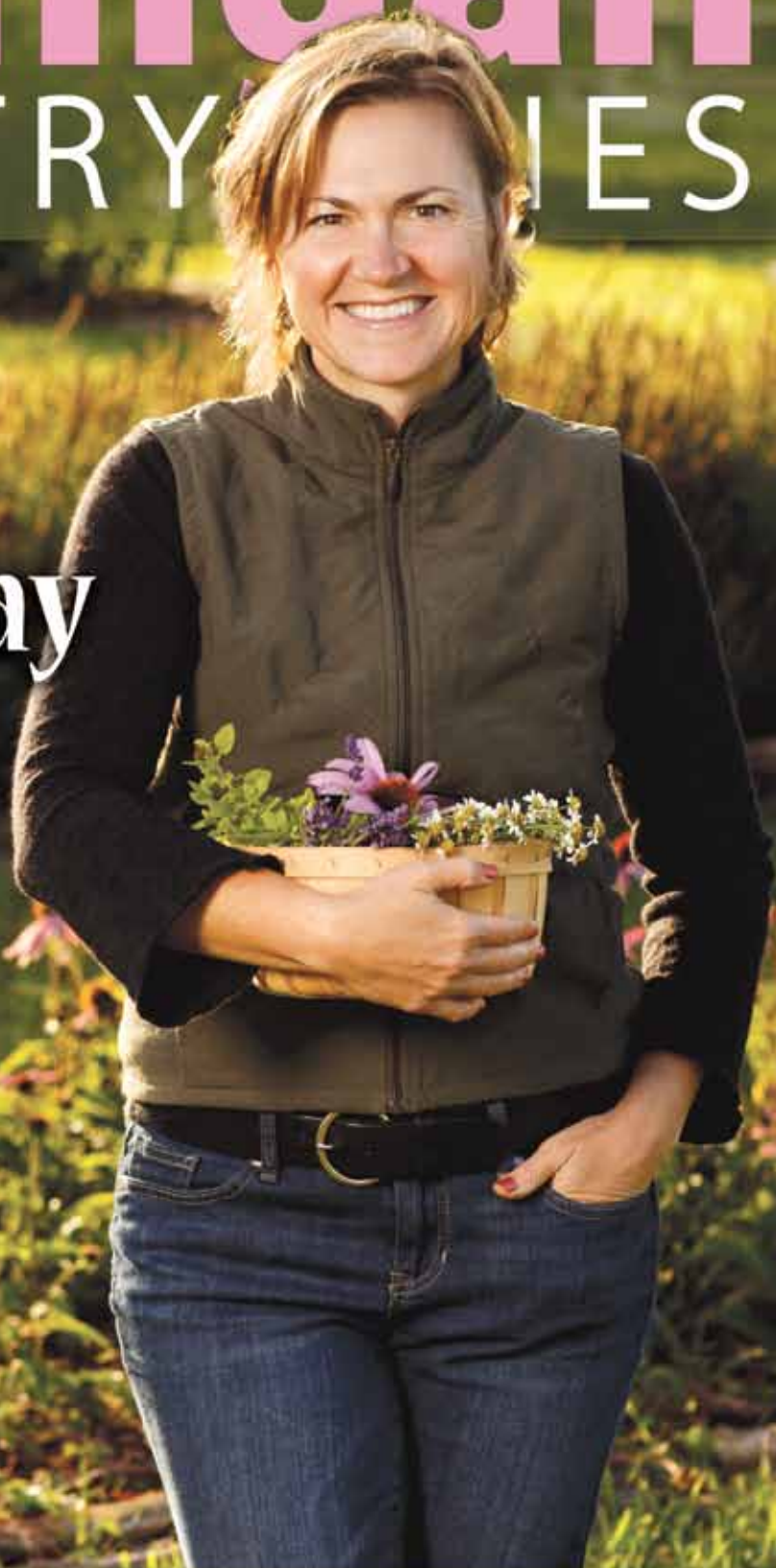


Michigan COUNTRY LIVES

Tea at the Light of Day



6 Can We
Survey You?

19 Outdoor Lighting
For Less

23 Reducing
Outages



Board of Directors

Richard Walsworth *Chairman*

3701 N. 48th Ave., Mears, MI 49436
231-873-2418 • rwalsworth@glenergy.com

Mark Carson *Vice-Chairman*

01950 Anderson Rd., Boyne City, MI 49712
231-582-0688 • mcarson@glenergy.com

Larry Monshor *Treasurer*

1541 Thumm Rd., Gaylord, MI 49735
989-705-1778 • lmonshor@glenergy.com

Paul Byl *Secretary*

9941 W. Buchanan Rd., Shelby, MI 49455
231-861-5911 • pbyl@glenergy.com

Richard Evans *Director*

11195 Essex Rd.
Ellsworth, MI 49729
231-588-7114 • revans@glenergy.com

Dale Farrier *Director*

4400 U.S. 131 N.E., Kalkaska, MI 49646
231-564-0853 • dfarrier@glenergy.com

Robert Kran *Director*

7380 N. Tuttle Rd., Free Soil, MI 49411
231-464-5889 • bkran@glenergy.com

Paul Schemanski *Director*

5974 Stolt Rd., Petoskey, MI 49770
231-439-9079 • paul.schemanski@glenergy.com

Robert Thurow *Director*

819 W. Chauvez Rd., Scottville, MI 49454
231-757-3430 • rthurow@glenergy.com

President/CEO: Steve Boeckman

888-485-2537

Communications

Director/Editor: Dave Guzniczak

231-487-1316

Boyne City Headquarters:

1323 Boyne Ave.
Boyne City, MI 49712

Hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m. M–F

Phone: 888-485-2537

To report an outage, call:

1-800-678-0411

gtlakes.com

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Above and Beyond

Electric co-op membership offers value far beyond affordable, reliable electricity.

At Great Lakes Energy, we work hard to deliver safe, affordable and reliable electricity to our members every day. But we don't stop there. Because we're a cooperative, we strive to do much more, to find ways of providing real value to you and the communities we serve.

What is Real Value?

So what exactly does real value mean? Well, in some ways it's basic, like connecting with a real, local person when you visit or call our offices. It could be finding a copy of *Michigan Country Lines* in your mailbox nearly every month, which keeps you informed about co-op business and topics of interest in rural Michigan. Or, it's getting the lights back on more quickly after a major weather event, thanks to your co-op's investments in new technologies, tree re-clearing work near power lines, and other reliability improvements.

And, how many utilities take their customers to lunch? We hold member luncheons in each of our nine service areas each year. It's a way for Great Lakes Energy members to get to know the people who run their co-op, and it's where members are updated on business matters. Most importantly, we learn what our members value most about their cooperative and what we can do to better serve them. Invitations are sent to members in each service area whose names are selected at random.

\$29 million in Refunds

Real value also means the regular investments you make in your cooperative earn you financial rewards. We have been issuing capital credit refunds annually for the last 10 years. In that time, \$29 million in refunds were returned to Great Lakes Energy members.

Because electric cooperatives are owned by their members, they do not create profits for distant shareholders. Any excess revenue—called "margins"—is allocated

back to our members in the form of capital credits, or patronage capital. Capital credits are "retired" and then paid back to members each year based on their purchases (in the case of electric co-ops, electricity) from the cooperative. Margins are used by the co-op as working capital for a period of time, then paid back to individual members as financial conditions permit.

GLE People Fund

Offering an easy way for you to help meet your local community's needs is another example of how electric cooperatives deliver more to their members. The Great Lakes

Energy People Fund has awarded over \$2.34 million to local organizations since 1999. Recipients include food pantries, senior centers, libraries, community health projects, youth programs, and many more.

The People Fund is possible because of the generous GLE members who allow us to round up their electric bills to the next dollar each month. All People Fund grant money comes from the rounded-up amounts, which average 50 cents a month or less, collected from participating members.

Co-op Connections® Card

Your cooperative helps you save money, too, through the Co-op Connections® program. Using your Co-op Connections card to get discounts on health care and other products and services offered by local businesses and national retailers is a tangible benefit of being a Great Lakes Energy member.

These are just a few ways we strive to meet our members' needs, with the most important being the experience you have when you talk or meet with one of our employees who are looking out for you on a daily basis.

October marks National Cooperative Month, when we take time to celebrate co-ops and talk about why our nonprofit, consumer-owned business model is special. Offering our members real value—and working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve—is just one way we set ourselves apart.



Steve Boeckman
Great Lakes Energy
President/CEO



Find us on Facebook.

facebook.com/greatlakesenergy

New Automated Pay-By-Phone Option

Pay your Great Lakes Energy bill by phone at any time with our new automated option that allows you to pay with your credit or debit card.

To use it, call 888-485-2537, use the options menu, and follow the payment prompts. Have your electric bill handy, as you will need to enter your account number before completing the process. You will receive a confirmation number to verify the payment was received and applied to your account.

Other payment options include:

- Pay in person at any of our GLE locations in Boyne City, Hart, Kalkaska, Newaygo, Reed City, Scottville, Waters or Wayland. Visit gtlakes.com for office hours.

- Several local businesses accept payments for GLE bills that aren't delinquent. Visit gtlakes.com or contact us for the location of the nearest pay station.

- Call and speak to a GLE rep to use your checking account for payment. Have your checking account information available. We also accept payments over the phone by credit or debit card.

- Pay online at gtlakes.com. Click on the "Account Login" box and follow the instructions. Enroll in e-billing while you're there!

- You can also sign up for automatic payments to ensure your bills are always paid on time.

- Enroll in our budget plan if you prefer to have even monthly payments.

Call us at 888-485-2537 if you have any questions about your bill.

Information for All Members of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative

Your cooperative offers a program called the People Fund, which is funded through the voluntary rounding up of your monthly utility bill to the next whole dollar.



An all-volunteer board of directors appointed by the member-elected board of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative distributes the funds throughout the cooperative's service area. The Fund supports charitable efforts in and around the communities we serve. Money from the People Fund has been distributed to educational programs, medical groups, recreational organizations serving all ages, senior organizations, and numerous other local charities. A copy of the most recent People Fund annual report, which details contributions, is available by contacting Great Lakes Energy, and prior year reports are highlighted in previous issues of *Michigan Country Lines* magazine.

Your participation in the People Fund is voluntary. If at any time you wish to discontinue participation in the People Fund, please let us know and we will make the change. If you are participating, your monthly bill is rounded up to the next whole dollar. If your bill is \$58.42, it would be rounded up to \$59. The 58 cents would then be contributed by Great Lakes Energy Cooperative on your behalf to the People Fund, to be used as explained above. A member's average annual contribution is about \$6. Your annual contribution to the People Fund is tax deductible and is reported on your monthly statement at the end of the year.

For additional information regarding the People Fund, contact the co-op office by mail or call 888-485-2537.

TAKE ONE AND SHOW IT TO YOUR PHARMACIST.



WITH YOUR CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD, SAVE UP TO 85% ON PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND REFILLS AT PARTICIPATING RETAILERS. OTHER HEALTHY SAVINGS DISCOUNTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE TOO.

THE BEST PART? IT'S FREE TO MEMBERS OF GREAT LAKES ENERGY JUST LIKE YOU.

DISCOVER ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN SAVE TODAY AT CONNECTIONS.COOP. NEED A CARD OR MORE INFORMATION? CALL US AT 888-GT-LAKES, EXT. 8957.

RESTAURANTS • AUTO REPAIR • HEALTH CARE • PRESCRIPTIONS • HOTELS • GIFTS • CAR RENTALS

Pharmacy discounts are not insurance, and are not intended as a substitute for insurance. The discount is only available at participating pharmacies.





Linda Cornelisse
Scottville



Richard Cowels
Plainwell



Lisa Simmons
Boyne City

Meet Our People Fund Winners!

Several Great Lakes Energy members who support the cooperative's People Fund received \$100 gifts of energy in our most recent drawing.

Winners whose names were randomly selected are Howard and Carol Grifhorst Jr., Ewart; Nancy White, Beaver Island; Harold Parslow, White Cloud; Robert J. and Linda Cornelisse, Scottville; Lisa Simmons, Boyne City; and Richard Cowels, Plainwell.

To thank our People Fund donors, we select six winners twice a year from our three major service areas. Current People Fund supporters and anyone who enrolls in the permanent billing round-up program before the next drawing in December are eligible to win.

Winners' gifts were provided by Great Lakes Energy and did not involve the use of any People Fund round-up money.

People Fund contributors allow their



cooperative to round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar each month. The rounded-up amounts, which averaged 39 cents monthly in 2011, are used to award grants to food pantries, senior citizen centers, youth programs and other local charities and community groups.

"The People Fund is great!" says winner Richard Cowels. "I formerly owned a local insurance agency. This is an easy way to stay involved with and give back to the community that I served and continue to live in."

Great Lakes Energy relies solely on your voluntary contributions to support the People Fund. In 2012, People Fund directors awarded \$146,660 in grants to charitable and community organizations throughout our 26-county service area.

Don't miss your chance to be the next winner! Visit gtlakes.com or call our office to sign up today.

How Are We Doing?

A random phone survey of co-op members begins in November.

The annual phone survey of Great Lakes Energy members will begin in early November. A random sample of residential and seasonal members will be contacted by phone to complete the survey questions. Each call can take 15-20 minutes to complete.

Members are asked a variety of questions on topics such as overall satisfaction, levels of satisfaction with specific aspects of service, interest in our products, and more. Seven demographic questions are also part of the survey.

It takes about two weeks to complete all the calls, and the results are provided in a detailed report to GLE. The results offer valuable insight on what our members value, how we can improve, and what services they may use or be interested in.

The survey results are also used internally to help measure how well the cooperative meets its annual member service goal, which is to always provide members with courteous, prompt and efficient service.

Members will not be asked for personal or financial information by survey representatives and should always take caution when asked for such information.

Thank you to all members who take the time to participate in the survey and provide us with the valuable information we need to better serve you.

Receive Country Lines While You're Away

You can continue to receive *Michigan Country Lines* magazine if you're away from home for an extended time.

Simply contact us if you plan to be away for more than a month, and give us the address where you would like the magazine sent. Contact us again when you return home to ensure there will be no interruption in your magazine mailings.

Contact us by dialing 888-GT-LAKES (485-2537), ext. 1817, or by visiting the member services section of gtlakes.com, found under "Your Home" and by clicking on "Change of Address."

Historic Farm Honored

Congratulations to Great Lakes Energy member Darell Sengelaub whose farm in Osceola County has received state historic designation.

Great Lakes Energy is a sponsor of the Michigan Centennial Farm Program that honors farms owned and operated by the same family for 100 years. Once a farm is certified through the program, the owners receive a certificate as well as a display marker for their farm.

Great Lakes Energy members can request an application or receive more information by contacting The Historical Society of Michigan, 517-324-1828, or by visiting the "Programs" section of their website, centennialfarms.org.



2013 Coloring Contest Winners

First Place Winners



Austin Boerman



Claire Howard



Melissa Tomko

Thanks to everyone who entered our coloring contest this year. Congratulations to the following Great Lakes Energy kids who won new art supplies.

4 years and under:

1st place – Austin Boerman, Allegan; 2nd place – Inara Gray-Edel, Kent City;
3rd Place – Isiah Kellogg, Delton

5-7 years old:

1st place – Claire Howard, Petoskey; 2nd place – Stella Estes, Irons;
3rd Place – Carder Burgtorf, Ravenna

8-10 years old:

1st place – Melissa Tomko, Gaylord; 2nd place – Madison Warnke, Rockford;
3rd Place – Aric Rich, Zeeland

Save With Electric Heat

Stay warm in your home with electric heat and save with Great Lakes Energy's reduced heating rates.

Two rates are available to qualifying Great Lakes Energy members that will reduce your electric heating costs. The money we save by controlling your electric heat during peak demand times makes the lower rates possible.

■ Controlled Heating Rate (CH)

3 cents per kilowatt-hour discount on your electric heat

- A backup heating system that generates heat from an energy source other than electricity is required. Examples include gas and oil furnaces, wood stoves and fireplaces. Generators do not qualify as a backup heating system.

- Your electric heat will be controlled up to 400 hours per year with the longest interruption not to exceed eight hours in any 24-hour period.

■ Partial Controlled Heating Rate (PCH)

1.5 cents per kilowatt-hour discount on your electric heat

- No backup heating system is required.
- Your system will be controlled up to 400 hours per year with the longest interruption not to exceed 40 minutes per hour for up to a total of six hours or nine times per day.

Electric heat on either rate can be more economical to operate than other heating fuels. A qualified heating and cooling contractor can provide estimated operating cost comparisons for different types of heating systems for your home.

Both rates require installation of dual metering equipment and a second meter that records only your electric heat. The primary heating system in your house must be electric heat, such as electric baseboard systems and heat pumps. Plug-in heaters do not qualify.

For more information, see the "Load Management & Rebate Programs" section of our website, gtlakes.com, under "Your Home." You can also call 888-485-2537, ext. 8957.

Public Act 295: The Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act 2012 Annual Energy Optimization Report

Great Lakes Energy Cooperative
MPSC Case Number U-16682

Great Lakes Energy has contracted with the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) to administer its Energy Optimization efforts in order to comply with P.A. 295. MECA filed a 4-year Energy Optimization plan with the MPSC on Aug. 1, 2011, as required by P.A. 295. This EO plan was approved by the MPSC on Nov. 10, 2011, and we began implementing the plan Jan. 1, 2012. The Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation (WECC) was selected to implement all Residential, Commercial and Industrial Programs, and the Energy Optimization website michigan-energy.org. WECC has subcontracted with JACO, Michigan Energy Options, Franklin Energy, Morgan Marketing Partners, and Honeywell to assist with the implementation of the EO Programs. MECA contracted with KEMA as the independent third party evaluation contractor for the certification of kilowatt-hour savings.

In 2012 Great Lakes Energy collected \$2,441,209 through the Energy Optimization Surcharge and spent \$1,503,475, resulting in an over-collection of \$937,734 which will be applied towards the 2013 EO Program delivery expenses and goal achievement. Great Lakes Energy achieved 10,340.7 megawatt hours of energy savings in 2012. The full report can be obtained at michigan-energy.org or efile.mpsc.state.mi.us/efile.

Fight Vampire Power

There's a scary character lurking in your home. It's vampire power and it's out to get your energy. Many electronics in your home continue using power even when turned off, and this continuous draw is known as "phantom" or "vampire" power.

Because appliances, electronics and lighting account for the second largest portion of your energy bill, and most people have about 40 different electronics plugged in at all times, vampire power adds up quickly. As much as 10 percent of your bill—or \$100 per year—may be going toward needless energy use.

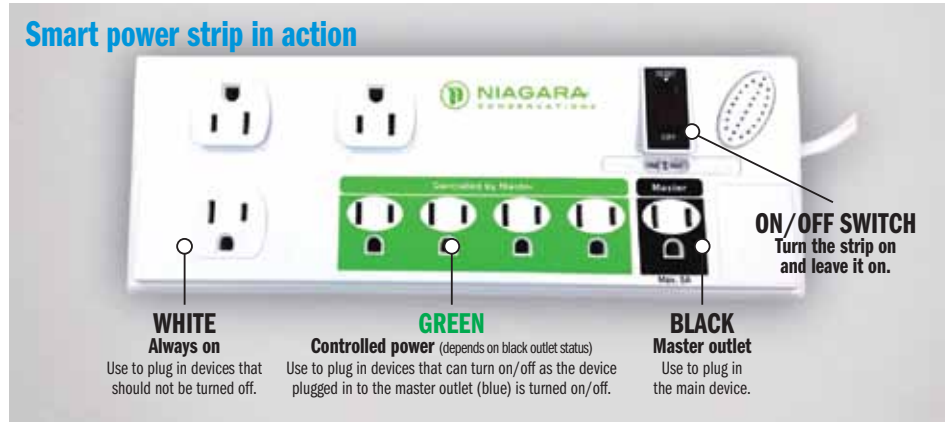
What Sucks Energy?

Some of the most common vampire power offenders are appliances or electronics with light-up displays that stay on when the device is off, including cell phone chargers, TVs, DVD players, DVRs, cable boxes, desk/laptop computers and monitors, wireless routers, and speakers.

Defend Your Sockets

Here are some proven ways to reduce vampire power-related energy waste:

- ▶ Unplug appliances and electronics when



you're not using them.

- ▶ Purchase ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances and electronics (they use the least amount of power in standby mode).

- ▶ Unplug battery chargers as soon as batteries are fully charged.

- ▶ Use a wattmeter. Plug electronics into this device to see how much energy is being used.

Automatic Savings With a Smart Power Strip

Using a smart power strip is a convenient way to fight off vampire power. It's similar to conventional power strips, however, it can sense when a main or master electronic device—such as a TV or computer—is turned off, and automatically shut down

other devices associated with it (DVD player, gaming device, cable/satellite box). By completely shutting down these devices, vampire power is destroyed.

A smart power strip can reduce your energy use by 5 to 10 percent. It uses about 1 watt of electricity when turned on, and 0 watts when the control outlets are off. Plus, you can receive a \$10 Energy Optimization rebate when you buy a qualifying smart power strip.

Savings for Everyone

Not only can Great Lakes Energy help you fight vampire power, but we have more ways to help residents, businesses and farmers save energy. See our current incentives at michigan-energy.org or call 877-296-4319 for details.



TRICK OR treat

Beware of vampire power

Did you know that when many appliances are turned off they still use energy? That's a bloody waste. Defend yourself against vampire energy drain without having to wear garlic. Simply plug your electronics into a smart power strip to truly turn them off, eliminating vampire energy waste for good. **Start saving today—buy a smart power strip and get a \$10 Energy Optimization rebate.**

ENERGY TIP: Smart power strips automatically use 5-10% less energy and are ideal for TV and computer equipment.

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org PHONE: 877.296.4319



Energy Optimization programs and incentives are applicable to Michigan service locations only. Other restrictions may apply. For a complete list of participating utilities, visit michigan-energy.org.

Light Your Yard For Less

Light your yard with less energy by using an outdoor LED (light emitting diode) light available through Great Lakes Energy's Outdoor Lighting Service program.

We will install an outdoor light on the property where your home or business is served by GLE. Its kilowatt-hour use and maintenance costs are covered by a monthly billing fee (see chart), and GLE owns and maintains the lights. Broken lamps or damage to fixtures due to accident or vandalism will be repaired at the member's expense.

To offset our higher costs for the outdoor LED lighting, there is an initial \$205 charge to install the light. There may be other up-front costs if the LED light is to be located where additional materials (pole and wire) are needed to install it.

On average, the outdoor LED light uses less energy (15 kWh/month) than other lamps with similar brightness offered by GLE. They include a 175-watt mercury vapor lamp (75 kWh/month) and a 100-watt high pressure sodium fixture (40 kWh/month). The Power Supply Cost Recovery (PSCR) costs for the LED light are also less.

Because it uses less energy, the LED light has the lowest monthly rate (\$7.65) of all lights offered in the program.

Requests for LED lights may take a minimum of six weeks to complete the order.

The minimum installation term is 24 months for any type of outdoor light installed by GLE. After that time, the light can be replaced with a different type or removed upon request.

Members interested in purchasing indoor LED lighting should be aware that not all LED lights live up to their manufacturers' claims. It is recommended that energy-conscious shoppers buy products that are ENERGY STAR® certified and carry that logo on the package. Visit energystar.gov for more information.

The U.S. Department of Energy, which helps run the ENERGY STAR program, predicts prices for LED lights will go down as more products enter the market.

The LED is a solid-state lightbulb with semiconductors that convert electricity into light. LED use has expanded from indicator and traffic lights to home lighting applications as the technology continues to grow.



A GLE outdoor LED light uses less energy to light your yard.

More information on the outdoor lighting service program can be obtained by calling 1-888-485-2537.

GLE Outdoor Lighting Service Rates

Nominal Rating	Monthly Rate
175-watt Mercury Vapor*	\$ 12.70
250-watt MV*	\$ 16.57
400-watt MV*	\$ 25.05
100-watt High Pressure Sodium	\$ 9.23
150-watt HPS	\$ 11.74
250-watt HPS	\$ 16.57
400-watt HPS	\$ 24.05
LED Alternative to 175-watt MV	\$ 7.65**
LED Alternative to 100-watt HPS	\$ 7.65**

* Mercury Vapor lights are only available at existing installations.

** Plus an up-front installation charge of \$205 per fixture.

An additional charge of 30 cents monthly per fixture will be made for fixtures suspended between poles. Fees and rates are subject to change.

Recycle CFLs at Great Lakes Energy

Recycle your used compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) at your local Great Lakes Energy office.

Only compact fluorescent bulbs will be accepted.

Great Lakes Energy is looking out for you by providing a COMPAK Recycling Center box in the lobbies of its eight service centers. Simply place your CFLs in the environmentally-secure container. The co-op will ship them to Next Level for Recycling, Inc. which disposes of waste products quickly and properly.

CFLs help you save energy.

ACCEPT



DON'T ACCEPT



Stay Safe and Warm!

Never place a space heater close to a water source. While there are waterproof electric heaters, many models are not intended for use in bathrooms, so be sure to check the manufacturer's safety instructions.

Visit SafeElectricity.org to learn more about avoiding electrical hazards.

Source - SafeElectricity.org

Tips for Using Space Heaters, Electric Blankets

Don't let your efforts to stay warm put your safety at risk. Space heaters and electric blankets can be efficient ways to warm up, but they can also be dangerous. We encourage you to understand the dangers of heating devices before you use them.

"Space heaters and electric blankets are not appropriate for all people or all situations," explains Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council. "However, in the right circumstances, space heating can save energy and money."

Try these tips for using space heaters and electric blankets safely:

- Read and follow all safety instructions for each unit.
- Cords should not be frayed, brittle or cracked, and the blanket should not have any charred or dark areas.
- Turn them off when not in use.
- Look for a space heater that has guards from heating elements and automatically shuts off if tipped over.
- Choose a unit with a safety certification (look for the UL®, ETL, or CSA mark, which means the product has been safety-tested).
- One of the biggest causes of fires is the most easily avoidable. Many fires start when flammable products are placed too close to heating devices. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet from blankets, clothing, paper and other flammables.
- Place space heaters out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, nonflammable floor surface—NOT on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
- Never allow pets to sleep on top of electric blankets, and the wires should never be bent or tucked under a mattress.
- Do not try to warm your entire home with space heaters. They are useful in small areas, such as a study or living room. For large areas, however, your heating system will do the job more efficiently.

See the back cover for electric heating options from Great Lakes Energy.

Help Prevent Electrical Fires

Each year, electrical failures and malfunctions cause 43,900 home fires, resulting in 438 deaths, 1,430 injuries, and \$1.47 billion in property damage. Many home electrical fires can be prevented by understanding basic safety principles and practices:

▶ Use a licensed electrician to perform all electrical work in compliance with local and national safety standards.

▶ Consider replacing circuit breakers with arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs), which provide enhanced fire protection by detecting dangerous arcing conditions.

▶ Make sure all electrical panel circuits are properly labeled. Always replace fuses or circuit breakers with the correct size and amperage.

▶ Keep the area around the electrical panel clear so you can easily shut off power in an emergency.

▶ Use the TEST button monthly to check smoke alarms and make sure that ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) at outlets and AFCIs are working properly.

▶ Be aware of warning signs, such as outlets and switches that are warm or make crackling, sizzling or buzzing noises.

▶ Regularly check cords, outlets and switches, and do not use damaged electrical devices.

▶ Do not use extension cords on a permanent basis, and never use them with space heaters or air conditioners.

▶ Avoid overloading outlets.

▶ Do not use lightbulbs that exceed the recommended wattage of the light fixture or lamp.

▶ Install smoke alarms in each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level.

▶ Create a family fire escape plan that includes two ways out of each room.

▶ Pick an easy-to-find meeting place outside, a safe distance from your home.

▶ Practice your escape plan by having at least two fire drills a year. One should be at night while your family is sleeping.

▶ If anyone in your household is deaf, or if your own hearing is diminished, consider installing a smoke alarm that uses a flashing light or vibration to alert you to a fire emergency.

Visit esfi.org for more electrical safety information and Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 6-12) resources.

Removing Dying Trees Before Trouble Strikes

Several hundred dead, dying and diseased (DDD) trees were removed so far as a result of a program started last year to identify trees outside Great Lakes Energy (GLE) right-of-way (ROW) areas that pose a threat to power lines.

“We do an excellent job of re-clearing trees *within* our rights-of-way that could fall into our lines,” says Steve Ryder, GLE’s vegetation management supervisor. “But we’re finding trees *outside* our rights-of-way are often a significant contributor to storm-related outages.”

Weeding out DDD trees outside right-of-way areas will require a long-term effort. It involves surveying hundreds of miles of overhead power lines that GLE operates along wooded areas. Cost is another factor that will determine the number of affected trees that can be identified and removed each year. Another challenge is the potential loss of more trees from insects and diseases that are already taking a heavy toll on some species. The emerald ash borer has killed millions of ash trees in Michigan alone.

Of the 3,721 DDD trees identified this year, 60 percent are ash trees plagued by the emerald ash borer, 20 percent are beech trees infected with beech scale, and the rest are miscellaneous species including oak trees suffering from oak wilt.

Summer interns Parker Ameal and Jameson Farinosi surveyed main power lines this year identifying and marking DDD trees for removal. The work of these college students will help keep the lights on for many Great Lakes Energy members. This is the second



Jameson Farinosi is one of two college interns who spent this summer surveying power lines for unhealthy trees that could pose a threat to Great Lakes Energy members’ electric service.

year interns were used to conduct the summer field audits.

The largest power lines are surveyed first, which enables the co-op to remove DDD trees that pose a threat to the greatest number of its members. Over 80 percent of the off-ROW areas along the largest circuits have been surveyed so far. That amounts to



A contracted worker removes a tree near Great Lakes Energy power lines. It is one of 3,400 dead, dying and diseased trees removed so far since a new vegetation management program to reduce tree-related outages was started last year.

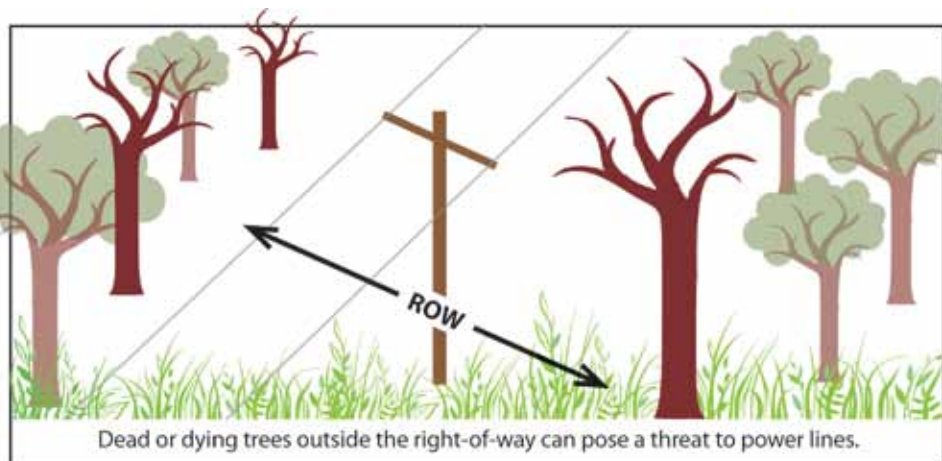
over 2,175 miles of line that were inspected. Re-inspections were also done in some areas this year where new tree infestation problems developed.

Many of these trees will eventually be removed by contracted tree-trimming crews. Each year, crews work a different region re-clearing trees and brush within the ROW. Great Lakes Energy members can expect to see them in their area every six to seven years. Any trees spotted outside the right-of-way that could be a danger to overhead wires are removed, too.

“The addition of the summer field audits to work already being done by our contracted tree trimmers allows us to step up our efforts in controlling what could become a bigger problem,” says Ryder.


The audits revealed DDD trees that contracted tree crews would not have been able to spot earlier. Trees that were healthy at the time crews were re-clearing the rights-of-way can become problems before they return again in a few years. Some trees, such as red oaks, can die within days or weeks after becoming infected.

Tree-related power line damage is a major cause of outages for Great Lakes Energy members. The DDD program is another important step in helping your co-op reach its annual goal of reducing average outage minutes.



Dead or dying trees outside the right-of-way can pose a threat to power lines.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

gtlakes.com

 facebook.com/greatlakesenergy



Affordable Heating Solutions

For • Chilly Bathrooms • Cold Rooms
• Cold Floors • Noisy Heaters



Plug-in and hard-wired units available only from your electric co-op

Choose Convectair heaters for your home!

Discover North America's most innovative line of electric space heaters. Convectair heaters use convection to evenly and silently distribute heat into your rooms.

Call today or visit our website for more information & pricing.

888-485-2537

gtlakes.com

Not regulated by the MPSC