

MICHIGAN Country Lines

Grayling's Real Thing

- 4 No Better Time To Save
- 5 Service & Reliability Get High Marks
- 28 Need A New Water Heater?

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1-800-678-0411

More Ways To Save Energy

We have expanded our Energy Optimization (EO) programs to include an appliance recycling program and an online energy audit.

They join EO programs that already offer incentives for the purchase of CFLs and home heating products such as electric water heaters, furnaces with ECM blower motors, and more. Energy-saving programs for low-income families and commercial and industrial members are available, too.

The Energy Optimization programs were created in response to the 2008 state “Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act” as one way to gradually reduce electricity use in Michigan by 1 percent per year. The law also requires a greater share of our electricity to come from renewable sources, such as wind energy.

The length of each EO program will be determined by how effective it is in

reducing electricity use. The programs will run until costs outweigh the benefits to consumers. The law requires independent third-party evaluators to determine how much energy is saved by each program.

As a member-owned electric co-op, we’ve been helping you manage your energy use before there were Energy Optimization programs. Examples include our rebates for high-efficiency Marathon® electric water heaters and heat pumps, and load management rates for electric heat and electric water heaters.

State and federal programs to help you reduce your energy use are also available. You can start your search by visiting energystar.gov (or call 888-782-7937) and MIrebates.com (or call 866-621-8782).

See page 25 for more EO information.

There is no better time than now to take advantage of opportunities to lower your home energy costs.



Steve Boeckman
Great Lakes Energy
President/CEO

Why Do We Send You *Country Lines*?

We send *Michigan Country Lines* to you because it is a convenient and economical way to share information with members. It takes the place of many mailings we would otherwise make to get information to you about our services, director elections, and member meetings, and about the staff and management decisions you should know about as an owner of the cooperative. The magazine also carries legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost.

And, sending *Country Lines* to you helps the cooperative fulfill one of its basic principles—to educate and communicate openly with members.

The board of directors authorizes the cooperative to subscribe to *Country Lines* on behalf of the membership at a cost ranging from \$3 to \$4 per year, paid as part of your electric bill. The current cost of the magazine is 35 cents per copy, less than a first-class stamp.

Michigan *Country Lines* is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in Okemos. As always, we value your comments about your magazine.



Delivering Value

State Performance Standards Met For Third Straight Year



Photo - GLE member Art Zelenak

For the third year in a row, Great Lakes Energy has met all 10 state-mandated standards for electric service and reliability.

“This is another good example of the progress we’ve made so far in delivering greater value to our members,” says GLE President/CEO Steve Boeckman. “Hard work and a strong financial commitment helped us achieve our annual reliability goal for the last four years. Improving reliability will continue to be our main focus and will require more large investments in our electric distribution system.”

State-regulated electric utilities are required to annually report to the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) whether they were able to meet standards established to protect consumers from unacceptable levels of electric service and reliability. They include standards to help measure how well utilities perform in emergency outage situations.

Standards and 2009 Results

1. **Complaint Response.** Utility must respond in three business days or less to at least 90 percent of any formal complaints filed against it with the MPSC.
GLE score: 94 percent.

2. **Call Blockage.** No more than 5 percent of incoming calls should receive a busy signal.

GLE score: 1 percent.

3. **Meter Reading.** At least 85 percent of the meters must be read within the approved time period. GLE score: 99.5 percent.

4. **Wire Down Relief Factor.** At least 90 percent of the time, a utility must respond within four hours to nonutility employees, such as firefighters, who request relief from guarding a downed power line.
GLE score: 100 percent.

5. **New Service Installation.** At least 90 percent of new services must be installed in 15 business days or less. Great Lakes Energy handled 589 new service installations last year, excluding those installed in combination with primary lines.
GLE score: 100 percent.

6. **Average Call Answer Time.** Calls must be answered on average in less than 90 seconds. In 2009, the cooperative handled over 340,000 calls through its Call Center, outage and operator queues.
GLE score: 33.75 seconds.

7. **Outage Restoration Normal Conditions.** At least 90 percent of the customers should have their power restored in eight hours or less. GLE score: 97.5 percent.

8. **Outage Restoration Catastrophic Conditions.** At least 90 percent of the customers should have their power restored in 60 hours or less. GLE score: 100 percent.

One of your co-op's improvement projects last year involved this section of line in Antrim County. More improvements to Great Lakes Energy's distribution system are planned this year.

State rules define catastrophic conditions as either severe weather conditions that result in service interruptions to at least 10 percent of a utility's customers or events of sufficient magnitude that result in a government issued state of emergency declaration.

9. **Outage Restoration All Conditions.** Power should be restored to at least 90 percent of the customers in 36 hours or less under normal and catastrophic conditions.
GLE score: 99.9 percent.

10. **Same Circuit Repetitive Interruption.** No more than 5 percent of the utility's electric circuits should experience five or more outages in a 12-month period.
GLE score: 0.01 percent.

The good scores for outage-related standards reflect in part GLE's renewed focus on reliability improvement. Several initiatives contributed to this, such as work to upgrade worst-performing circuits, sectionalizing efforts that help limit members affected by outages, and an increased emphasis on clearing trees and brush within power line rights-of-way.



Bring Your Kids to a Park Party!

WOOD TV8 personality "Maranda" is hosting Park Parties for kids again this year! Touchstone Energy cooperatives Great Lakes Energy and HomeWorks Tri-County Electric will partner to join the fun.

You'll find food, games, prizes, rides, entertainment and information at these free parties. Stop by and ride GLE's Energy Bike!

The parties take place on Thursdays from noon-2 p.m. Put one of them on your schedule now!

June 24	Public School Complex - Cedar Springs
July 1	Lamar Park - Wyoming
July 8	Barry County Expo Center - Hastings
July 15	Kollen Park - Holland
July 22	Upjohn Park - Kalamazoo
July 29	Allegan County Fairgrounds - Allegan

Is Your Mailing Address Changing?

Great Lakes Energy members who travel are reminded that you need to keep your mailing address current with us in order to receive *Michigan Country Lines* without interruption. That's particularly important for the July/August issue that will contain the mail-in ballot used to vote for candidates seeking election to the Great Lakes Energy Board of Directors.

If you haven't already done so, please inform us of any address changes so you can continue to enjoy *Michigan Country Lines* and exercise your voting rights as a member and owner of an electric cooperative.

You Could Win \$100

Six lucky Great Lakes Energy members will win \$100 billing credits in June just for participating in the People Fund.

You can be eligible to win, too! Can you give 50 cents a month to help your community? It's not much, but an average donation of 50 cents monthly to the Great Lakes Energy People Fund really adds up. The People Fund program works because there is power in numbers.

The needs of our local communities continue to grow, and you have the power to give the People Fund a bigger role in meeting those needs.

With your permission, we round up your electric bill to the next dollar and the difference, which averages 50 cents a month, goes into the People Fund. The money is used to award grants to non-profit organizations in local communities.

Simply enroll in the People Fund program online or call us today at 888-485-2537. New and existing members participating in the program are automatically entered to win.

Thanks for Visiting Us At The Home Shows

Thanks to all the members who visited the Great Lakes Energy display to get information on our products and services at spring home shows held in Ludington, Newaygo and Petoskey.

If you missed your chance to visit us, feel free to contact us about our Marathon® electric water heaters, heat pump rebates, lower rates for electric heat, Convectair® electric space heaters, Energy Optimization programs that can save you money, and all our other products and services. Call 888-485-2537, ext. 8957.

Avoid Shocking Experiences This Spring!

Although we love to see spring arrive, its showers often bring more than just flowers.

- Lightning can pose a threat to you and your electrical appliances and gadgets.
- Protect yourself during storms.
- Seek inside shelter when lightning is present.
- Don't shower or bathe during a storm.
- Use cell or cordless phones only. Corded phones can be dangerous to use during storms.
- Protect your appliances, too.

Electrical surges and spikes from lightning can damage your TV, DVD player, computer, and other appliances. Protect them by subscribing to Home Guard Defender Plus through Great Lakes Energy for only \$5.95 a month. We'll add the charge to your electric bill.

Protective equipment includes a meter base unit for large appliance protection and surge suppression equipment for smaller items like phones, TVs and computers.

For more information or to enroll, visit the Products and Services section at gtlakes.com or call 888-485-2537, ext. 8957.

Visit gtlakes.com for more information about co-op services.

THE RESULTS ARE ENLIGHTENING!



See the difference saving money can make.

The business pictured above has participated in an energy efficiency program that is currently available to commercial and industrial companies throughout Michigan. Through the Commercial & Industrial Prescriptive Program, significant rebate incentives are available to offset overall project costs for an immediate payback on your investment, and to help lower your long-term energy bill.



For more details on this program please visit michigan-energy.org or call 877-296-4319



WE PICK UP YOUR OLD FRIDGE AND YOU PICK UP 30 BUCKS

Chances are, that old, second, working refrigerator or freezer in your garage or basement is running up your electric bill. That's because they can use three times as much energy as newer models, which can add up to \$150 a year to your electric bill. But now there's an easy solution. We'll pick up your older appliance for free and you'll pick up \$30 in cold cash when you recycle it. So do something good for yourself, good for the environment, and lower your energy bills, too.

GET A
\$30
REBATE

SAVE UP TO
\$150
A YEAR IN
ENERGY COSTS

Call 877-296-4319 or visit michigan-energy.org for a FREE pickup.



Refrigerators and freezers must be in working condition and must be between 10 and 30 cubic feet, using inside measurements. Energy Optimization contracts with JACO Environmental, an appliance recycler, to pick up and recycle the units. Customers/members of partnering Energy Optimization utilities must own units being recycled. Limit two units per residential address. A check will be mailed within 4-6 weeks after appliance collection. Additional restrictions apply.

Energy Optimization partner utilities include:

Alger Delta Electric Cooperative
City of Escanaba
City of Stephenson

Great Lakes Energy Cooperative
Midwest Energy Cooperative

Ontonagon County REA
Thumb Electric Cooperative
Cloverland Electric Cooperative

HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative
Marquette Board of Light & Power

Newberry Water & Light Board
Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

GLE Employees Discover Marathon Water Heater Benefits

Two Great Lakes Energy employees who purchased new Marathon® electric water heaters have made pleasant discoveries.

Barry Maginity was surprised to learn the Marathon heater uses less energy than he expected when no one's home running the hot water. Pat Hills noticed the water stays hot longer with the Marathon heater than with the same-size propane water heater he replaced.



Barry Maginity

device calculated that the water heater would have consumed 54 kilowatt-hours (kWh) if it had been left on for a month without any hot water use.



Pat Hills

Based on this finding, Maginity determined it only cost about 20 cents a day for the Marathon unit to maintain the water at 120 degrees while on standby. The water heater operated an average of only about 24 minutes per 24-hour period during the time his home was vacant.

"I think that is pretty good for a 75-gallon tank," he says. "I may be able to reduce the usage further by better insulating my hot water outlet pipe."

Maginity is also pleased that in a recent

month the Marathon unit used only about 344 kWh to supply plenty of hot water for him, his wife and three children. That included hot water for showers, a few baths, their new front-loading washing machine, and an automatic dishwasher.

Hills, a GLE lineworker in Newaygo, found his 50-gallon Marathon water heater runs much less than the one he replaced, which was 13 years old.

Special rebates and Marathon features that include a well-insulated tank (see box below) make it a good investment. "I just couldn't pass up the deal," Hills says.

Why Buy a Marathon Electric Water Heater?

- p Replace your old electric water heater with a Marathon® unit and receive a \$250 rebate.
- p Qualified members earn \$50 off through our Energy Optimization (EO) rebate program.
- p Switch from a fossil-fueled water heater to a Marathon heater and receive a \$500 rebate.
- p Additional EO rebate available to insulate the hot water line to the water heater.
- p Marathon's plastic tank won't rust or corrode and is warranted not to leak for as long as you own your home. No smelly anode rod, either.
- p The plastic tank is insulated like a giant thermos bottle with environmentally-friendly Envirofoam® insulation.
- p Receive a reliable product that comes with a six-year parts and labor warranty.
- p In addition to the energy it will save, you can save more (up to \$90/yr) by participating in our load management program.



There's **POWER** in Numbers

The average Great Lakes Energy member gives just \$6 per year to the People Fund program to help local non-profit organizations. But with the needs in our communities increasing, your contribution to the People Fund matters even more! If every People Fund supporter got just one other person to join, we could easily double the amount of money available each year to help local food pantries, senior citizen centers, youth programs and other local worthwhile causes.

There's power in numbers. More than \$206,000 in grants was awarded to local non-profit groups in 2009 alone. **Only you have the power to make a contribution to the People Fund. You have the power to make a difference.**

Great Lakes ENERGY
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

PEOPLE FUND

We Need Your Help!
Enroll in the People Fund today.
1-888-485-2537
gtlakes.com

Contact Great Lakes Energy for more information. Restrictions may apply. 888-485-2537, ext. 8957.

STATE OF MICHIGAN BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR THE CUSTOMERS OF GREAT LAKES ENERGY COOPERATIVE CASE NO. U-15671-R

- Great Lakes Energy Cooperative will reconcile its 2009 power supply cost recovery (PSCR) costs and revenues, and increase its revenues through its times interest earned ratio (TIER) ratemaking mechanism, if the Michigan Public Service Commission approves its request.
- The information below describes how a person may participate in this case.
- You may call or write Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, 1323 Boyne Avenue, P.O. Box 70, Boyne City, MI 49712-0070, (888) 485-2537, for a free copy of its application. Any person may review the application at Great Lakes Energy Cooperative's office.
- The first public hearing in this matter will be held:

DATE/TIME: May 25, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. This hearing will be a prehearing conference to set future hearing dates and decide other procedural matters.

BEFORE: Administrative Law Judge Daniel E. Nickerson, Jr.

LOCATION: Michigan Public Service Commission, 6545 Mercantile Way, Suite 7, Lansing, Michigan

PARTICIPATION: Any interested person may attend and participate. The hearing site is accessible, including handicapped parking. Persons needing any accommodation to participate should contact the Commission's Executive Secretary at (517) 241-6160 in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold a public hearing to consider the April 6, 2010 application of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative (Great Lakes) to reconcile its 2009 PSCR plan. Great Lakes' reconciliation result is a net undercollection in the amount of \$746,900. Great Lakes proposes to collect the 2009 undercollection from its customers through a roll-in to Great Lakes' 2011 PSCR Plan. Great Lakes is also seeking a \$4,107,088, or 2.77%, revenue increase through its TIER Ratemaking Mechanism for the 12-month period ended December 31, 2009.

All documents filed in this case shall be submitted electronically through the Commission's E-Dockets website at: michigan.gov/mpscedockets. Requirements and instructions for filing can be found in the User Manual on the E-Dockets help page. Documents may also be submitted, in Word or PDF format, as an attachment to an email sent to mpscedockets@michigan.gov. If you require assistance prior to e-filing, contact Commission staff at (517) 241-6180 or by email at mpscedockets@michigan.gov.

Any person wishing to intervene and become a party to the case shall electronically file a petition to intervene with this Commission by May 18, 2010. (Interested persons may elect to file using the traditional paper format.) The proof of service shall indicate service upon Great Lakes' attorney, Joseph J. Baumann, at Dykema Gossett PLLC, Capitol View, 201 Townsend Street, Suite 900, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

Any person wishing to make a statement of position without becoming a party to the case may participate by filing an appearance. To file an appearance, the individual must attend the hearing and advise the presiding administrative law judge of his or her wish to make a statement of position. All information submitted to the Commission in this matter will become public information: available on the Michigan Public Service Commission's website, and subject to disclosure.

Requests for adjournment must be made pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure R 460.17315 and R 460.17335. Requests for further information on adjournment should be directed to (517) 241-6060.

A copy of Great Lakes's request may be reviewed on the Commission's website at michigan.gov/mpscedockets, and at the office of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, 1323 Boyne Avenue, Boyne City, Michigan. For more information on how to participate in a case, you may contact the Commission at the above address or by telephone at (517) 241-6180.

Jurisdiction is pursuant to 1909 PA 106, as amended, MCL 460.551 et seq.; 1919 PA 419, as amended, MCL 460.51 et seq.; 1939 PA 3, as amended, MCL 460.1 et seq.; 1982 PA 304, as amended, MCL 460.6h et seq.; 1969 PA 306, as amended, MCL 24.201 et seq.; and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, as amended, 1999 AC, R 460.17101 et seq.



I PULLED THE PLUG ON MY ENERGY COSTS JUST BY PULLING A FEW PLUGS.

TVs, gaming consoles, DVRs, cable boxes and almost anything that has a plug uses energy even when it's off. I'm saving \$222 a year by pulling plugs and turning off power strips. What can you do? Find out how the little changes add up at TogetherWeSave.com.

 **Great Lakes**
ENERGY
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

TOGETHERWESAVE.COM