

Tippecanews

A monthly summary of municipal affairs and activities

What is Polar Vortex and What Does it Mean to Your Electric Bill?

A polar vortex is a circulating pattern of strong winds flowing around a low-pressure system. This normally sits over the Arctic in the winter and keeps cold air circulating within the polar region, but it can, and did, split and sent colder air farther south in 2014.

This extreme cold had a big impact on the power grid. Cold weather always sends prices up a bit as the demand for power gets higher when it's colder, but the polar vortex cold caused two other main issues: higher-than-normal generation outages and gas distribution shortage issues.

Just like cars or other machines, power plants have trouble operating in extreme cold. This includes freezing pipes, and fuel transportation and staffing issues.

As coal units retire, more natural gas plants are taking their place. This puts additional strain on the natural gas system. In the summer months, residents don't use much gas, but as people turn on their gas furnaces when it gets cold, it comes from the same place that natural gas power plants get their supply. This creates competition for gas pipe space with power plants. There are only so many pipes and only so much that can fit through a pipe at one time – the dramatic increase in load from the polar vortex intensified this issue.

Plants have to buy what is called "firm gas pipeline capacity" ahead of time. The AMP Fremont Energy Center, a natural gas combined cycle facility, was available during the polar vortex because American Municipal Power, Inc. bought long-term pipeline capacity. This process can be thought of in terms of buying a parking pass. Peaking plants don't need to buy an annual pass because they only "drive" a few days out of the month, but on Jan. 7, they desperately needed a day pass and it wasn't available because there were no "parking spots" left.

The more natural gas plants that come online increase the number of entities competing for space. The January 2014 polar vortex intensified the problem, which has caused the industry to examine solutions of how to deal with pipeline shortage issues in the future. ●

Efficiency Tip

Using a humidifier in the winter can actually save you money. People require a higher temperature to remain comfortable in dry air than they do in humid air. Placing an energy-efficient humidifier in your living space during the winter months keeps the air from being as dry, which means you won't need the heat cranked as high to feel warm. ●

Fire Hydrants

During an emergency, the Fire Department will have to spend valuable time looking for a fire hydrant, shoveling it out, so that they can use the hydrant. Please help out the Tipp City Fire Department, your neighbors, and yourself by carefully shoveling out the fire hydrant nearest to your house or business. The Tipp City Fire Department thanks you! ●



Income Tax Forms

The Tax Department has updated the 2014 local income tax forms and filing instructions. As a cost saving measure the City will not be sending preprinted forms to all account holders. Forms are available on the City's web-site, www.tippcityohio.gov, at the Government Center, or by contacting the Tax Department (937-667-8426) to request a form to be mailed to you. The City of Tipp City has also implemented an online tax filing system available on the City's website listed above. The tax due date for 2014 calendar year filers is Wednesday, April 15, 2015. If you have any questions pertaining to the City income tax please contact the Tax Department at 937-667-8426. ●

Stay Informed!

Subscribe to receive City news updates by email at www.tippcityohio.gov.

WINTER DRIVING SAFETY: Preparation is Key

So far in the mid-west and Tipp City we have been lucky to avoid the snow. Please keep the following tips in mind while driving on ice and snow covered streets. Driving in snow and ice is just part of life for many U.S. residents in the winter, but safety goes beyond being careful and allowing extra time for slow travel.

Preparations for winter driving should include maintaining your car. Check your battery, windshield wipers, tire tread, and top off washer fluids and antifreeze. Make sure you have important items on hand in case of emergency such as a flashlight, jumper cables, snow brushes/scraper, flares, blankets, snacks and water. It's also a good idea to keep some kind of abrasive material on hand (such as sand or kitty litter) to help aid traction on icy roads.

We've all heard to leave more distance between cars in icy weather. This is because dry pavement has more than twice the friction of a surface covered with snow and ice. Stopping distance at 30 mph or dry roads is about 40 feet, but extends to more than 100 feet on snow or ice. If possible, brake on straights and not during corners in winter road conditions. Maintaining an appropriate speed is critical.

Have a new driver in the family? Consider taking them to an empty lot during the day to practice maneuvers slowly on ice or snow. The chance to safely experience first-hand how steering and brakes react in winter conditions is important for any driver.

Don't forget that safety applies all year round: Always wear a seat belt, use child safety seats properly, be aware of pedestrians walking in the road, do not text while driving, and never drink and drive! ●

Snow Reminders and Information

With the return of snow, Tipp City residents are reminded of the following guidelines regarding snow and ice removal. The Street Department asks residents to use the following guidelines for a safe winter season.

- If the City experiences a snow or ice storm, citizens should remove all vehicles from the street to allow for more efficient snow plowing.
- Please do not blow or shovel snow into the street.
- Trash cans and recycling bins should be placed in the curb lawn as not to interfere with snow removal.
- It is the citizen's responsibility to clear snow from the sidewalk and in front of their mailbox. It is not possible to clear these areas with snow plows.

In the interest of clearing streets in a manner maintaining safety/service vehicle traffic and public travel, the following schedule will be completed by snow removal crews for plowing and/or salting:

First Priority

- Main Street
- Hyatt Street
- Third Street
- South First Street
- East and West Kessler-Cowlesville Road
- Evanston Road
- County Road 25A
- Donn Davis Way
- School Areas

Second Priority

Connectors: Stonecress Dr, Beechwood, Brookmere, Tyler, Sycamore Woods Dr, Hampton Woods Dr, Barbara Dr, York Meadows Dr, Hunters Ridge Dr, Park Ave, Parkwood, Broadway(1st to Hyatt) South Fifth, Dow St. at Broadway School, Westedge, Garber Dr, Hathaway Trail, Tippecanoe, Manchester Dr, Woodlawn Dr, Commerce Park Dr, Kina, Weller,

Harmony, Winston, Chevington Chase, Stonehenge, Copperfield, and Rosewood Creek Dr.

Third Priority

- Alleys
- Cul-de-sacs

Park Department

- Fire Stations
- Government Center
- 3. E. Main Street – Tipp-Monroe Community Services
- All Park Sidewalks and Roads
- Bikeways

If you have any questions or concerns during snow and ice events, please contact the Service Department at (937) 667-6305. In the event of an emergency, please call 911. The City appreciates your patience during any snow or ice storm event and reminds everyone to drive safely. ●

IMPORTANT CITY CONTACTS

**Automated Attendant/
Direct Connect 669-TIPP**

**Police, Fire and EMS
(EMERGENCY) 9-1-1**

**Miami County Communications
Center (Non-Emergency)
440-9911**

**Police (Non-Emergency)
667-3112**

**Fire and EMS (Non-Emergency)
667-9199 or 667-1680**

Utility Billing 667-8424

Planning/Zoning 667-6305

**Engineering and Utilities
667-6305**

**Refuse Collection
(Waste Management Inc.)
(866) 695-3433**

**Service Center (Parks and
Streets) 667-8234**

City Manager's Office 667-8425

Clerk of Council 667-8425

**Construction Notice Update
667-6293**