

# Municipal Power News



Blanchester Board of Public Affairs  
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## Winter Energy Efficiency

In the wintertime, your electric bill may climb higher than it had in the previous season as the weather gets colder outside. This is because consumers tend to use the most electricity in their home during winter—staying indoors for most of the season, lighting their homes for longer periods of time, and using more hot water. Additionally, a home's heating system must work hard to keep homes comfortable in cold weather. Even if consumers don't change the settings on their thermostat, colder weather requires a home's heating system to run longer to combat the cold outside. Each of these factors contributes to high wintertime electric consumption, which oftentimes is quite noticeable on your electric bill.

Luckily, as a utility customer of the Blanchester Board of Public Affairs, you are served by a public power utility. This means that the municipality you live in owns and operates the electric utility through a not-for-profit business model that prioritizes you and your community. According to the American Public Power Association, public power customers of Ohio typically saved up to 40% when compared to other types

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#### *Saving Energy in Cold Weather*

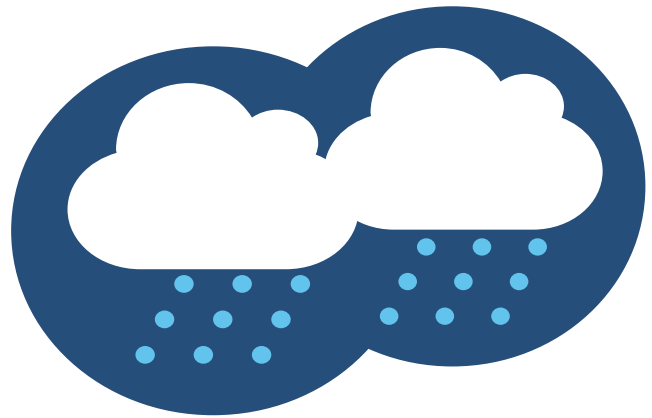
Read the various ways that readers of this newsletter save energy in the cold.

# Winter Safety with IMPA!

The winter season is upon us, and while it is the least favorite time of year for many, preparing for the cold can help things go over a bit more smoothly. Use this time to remind yourself and your loved ones about the following safety tips that will help everyone enjoy the time to come as best as they can.

## Driving

- Drive slowly and attentively in icy or snowy conditions. Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination.
- Keep your vehicle's gas tank as full as possible throughout the winter season. This can prevent your fuel lines from freezing, which can result in your car not starting.
- Dress warmly and keep an extra set of clothes and blankets in the car.
- Avoid using backroads, as major streets and highways will have better clearance in bad conditions.



## Avoiding Fires

- Never plug a space heater into an extension cord or power strip - only plug them directly into an outlet.
- Never leave a space heater, lit fireplace, or candles unattended for long periods of time.
- Portable generators can be great during a winter power outage, but keep in mind that they pose fire and carbon monoxide poisoning risks. Never run a generator indoors or in enclosed areas, and keep fuel containers away from heating devices.

## Snow Removal

- Before going outside to clear snow from a driveway or walkway, be sure to stretch just like you would before regular exercise.
- When shoveling snow, be sure to stay hydrated and avoid overexertion. Take frequent breaks to let your body rest, as cold weather can put a unique strain on your heart and lungs.
- Keep dry while working outside with snow. Wet clothes will make your body lose heat faster.



## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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!



## Winter Energy Efficiency

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of electric utilities. So, you're already faring well during wintertime cold snaps because of your dedicated public power utility.

Additionally, there are several ways that you can winterize your home or living space in preparation for the coldest time of the year. The following tips can help you increase efficiency in your living space, leading to less electric consumption overall.

### Reverse Your Ceiling Fans

This unique tip is important to remember in the transition from warmer to colder weather. In the wintertime, it's ideal to set your ceiling fans to rotate clockwise at a low speed. This rotation helps to pull warm air that naturally rises down into the room, redistributing warmth that tends to collect at the ceiling.



## Follow IMPA on Social Media!



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### Adjust Water Heater Temperature

A water heater is a significant consumer of energy in residential homes. Water heaters are used for activities like showering, washing dishes, using the water in a sink, and laundering clothes. Lowering the temperature on your water heater can help improve energy efficiency while doing these activities. While most water heaters are set to a default temperature of 140°F, experts recommend

dialing it back to around 120°F to save on energy and minimize the risk of scalding.

### Use Drapes and Curtains Strategically

When sunshine hits your windows, be sure to open your drapes and curtains to let the sun heat up your living spaces. As soon as the sun sets, or sunshine is no longer coming into your home, close all of your drapes and curtains to preserve the sun's heat and stave off the loss of heat through glass. •

## What's the Word?

*Investigating Power Terminology*

### Distribution Lines

Utilities use distribution lines to transport electricity from the larger transmission system to individual customer homes and businesses. While transmission lines carry electricity across long distances at a high

voltage, distribution lines carry electricity over shorter distances at a lower voltage. You may see transmission lines while driving on a highway, but the utility lines you see on the streets of your community are distribution lines.

Distribution lines bring electricity to its final stage of delivery. As a member of a public power utility, your town or city owns and operates the distribution lines in your community.

# 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:

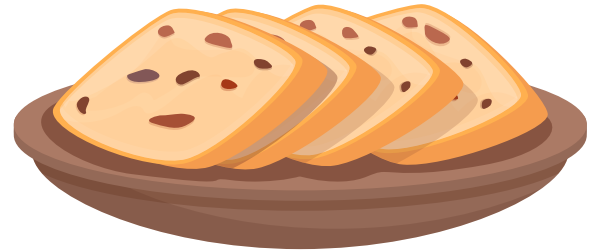
MPN Recipes  
11610 N. College Ave.  
Carmel, IN 46032  
or  
[newsletter@impa.com](mailto:newsletter@impa.com)

- 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

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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# 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

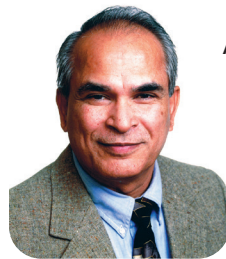
their thermostat turned way up. That makes no sense to me. Today, for instance, it’s 14° outside. The thermostat is set at 68° inside. I’m wearing a flannel shirt with a puffy vest, long pants, and shoes.”

- Bruce

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IMPA Commissioner and  
Director of BPA Utilities: Ram Reddy

# Avoid Common Utility Scams

According to the Federal Trade Commission, more than 2 million fraud complaints are received each year, showing average total losses in the billions of dollars. Many of these scams are utility related, where scammers pretend to be representatives of utility companies and demand immediate payment to avoid service disconnects.

Learn how to spot a utility scam with these tips:

- Utility companies do not request payment, or other personal information, over the phone or through email.
- Utilities do not ask for gift cards, prepaid cards, or money transfers as forms of payment.
- Utilities will not contact you threatening to disconnect service and ask for immediate payment over the phone or email.
- Scammers use fake emails or phone numbers. If you have any questions about your account, contact the utility directly using the phone number or email listed on your bill.

Have you noticed a scam? Let your utility know. This can happen to you, your loved ones, and your neighbors. •

*Information can be found at [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).*