

TITLE: Tucson Electric Power Company collection

DATE RANGE: 1925-1976

CALL NUMBER: MS 0975

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 32 linear ft. (187 volumes)

PROVENANCE: Donated by Tucson Electric Power Company in February 1981.

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HISTORICAL NOTE: Tucson Electric Power Company, known until 1979 as Tucson Gas and Electric Company, is a major utility serving southern Arizona. The present company has had several predecessors. Tucson Gas Company, founded in March 1880 was granted a twenty-five year franchise with the City of Tucson, Arizona to supply gas street lighting. A competitor, Tucson Electric Light Company, was organized in March 1882 and thus began an intense rivalry for the city's street lighting contract. The Tucson city council terminated its agreement with the gas company in August 1883 and awarded the street lighting contract to Tucson Electric Light Company.

Lawsuits and financial difficulties plagued the electric company in the following years and it was sold to its creditors on May 22, 1885. Street lights went out in Tucson in the summer of 1885 and service was not resumed on a regular basis until October 1888. The company and the city negotiated annual contracts for street lighting until 1893.

The Tucson Electric Light and Power Company was reincorporated on October 28, 1892. Its officers included several prominent Tucsonans: Albert Steinfeld, president; A.V. Grossetta, vice-president; L.M. Jacobs, treasurer; and J.M. Ormsby, secretary. Frank A. Russell was named plant manager in 1893.

The Tucson Electric Light and Power Company purchased the Tucson Gas Company on January 14, 1896 and amended its name to Tucson Gas, Electric Light and Power Company (TG & E). J.J. Henry, of Denver, Colorado, purchased the utility in January 1902. A month later, he sold it to U.S. Light and Traction Company, also of Denver.

The gas plant had been destroyed by cyclone in 1898. It was rebuilt in 1903 and gas service was resumed. During the next twenty years, under Russell's leadership, the company expanded and diversified its services and facilities and increased its earnings. In September 1926, TG & E installed the largest diesel-powered generator in the country. In December 1933 the company initiated natural gas service in Tucson and, on July 3, 1940, signed a contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to deliver hydroelectric power from Parker Dam beginning in 1943.

In January of 1943, Federal Light and Traction Company, controlling owner of TG & E since 1910, offered to sell the utility and the affiliated Tucson Rapid Transit Company to the city of Tucson for \$9,100,000. The city council refused the offer. Eight months later, the Securities and Exchange Commission ordered Federal Light and Traction Company to divest itself of ownership of the two companies. Efforts by the city government to acquire the property through revenue bond sales totaling \$8,500,000 were rejected by voters in October. A similar referendum won voter approval in February of 1944, but no action was taken to authorize the sale of bonds. The city had filed a condemnation on suit against the power company a month earlier. After lengthy litigation, the Arizona Supreme Court ruled against the city, declaring the suit unconstitutional on February 20, 1948. Meanwhile, on June 12, 1946, the company had become a public corporation through the sale of common stock. In September 1946, Federal Light and Traction Company sold Tucson Rapid Transit Company to W. Culver White, John B. Tigrett, A.V. Lindseth and L.A. Tanner.

The 1950s and 1960s was a growth period for TG & E. Its facilities and operations expanded enormously as Tucson boomed. New generating stations were built at the DeMoss Petrie and Irvington installations, while the city's twenty-five year franchise agreement was renewed in April 1951 and again in April 1976. The Arizona Corporation Commission granted several company requests for rate increases during the 1970s.

On April 1, 1979 Tucson Gas & Electric Company sold its natural gas operations to Southwest Gas Corporation of Las Vegas, Nevada and officially changed its name to Tucson Electric Power Company.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: The bulk of this collection consists of clippings from Arizona newspapers related to the growth of the Tucson Gas, Electric Light & Power Company, the predecessor of Tucson Electric Power Company. The collection documents the role played by Tucson Electric Power Company and its predecessor companies in the political, economic and civic life of southern Arizona. General news coverage includes topical news stories, feature articles, legal notices, and editorials describing company operations. Some of the clippings relate to other utility companies such as Arizona Public Service Company and El Paso Natural Gas Company, and to affiliated businesses such as Tucson Rapid Transit Company. Other clippings concern political and legislative actions bearing upon the company's franchise agreements, generating facilities, and rate charges; city and state budget reports; energy-related issues; and general community and consumer news features.

The clippings consist of articles and advertisements appearing in several Arizona newspapers, predominantly The Arizona Daily Star and The Tucson Citizen, from 1925 to 1976. Other newspapers represented in the collection include The Tucson Independent, El Tucsonense, The Nogales Herald and The Phoenix Republic. There are 145 volumes of general news articles relating to Tucson Electric Power Company and its predecessors, and 42 volumes of company advertisements in both English and Spanish.

Scrapbooks from 1925-1930 document expansion of company power-line facilities and the increased use of electricity in Tucson. News articles reflect public concern over low gas pressure, government inquiries into high utility rates, and public complaint about a noisy diesel engine installed in 1928. Volumes one and two contain information on the inauguration of bus service in October 1925 by Tucson Rapid Transit Company (TRT) and the power franchise renewal election of April 9, 1926. Advertisements during the 1920s promote new gas and electric

appliances, TRT bus service, a company-sponsored electric-cooking class and “Gas Chats” advertising column.

Clippings from the 1930s document the company’s interest in state legislation and in state and local political races, as well as education issues, highway construction, budgets and taxes, the Rural Electrification Administration, and the Boulder and Park Dam proposals. Volumes 11 and 13 (1931, 1932) contain regular clippings of “political facts and fancies” and “Capital facts and fancies,” political news columns by Talbott T. Smith in The Arizona Star. Advertisements from this same period promote an increasing number of electrical appliances, and provide consumer information for customers of TG & E and TRT.

Volume 15 (1933) contains news articles about the installation and inauguration of natural gas service in Tucson, which lowered gas rate charges over the previous rates for manufactured gas. Advertisements notify customers of change-over procedures and promote the economic benefits of natural gas heating and cooking.

From 1943 to 1948, the clippings document the city of Tucson’s condemnation suit against the utility and subsequent hearings before the city council and the Arizona Supreme Court (Volumes 43-53). These volumes contain descriptions of power rationing, equipment failures, conservation measures and public reaction to the situation. They also document the opposing stands taken by The Arizona Daily Star and The Tucson Citizen during the dispute. During World War II, advertising themes reflect the national war efforts (Volumes 39, 42, 46), but post-war advertisements reflect the company’s position during the condemnation suit, emphasizing its inadequate resources and power shortages compared to Tucson’s increasing need for electricity.

News clippings from the 1950s (volumes 68-76) reflect Tucson’s growth in population, building projects, and business developments such as the growth of the electronic industry in southern Arizona. Water and power concerns are documented in news articles about the proposed Central Arizona Project and the Glen Canyon Dam project. Company progress during the 1950s is recorded in 1956 with articles announcing a fifty million dollar expansion plan (volume 71); “Greater Tucson Business Indicators” in The Arizona Daily Star which include utility statistics (volume 76); and several company stock, earnings and dividend notices (volume 71). Community involvement by the company during this time is revealed by its sponsorship of an American Legion baseball team, promotion of the annual Soap Box Derby, participation in a new hospital drive, and sponsorship of youth concerts (volumes 71, 76). Advertisements feature a hard-working, economical and convenient “Reddy Kilowatt” as the symbol of reliable electric service. Proper house wiring is a recurring advertising theme during this period. Most of the advertisements also promote the utility’s association with Tucson Appliance Merchandisers Association (TAMA) and TG & E’s local directorship.

In the 1960s, news clippings (volumes 83-126) reflect company concerns with progress and growth in the local construction industry, population indicators, atomic energy developments, tax and budget hearings, the Central Arizona Project, economic forecasts and environmental issues. A number of articles (volume 85) refer to asphyxiation deaths and a publicity campaign against poorly ventilated gas heaters. Volume 97 documents the gas explosion at the Supreme Cleaners building in March 1963. Company advertising in the early 1960s promotes company developments in the Tucson area. Full-page weekly advertisements from mid- and late-1960s reflect a consumer lifestyle of “Better Living” with new electric appliances (volume 117).

News stories and advertisements from the 1970s reflect company and government concern over environmental and pollution issues, petroleum and natural gas shortages and alternative energy sources such as solar and nuclear energy. Other stories concern the development of the Central Arizona Project; conservation of gasoline, electricity and other resources; and land and water rights of Arizona Indian tribes, particularly the Navajo and Hopi Indians (volumes 153-185). Several lengthy rate increase hearings before the Arizona Corporation Commission are documented in news articles from the early 1970s (volumes 158, 167, 168, 171, 176-181, 187). A 1971 rate increase request was rejected by the ACC (volume 153) but 1972 and 1976 rate increase request were approved (volumes 159-160, 187).

CONTAINER LIST:

Volume	Description	Dates
1	Articles	May 21, 1925-December 30, 1925
2	Articles	1926
3	Advertisements	May 10, 1926-December 30, 1926
4	Advertisements	1927
5	Articles	1928
6	Advertisements	1928
7	Advertisements	January 1, 1929-September 27, 1929
8	Advertisements	April 23, 1930-December 18, 1930
9	Advertisements	October 1, 1930-August 18, 1931
10	Advertisements	December 20, 1930-September 27, 1931
11	Articles	1931
12	Articles	January 1, 1932-July 29, 1932
13	Articles	July 31, 1932-February 17, 1933
14	Advertisements	August 23, 1932-October 28, 1933
15	Articles	August 26, 1933-February 22, 1934
16	Articles	February 17, 1933-June 29, 1933
17	Articles	June 30, 1933-February 26, 1934
18	Advertisements	November 1, 1933-December 22, 1934
19	Advertisements	February 22, 1934-December 31, 1934
20	Articles	February 28, 1934-December 30, 1934
21	Articles	January 1, 1935-July 30, 1935
22	Advertisements	January 1, 1935-November 27, 1935
23	Advertisements	January 4, 1935-February 21, 1936
24	Articles	August 1, 1935-August 10, 1936
25	Advertisements	December 2, 1935-December 31, 1937
26	Advertisements	February 28, 1936-September 4, 1937
27	Articles	August 11, 1936-January 23, 1937
28	Articles	January 23, 1937-May 15, 1937
29	Articles	May 15, 1937-December 31, 1937
30	Advertisements	September 15, 1927-November 12, 1938
31	Articles	1938
32	Articles	December 12, 1938-October 29, 1939

33	Advertisements	November 12, 1938-November 25, 1939
34	Articles	November 1, 1939-August 15, 1940
35	Advertisements	November 29, 1939-December 8, 1940
36	Articles	August 15, 1940-March 9, 1941
37	Advertisements	December 7, 1940-December 31, 1941
38	Articles	March 9, 1941-December 31, 1941
39	Advertisements	December 27, 1941-May 1, 1943
40	Articles	January 1, 1942-September 4, 1942
41	Articles	September 9, 1942-March 30, 1943
42	Advertisements	May 8, 1943-June 4, 1944
43	Articles	March 30, 1943-November 18, 1943
44	Articles	October 25, 1943-February 24, 1944
45	Articles	February 23, 1944-October 18, 1944
46	Advertisements	June 4, 1944-October 8, 1945
47	Articles	October 17, 1944-October 21, 1945
48	Advertisements	October 10, 1945-April 11, 1947
49	Articles	October 23, 1945-October 9, 1946
50	Articles	October 10, 1946-July 8, 1947
51	Advertisements	April 13, 1947-July 6, 1948
52	Articles	July 3, 1947-February 25, 1948
53	Articles	February 26, 1948-May 10, 1949
54	Advertisements	July 9, 1948-September 13, 1949
55	Articles	May 11, 1949-June 13, 1950
56	Advertisements	September 15, 1949-November 23, 1950
57	Articles	June 13, 1950-April 27, 1951
58	Advertisements	November 3, 1950-December 31, 1950
59	Articles	April 28, 1951-December 14, 1951
60	Articles	December 14, 1951-December 31, 1952
61	Advertisements	January 3, 1952-February 20, 1953
62	Articles	January 1, 1953-October 16, 1953
63	Advertisements	February 24, 1953-February 9, 1954
64	Articles	October 17, 1953-May 22, 1954
65	Advertisements	February 12, 1954-December 10, 1954
66	Articles	May 24, 1954-December 31, 1954
67	Advertisements	December 14, 1954-October 20, 1955
68	Articles	January 1, 1955-June 13, 1955
69	Advertisements	October 28, 1955-October 10, 1956
70	Articles	June 14, 1955-January 30, 1956
71	Articles	November 26, 1956-July 24, 1957
72	Advertisements	October 11, 1956-October 8, 1957
73	Articles	June 5, 1957-April 9, 1959
74	Articles	July 2, 1957-March 21, 1958
75	Advertisements	October 4, 1957-December 2, 1958
76	Articles	March 19, 1958-August 20, 1958
77	Articles	August 20, 1958-January 28, 1959

78	Advertisements	December 3, 1958-March 26, 1960
79	Circulars and general instructions	January 15, 1959-April 30, 1959
80	Articles	May 1, 1959-July 31, 1959
81	Articles	August 1, 1959-October 20, 1959
82	Articles	October 20, 1959-January 15, 1960
83	Articles	January 14, 1960-April 1, 1960
84	Advertisements	April 1, 1960-September 4, 1961
85	Articles	September 21, 1960-December 23, 1960
86	Articles	December 23, 1960-April 11, 1961
87	Articles	April 12, 1961-July 13, 1961
88	Articles	July 13, 1961-September 28, 1961
89	Advertisements	September 7, 1961-December 7, 1962
90	Articles	September 29, 1961-January 24, 1962
91	Articles	January 25, 1962-May 21, 1962
92	Articles	May 21, 1962-August 31, 1962
93	Articles	September 1, 1962-December 16, 1962
94	Advertisements	December 10, 1962-August 17, 1964
95	Articles	December 17, 1962-March 26, 1963
96	Articles	March 26, 1963-June 3, 1963
97	Articles	March 29, 1963-July 4, 1963
98	Articles	June 4, 1963-August 8, 1963
99	Articles	August 9, 1963-October 20, 1963
100	Articles	October 21, 1963-January 7, 1964
101	Articles	January 17, 1964-April 9, 1964
102	Articles	April 10, 1964-June 30, 1964
103	Articles	June 30, 1964-September 22, 1964
104	Advertisements	August 21, 1964-August 11, 1966
105	Articles	September 21, 1964-December 11, 1964
106	Articles	December 11, 1964-February 12, 1965
107	Articles	February 13, 1965-May 2, 1965
108	Articles	May 3, 1965-June 26, 1965
109	Articles	June 27, 1965-August 17, 1965
110	Articles	August 17, 1965-October 8, 1965
111	Articles	October 8, 1965-November 10, 1965
112	Articles	November 10, 1965-January 25, 1966
113	Articles	January 25, 1966-March 24, 1966
114	Articles	March 24, 1966-May 11, 1966
115	Articles	May 11, 1966-July 1, 1966
116	Articles	July 2, 1966-August 29, 1966
117	Advertisements	August 15, 1966-February 17, 1969
118	Articles	August 30, 1966-November 3, 1966
119	Articles	November 4, 1966-January 14, 1967
120	Articles	January 15, 1967-March 9, 1967
121	Articles	March 9, 1967-May 4, 1967
122	Articles	May 4, 1967-July 5, 1967

123	Articles	July 6, 1967-August 30, 1967
124	Articles	August 31, 1967-October 16, 1967
125	Articles	October 17, 1967-November 30, 1967
126	Articles	November 29, 1967-January 25, 1968
127	Articles	January 25, 1968-March 28, 1968
128	Articles	March 23, 1968-May 22, 1968
129	Articles	May 22, 1968-July 18, 1968
130	Articles	July 17, 1968-September 5, 1968
131	Articles	September 5, 1968-November 6, 1968
132	Articles	October 21, 1968-January 6, 1969
133	Articles	January 4, 1969-February 21, 1969
134	Articles	February 21, 1969-April 12, 1969
135	Advertisements	February 24, 1969-December 17, 1971
136	Articles	April 12, 1969-June 6, 1969
137	Articles	June 5, 1969-July 27, 1969
138	Articles	July 27, 1969-September 15, 1969
139	Articles	September 16, 1969-November 28, 1969
140	Articles	November 25, 1969-January 23, 1970
141	Articles	January 23, 1970-March 16, 1970
142	Articles	March 13, 1970-May 7, 1970
143	Articles	May 3, 1970-June 21, 1970
144	Articles	June 22, 1970-August 4, 1970
145	Articles	August 4, 1970-September 26, 1970
146	Articles	September 25, 1970-November 25, 1970
147	Articles	November 26, 1970-February 2, 1971
148	Articles	February 1, 1971-April 2, 1971
149	Articles	April 3, 1971-May 19, 1971
150	Articles	May 19, 1971-July 3, 1971
151	Articles	July 3, 1971-August 28, 1971
152	Articles	August 28, 1971-October 17, 1971
153	Articles	October 18, 1971-November 29, 1971
154	Articles	November 29, 1971-January 5, 1972
155	Advertisements	December 31, 1971-March 10, 1972
156	Articles	January 6, 1972-February 8, 1972
157	Articles	February 8, 1972-March 10, 1972
158	Articles	March 11, 1972-April 10, 1972
159	Articles	April 11, 1972-May 20, 1972
160	Articles	May 19, 1972-June 11, 1972
161	Articles	June 11, 1972-July 11, 1972
162	Articles	July 11, 1972-August 12, 1972
163	Articles	August 12, 1972-September 27, 1972
164	Articles	September 27, 1972-November 7, 1972
165	Articles	November 8, 1972-December 16, 1972
166	Articles	December 17, 1972-February 1, 1973
167	Articles	February 1, 1973-March 23, 1973

168	Articles	March 23, 1973-April 23, 1973
169	Articles	April 23, 1973-May 23, 1973
170	Articles	May 23, 1973-July 1, 1973
171	Articles	July 1, 1973-August 15, 1973
172	Articles	August 15, 1973-October 1, 1973
173	Articles	September 30, 1973-November 14, 1973
174	Articles	November 15, 1973-December 15, 1973
175	Articles	December 15, 1973-January 25, 1974
176	Articles	January 25, 1974-February 28, 1974
177	Articles	March 1, 1974-April 30, 1974
178	Articles	April 30, 1974-June 30, 1974
179	Articles	June 30, 1974-September 10, 1974
180	Articles	September 10, 1974-October 31, 1974
181	Articles	October 31, 1974-January 1, 1975
182	Articles	January 1, 1975-March 5, 1975
183	Articles	March 5, 1975-May 6, 1975
184	Articles	May 6, 1975-July 1, 1975
185	Articles	July 1, 1975-September 1, 1975
186	Articles	September 1, 1975-November 23, 1975
187	Articles	November 23, 1975-February 29, 1976