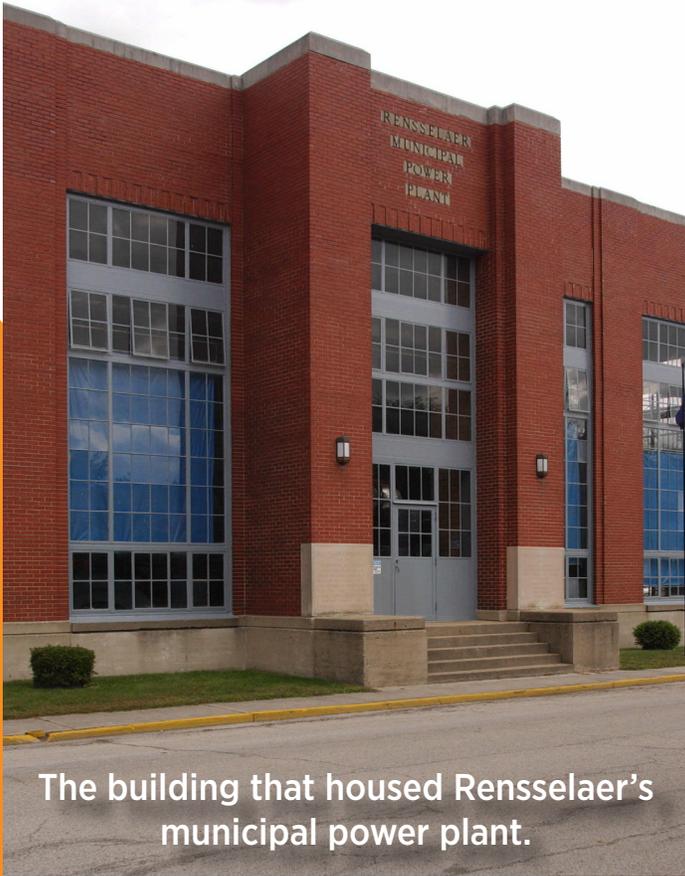


Municipal Power News



City of Rensselaer

Volume 28, Issue 3 | Fall 2023



The building that housed Rensselaer's municipal power plant.

The Rich History of Rensselaer's Electric Utility

In 1896, the city of Rensselaer formed one of several public power utilities popping up around the US, meaning that the community's newborn electricity system would be served by a not-for-profit entity operated by the local government. Since then, Rensselaer has been a part of a rich network of over 2,000 community-owned utilities that serve approximately 49 million people nationwide. Public power is unique in the several benefits it provides, including being owned by the community and run as a division of local government. The revenue from public power utility rates goes straight toward maintaining local infrastructure, supplying hometown jobs, and providing reliable electricity. Additionally, the American Public Power Association reports that public power customers of Indiana and Ohio typically saved an average of more than 40% when compared to other types of electric utilities.

With over 125 years of operation under its belt, Rensselaer's public power utility has a rich history of serving the city's utility customers with a reliable and low-cost power supply. The utility had a great

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Holiday Safety with IMPA!

The holiday season is just around the corner, and preparing for this hectic time of year can help things go over a bit more smoothly. Safety precautions are always important but can often be forgotten in the midst of holiday chaos. Use this time to remind yourself and your loved ones about the following safety tips that will help everyone enjoy the time to come.

Decorative Lights

- Check all electrical wiring before you install decorations, and throw away any damaged wiring.
- Using miniature lights or LED lights on a Christmas tree can produce less heat, decreasing the chances of mishap.
- All lights should be labeled as approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as the Underwriters Laboratory (UL).
- Always unplug any lights before leaving your home.



Candles

- Imitation electric candles are always safer than traditional candles that burn with fire.
- Keep all candles away from window dressings, furniture, and greenery.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended.

Cooking

- Never leave food cooking on the stove unattended.
- Keep handles on pots turned in, so they won't be bumped or in reach of small children.
- Extinguish a cooking fire by putting a lid, or even a plate, on the pot or pan. If a fire breaks out in the oven, keep the door shut and turn off the appliance.

Toys

- When buying electrical toys, purchase only those approved by the UL, and those that meet fire and shock hazard standards.
- Make sure toys that are given as gifts are always suitable to the receiver's age.



How Does Public Power Work?

The transmission lines stretching across the country carry electricity to households and businesses nationwide. However, some of the electricity travels to customers served by investor-owned utilities (IOUs) or rural electric cooperatives (REMCs), while other households like yours are served by a public power utility. Your community, as a member of the Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA), buys its electricity from the Agency before selling it to you and bringing it to your door. The electricity that your community purchases is called wholesale power—it is supplied to your local public power utility for resale to retail customers of the utility. By purchasing wholesale power in bulk, the member utilities of IMPA are able to provide electricity with the economic advantages than if they were to individually generate the power themselves or purchase it elsewhere. Your community takes advantage of this benefit, since all 61 member communities of IMPA work together to purchase power in bulk through the Agency.

Member utilities of IMPA have contracts with the Agency to ensure that all the electric needs of the community are met. IMPA, by either generating power at a

generation facility or purchasing it from other utilities, places the power on the electric grid through transmission lines.

The high voltage electricity travels across the grid on these transmission lines to your community. Before the electricity gets to your residence, a substation transformer is used to lower the voltage of the electricity to make it safer to travel across shorter distances than the transmission lines cover. This lower voltage also makes it safer for the electricity to be in closer proximity to traffic and people. Once electricity goes through the transformer in the substation, it moves through distribution lines in your local community to a transformer at homes and businesses. It then arrives at your home and allows you to turn on the lights, heat your home, and watch tv.

Public power utilities are not just there to provide power – they work for the betterment of the community, too. These utilities are embedded in the fabric of their communities—boosting community investment, supporting local education, and getting involved with beautification and charitable programs. As a result, public power customers benefit from affordable energy, better service, local control, and a utility that cares about the overall well-being and growth of your community. •



At IMPA Board Meetings, a representative from your community helps guide the direction and decisions of the Agency.

Tidbits & Trivia

The **Indiana Municipal Power Agency** (IMPA) is a not-for-profit organization that provides a low-cost, reliable, and environmentally-responsible power supply to its members. IMPA provides this wholesale power to 61 communities in Indiana and Ohio, who collectively make up the Agency's membership.

What are some of the benefits of public power?



Send your answer to newsletter@impa.com, along with your name, e-mail address, and address for a chance to win an energy efficiency prize pack!

Reader Survey

Is there more about your community that you would like to know? Do you have questions about how public power or your municipally-owned utility works? Would you like to learn more tips and tricks as to how you can improve your home's energy efficiency?

Reach out to newsletter@impa.com to suggest topics for future *Municipal Power News* newsletters and let us know what articles you enjoy most, and what you'd like to see next!



Rensselaer's Utility

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advantage starting in Rensselaer, as the city already housed a power plant, which was incorporated as a municipal steam generating facility by 1898. This power station on North Van Rensselaer Street played a role in the utility's early service to customers—changing to diesel power in 1925, expanding in both 1939 and 1949, and receiving another addition in 1969 as the facility aimed to serve the growing city's power needs. By 1994, Rensselaer added a five-megawatt dual fueled generator/engine, and in 2006, an additional unit was installed to provide supplemental energy to IMPA during peak periods of usage.

Over the decades, individual public power utilities like Rensselaer's remained vulnerable to the wider energy market and



investor-owned utilities. Securing low-cost and reliable power became difficult as demand for electricity was growing and cities like Rensselaer had to purchase additional power from the area investor-owned utility fully supply local utility customers.

By 1983, Rensselaer utility leaders addressed this issue by joining with 25 other public power communities in Indiana to create a joint action agency called the Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA). The formation of IMPA, a not-for-profit wholesale power provider to each of the 26 member communities that participated in the organization's founding, allowed its members to share generation resources and bulk buy power at a mutually beneficial cost. Through pooling these resources together, IMPA reduced power supply costs to Rensselaer and the other 25 IMPA member communities.

Since becoming an IMPA member in 1983, the Agency has supplied 100% of

Rensselaer's power supply. While the city bought all its power to serve its customers from IMPA, Rensselaer was still operated its power plant under a capacity purchase agreement with IMPA. IMPA would request Rensselaer to operate the plant during times of high system load. Any power generated by the plant would be used to meet the electric needs of customers in all IMPA member communities, not just Rensselaer. In return, IMPA made monthly payments to Rensselaer, depending on the capacity provided by the plant to the Agency. Three other IMPA communities who also had locally-owned power plants also had similar agreements to sell their power plant capacity to IMPA.

As the power plants in these communities aged, they became increasingly uneconomical and more difficult to operate and maintain. Also, during this time frame, electric regional transmission organizations developed and matured, which made power markets more competitive and harder for the older plants to compete. The three other IMPA members with generating plants all made the decision to either retire or sell off their power stations by 2015. The city of Rensselaer kept its generating facility open for a few years longer, but revenues earned from the sale of power became less than the costs to maintain the power plant. After much deliberation, city leaders realized that Rensselaer was losing money by keeping the plant open and chose to close the generating station. Losing money at the not-for-profit utility could have eventually led to higher electric rates for the customers.

As an IMPA member, the closure of the local power plant did not negatively impact the reliability or low-cost nature of electric service in the community, nor the local utility's customer service. IMPA's diverse

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Cooking Corner

Eggnog Bread

Recipe submitted by Susan of Richmond, Indiana

For a chance to be featured in the newsletter and win a prize, send your recipe to:

MPN Recipes
11610 N. College Ave.
Carmel, IN 46032
or
newsletter@impa.com

The MUNICIPAL POWER NEWS is a periodic publication of the Indiana Municipal Power Agency and the 61 communities that it serves with wholesale power.

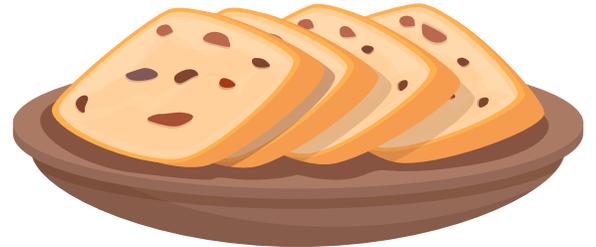
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- 2 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup skim milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange juice
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups eggnog
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- 1 tbsp grated orange zest
- 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 2 tbsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dried cranberries
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped macadamia nuts

Preheat oven to 350°F. Whisk wet ingredients together with orange zest in a bowl. In another bowl, combine all dry ingredients except for cranberries and macadamia nuts. Add the liquid mixture to the dry mixture, carefully stirring until the flour is moistened. Fold in cranberries and nuts. Grease and flour 2 loaf pans and pour in batter. Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool in pans for 10 minutes, then remove wire racks to cool completely. Slice and serve with orange marmalade. Or, to serve without a spread, use the glaze below.

In a small bowl, mix:
- 1 tbsp eggnog
- $\frac{3}{8}$ cup confectioner's sugar



Drizzle mixture over the cooled loaves

MEMBERS

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Bargersville
Blanchester, OH
Bremen
Brooklyn
Brookston
Centerville
Chalmers
Coatesville
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Walkerton
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Waynetown
Williamsport
Winamac

How Do I Save Energy in Cold Weather?

Last year, we asked readers of the *Municipal Power News* some of the methods they use to reduce energy consumption in cold weather. Here is what some of you said!

“I have reduced my energy consumption due to my purchase of long cloth door tubes that resemble snakes. They are the draft prevention cloth tubes approximately 36” x 3 1/2” filled with beans or double tubes with center strips. They can be placed in the home at the bottom of outside doors or where drafts enter under doors inside a home. The double tube style can slide under

the storm door outside the house door---one tube outside the storm door and the other tube set between the storm door and the inside house door. These can also be used on doors in cold rooms with closed doors to stop drafts. This is really great in blocking cold air at the floor level that cause cold feet and drafts.”

- Jean

“I often use an infrared/radiant space heater that is thermostat-controlled. During the day I close off unused rooms so my living room/kitchenette is comfortably warm. The glow of the radiant heater is pleasing like a fireplace. You definitely need to wear insulated slippers or plush socks indoors in

addition to layered clothing. Wearing indoor weather-appropriate clothing, I can keep my heater set on a lower temperature—generally less than 65 degrees. My furnace, in comparison, needs to be set at 70+ degrees to maintain satisfactory room warmth.”

- Penny

“During the cold weather months, the most effective method for reducing my energy consumption is by closing off rooms that do not necessarily have to be heated all day. I also put plastic on any drafty windows and use draft stoppers for my doors. I’ve replaced

most of my home’s light bulbs with energy efficient LED bulbs and I change my furnace filter often. Room darkening curtains help keep the heat in and as the famous saying goes, I never let the water run!”

- Tiffany

“The method that I use most is to wear warmer clothes in the house. I know that there are people who want to sit around the house in shorts and t-shirts, and run around the house in bare feet, all the while having

their thermostat turned way up. That makes no sense to me. Today, for instance, it’s 14° outside. The thermostat is set at 68° inside. I’m wearing a flannel shirt with a puffy vest, long pants, and shoes.”

- Bruce

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The *Municipal Power News* is published by the Indiana Municipal Power Agency and the City of Rensselaer.

IMPA Commissioner: Mayor Stephen Wood

Rensselaer's Utility

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power supply portfolio continues to supply high quality electricity to the Agency's now 61-community-strong membership. In addition, the city has worked with IMPA to establish two solar parks in the community's service territory, bringing nearly 5 megawatts of solar capacity to Rensselaer. The generation of these solar parks goes directly into the city's distribution system, serving approximately 720 homes in the community.

After 40 years with Rensselaer as a valuable ally, IMPA is proud to plan for the future with the city and provide low-cost, reliable, and environmentally responsible power to all 350,000 utility users in IMPA communities in the next four decades. •

