

# MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



Meet Our

**Deer Blind**  
Contest Winners!

**Plus!**

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- 8 Northwoods Patriot Builds A Veterans' Memorial
- 13 Meet Your Co-op's Newest Lineworkers



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# IN THIS ISSUE

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**Casey Clark**

*Editor*

**Gail Knudtson**

*Publisher*

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*Design and Layout*

**Ciesa Design**

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**The appearance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised.**

**Change of Address:** Please notify your electric cooperative. See page 4 for contact information.



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## Board Of Directors

### District #1—Big Bay

Mike Nason  
906-360-1477 • mnason9993@charter.net

### District #2—Harvey-Deerton

Sam Simonetta  
906-892-8504 • lcellc@hotmail.com

### District #3—Grand Marais

Nancy Gardner-Platt  
906-494-2772 • rlnkgard@jamadots.com

### District #4—Cedar River/Palestine

Dave Prestin  
906-424-0055 • cedarriverplaza@gmail.com

### District #5—Gourley, LaBranche & Cornell

David Anthony  
906-466-2932 • anthony@hannahville.org

### District #6—Nathan, White Rapids

Paul Sederquist  
906-753-4484 • seder@dreamscp.com

### District #7—Stonington/Rapid River

Sue Alexander  
906-399-3666  
smalexander55@yahoo.com

### District #8—Nahma/Isabella

Ray Young  
906-644-2488 • kyoung@uplogon.com

### District #9—Hiawatha & Maple Ridge

Ron Oberg  
906-573-2551  
director9-algerdelta@jamadots.com

### CEO

Tom Harrell  
tharrell@algerdelta.com

### Headquarters:

426 N. 9th St—Gladstone, MI 49837  
906-428-4141 • 800-562-0950  
Fax: 906-428-3840 • admin@algerdelta.com  
On the web: www.algerdelta.com

### Office Hours

M–F, 7:30–4:00 (ET)

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**algerdelta.com**



# Alger Delta Explores Merger With Great Lakes Energy



**Tom Harrell**  
General Manager

**A**s a member-owner of Alger Delta Cooperative Electric Association, it's important for you to know that your co-op's board of directors has voted to discuss and explore the possibility of merging with another electric cooperative—Great Lakes Energy (GLE), headquartered in Boyne City, MI. Great Lakes Energy currently provides electric service to about 125,000 members in 26 counties across the western Lower Peninsula (visit [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com) to learn more).

There is quite a bit of due diligence to perform, however, it appears the potential benefits for both cooperatives could be significant.

For example, Great Lakes Energy members would benefit from the growth associated with the addition of 10,000 Alger Delta members, including increased margins. Both co-ops could benefit from the ability to spread fixed costs over a larger consumer base. Future rates could also be stabilized by the longer-term merger benefits.

Alger Delta members would benefit from increased investment in key operational areas, such as tree trimming and distribution system automation that leads to improvements in reliability and an enhanced level of service to members.

Officials estimate that Alger Delta's rates would be consolidated with Great Lakes Energy's within five years. Using current retail rates, the average Alger Delta residential member would save more than \$24 per month on GLE's rates.

Great Lakes Energy says they are excited about exploring the benefits of combining the two electric cooperatives. There could be many operational and financial benefits for the member-consumers served by both organizations.

A merger of GLE and Alger Delta would require an affirmative vote from the member-owners served by each of the cooperatives. These respective votes could come in early 2015 if the merger is approved by the board of directors of both cooperatives.

**The Alger Delta Co-op office will be closed for the following holidays:**

### Thanksgiving

Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27–28

### Christmas

Thursday and Friday, Dec. 25–26

### New Year's

Thursday, Jan. 1

*For electrical emergencies, please call 1-800-562-4953.*

# Carrying the Load: U.P. Electricity Rates to Increase Significantly

**M**ichigan's Upper Peninsula is dealing with a serious energy issue that will increase the electricity bills of nearly all its residents. Until a more permanent energy solution is found, costs to keep the Presque Isle Power Plant (PIPP) in operation will be determined on an annual basis. In 2015, that number is \$116 million. This figure includes PIPP operating and EPA compliance costs. A new order and recent filings made at the federal level provide that the U.P.'s portion of responsibility for that number will increase from about 8 percent to nearly 100 percent. A series of events has brought us to this point. Let's break it down:

## The Cliffs mining company says goodbye to their electricity supplier.

The Presque Isle Power Plant is owned by We Energies (Milwaukee, WI) and is the only electricity generating plant of significant size in the Upper Peninsula. In summer 2013, PIPP's largest customer, Cliffs mining, decided it was in their best business interest to switch from We Energies to another supplier. This switch was possible because of an exemption in Michigan's electric choice laws applicable only to the Cliffs mines.

## After losing their largest customer, We Energies decides to close PIPP.

The Cliffs mines accounted for 80 percent of the electricity We Energies sold in the U.P. Without their business, it was no longer profitable to keep PIPP operational. In September 2013, We Energies filed a request to shut the plant down.

## MISO mandates PIPP stay open to ensure grid stability, but it is costly.

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is an independent agency that "maintains the integrity of the grid." MISO has determined PIPP must keep operating to ensure system reliability in the U.P. and Wisconsin. As a result, MISO agreed to pay We Energies about \$8,084,500 monthly to keep PIPP open.

## There is disagreement about who will pay for these costs.

By prior agreements among utilities in Wisconsin and Michigan dating back to 2000, the costs of installing new transmission were shared between Wisconsin and Upper Peninsula ratepayers. In the original arrangement, Wisconsin ratepayers paid 92 percent of the costs and Michigan paid 8 percent. On July 29, 2014, The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ruled that the

92 to 8 ratio was "unjust and unfair," and ordered MISO to refigure its load-shedding analysis to determine the equitable ratio.

## MISO releases new cost breakdown, raising electric costs for U.P. residents.

On July 29, 2014, MISO released a new cost-sharing breakdown that will result in a substantial increase in electric costs for U.P. residents. Since that time, We Energies and MISO have made further filings addressing these issues—including filing a new proposed agreement addressing the costs for running the PIPP plant. At this time, it appears that nearly 100 percent of the costs to keep PIPP open will be allocated to the U.P.

## PIPP plant does not meet EPA emissions standards.

The existing generating units have not been retrofitted with new air quality equipment that will meet federal environmental regulations before the 2016 deadline. This added cost has raised the original project cost of \$52 million to the current \$116 million, covering mid-October to December, 2015.

## Short-term Outlook: No Increase for Alger Delta Members

The numbers could change due to litigation or regulatory action, but the new formula may require Alger Delta Cooperative—through its power supplier, WPPI Energy, to assume some of the costs for running PIPP. The new formula will change every U.P. electric utility's percentage of the costs to keep the plant open.

"Alger Delta is very concerned about these decisions," says Tom Harrell, Alger Delta's CEO, "because we have been working very hard to keep electricity affordable and these events run counter to our efforts. However, Alger Delta expects any wholesale rate impact to be manageable for now and doesn't anticipate any rate changes for members in the short term."

Alger Delta is in a good position relative to these costs because they became a WPPI member in 2007. "I've said it before...joining WPPI was the best decision Alger Delta has made since the cooperative started, and our WPPI membership helps us face these kinds of events better than if we were on our own in the energy marketplace," Harrell explains.

Updates on this issue will be shared with co-op members as they become available. ■



## HOLIDAY HAPPINESS

These make-ahead recipes are time-savers, and a perfect compliment to your holiday feast!

### Holiday Spinach Dip

1 large round crusty bread, slice off top and hollow  
 2 pkgs. 10-oz. spinach, defrosted, chopped, squeezed  
 2 c. sour cream  
 2 c. Hellman's® mayo  
 1 c. chopped onion, very fine  
 2 t. dill weed  
 2 T. oregano  
 1 ½ t. Lawry's® seasoning salt

Mix all ingredients. Chill overnight. Serve in bread. Use scooped out bread and additional small bread slices to dip. Looks pretty surrounded with cherry tomatoes.

*Arlene Russel, Harbor Springs*

### Bailey's Milk Chocolate Truffles

¾ c. heavy cream  
 3 T. butter  
 1 ½ lb. milk chocolate chopped in pieces (not chocolate bits)  
 ¾ c. Bailey's® Irish cream  
 ½ c. confectioners' sugar  
 ¼ c. cocoa powder  
 ⅛ t. cinnamon

Combine cream and butter in saucepan and bring to a light boil; remove from heat. Add chocolate pieces, stir to melt. Stir in Bailey's®. Pour into bowl and refrigerate at least 6 hours. Spoon out walnut size pieces of the mixture onto cookie sheet and refrigerate until firm. Before serving, sift together confectioners' sugar, cocoa and cinnamon or you can do them all separately, for a different variety of colors. Roll each truffle into a ball and roll in cocoa/sugar mixture. Makes 40 or more. Refrigerate in airtight container. Use candy papers to keep them from sticking together when serving at room temperature. These do have alcohol in them, so serve just at an adult party.

*Kami Maurer House, Sebawaing*

### Low Effort Eggnog



4 egg yolks  
 ⅓ c. sugar, plus 1 T.  
 1 pint whole milk  
 1 c. heavy cream  
 3 oz. rum or bourbon (or extract)  
 1 t. freshly grated nutmeg  
 4 egg whites

In the bowl of a stand mixer, beat the egg yolks until they lighten in color. Gradually add the ⅓ c. sugar and continue to beat until it is completely dissolved. Add the milk, cream, bourbon and nutmeg, and stir to combine. Place egg whites in the bowl of a stand mixer and beat to soft peaks. With the mixer still running, gradually add the 1 tablespoon of sugar and beat until stiff peaks form. Whisk the egg whites into the mixture. Chill and serve.

*Laura Kurella, Sturgis*

### SUBMIT YOUR RECIPE!

Thanks to all who send in recipes. Please send in your favorite "Sandwiches" recipes by **Nov. 10** and your favorite "Soups" recipes by **Dec. 10**.

Mail (handwritten or typed on one side, please) to: *Country Lines* Recipes, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, MI 48864; or email [recipes@countrylines.com](mailto:recipes@countrylines.com).

Contributors whose recipes we print in 2014 will be entered in a drawing and *Country Lines* will pay the winner's January 2015 electric bill (up to \$200)!

Visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) for more reader recipes!

Photos—831 Creative

# Don't Get Lost in the Shuffle



**Craig Borr, CEO,**  
Michigan Electric  
Cooperative  
Association

**S**ix hundred pages, plus another 1,000 of supporting documents—that's the length of the latest proposal from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It would amend the Clean Air Act (only 465 pages) to limit carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the power plants on which Michigan relies today.

Besides the actual rule, a lot has been written about its legality, feasibility and complexity. In fact, Michigan Rep. John Dingell, the longest-serving member of the U.S. House of Representatives, emphatically stated several years ago that the EPA's regulation of carbon dioxide would result in a "glorious mess". His position, and I agree, is that Congress should determine far-reaching energy policy—not a federal agency loaded with lifetime bureaucrats.

But lost in the shuffle of these thousands of pages is *the impact on people*. How much will electric bills increase? Will manufacturers relocate? How many jobs will be lost? Which power plants will be forced to shut down? In Michigan, one-third of Michigan's coal fleet will close as a result of EPA regulations. Arguably, some of those facilities need to close, as they are old and dirty.

Energy policy questions are often difficult, but they are important questions. Michigan's electric cooperatives work hard to keep your electricity affordable and reliable. That's why we're asking the EPA for answers to these and many other questions.

We don't want you to get lost in the shuffle. We put you—our members—first. We advocate for you. Our member-cooperatives see you every month paying your bill at the office. We work with you. We know when times are tough. We often live next door.

After all, you govern us. Our board members and community leaders are one and the same. We're as local as any organization, and we like it that way.

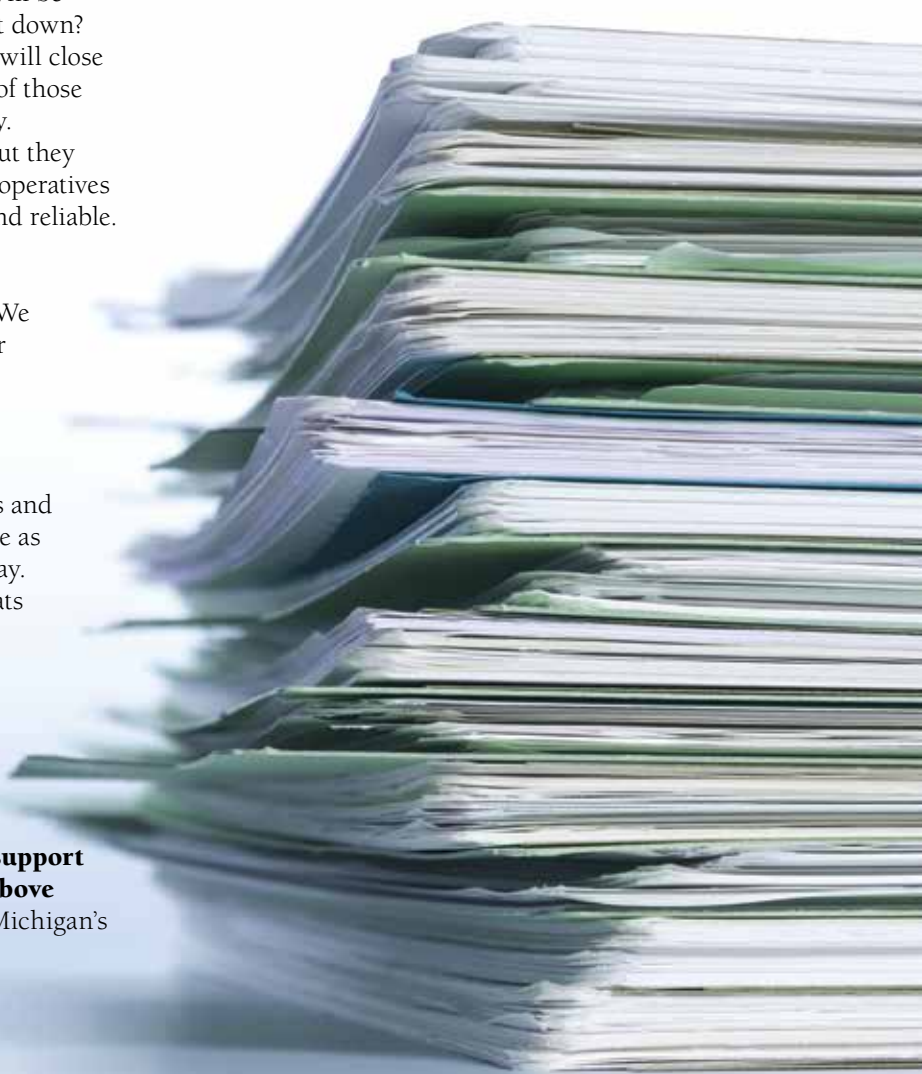
That's why we keep reminding the bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., that the rules they write have an impact on the real world—where we live. That's why we're encouraging everyone to take 30 seconds to sign up at [Action.coop](http://Action.coop) and tell the EPA we cannot afford these regulations.

Please raise your voice. Don't get lost in the shuffle. **Together, we can tell the EPA that support for the environment and a true all-of-the-above energy policy are not mutually exclusive.** Michigan's

electric cooperatives lead by example. Our members are proud to be leaders in both energy efficiency and renewable energy. We have been leaders in both of these important areas long before they were required by the Michigan Legislature. Like many of our member-consumers that make their living in the agriculture industry, electric co-ops have always been good stewards of the environment because it is the right thing to do.

Together we need to remind regulators and lawmakers that the impact the EPA's proposed new rules could have on rural Michigan people, and others throughout our country, should be their *first* thought, not their *last*.

With over 900 electric cooperatives in the country backing us up, our voice can be heard. We have a great and positive story to tell. We can tell the story together. And it won't even take 1,600 pages. The EPA's public comment period is extended to Dec. 1—please take a moment to visit [Action.coop](http://Action.coop) today and let your voice be heard. ■





## THE POEM

He was getting old and paunchy  
And his hair was falling fast,  
And he sat around the Legion,  
Telling stories of the past.

Of a war that he once fought in  
And the deeds that he had done,  
In his exploits with his buddies;  
They were heroes, everyone.

And 'tho sometimes to his neighbors  
His tales became a joke,  
All his buddies listened quietly  
For they knew where of he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer,  
For ol' Joe has passed away,  
And the world's a little poorer  
For a Veteran died today.

He won't be mourned by many,  
Just his children and his wife.  
For he lived an ordinary,  
Very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a family,  
Going quietly on his way;  
And the world won't note his passing,  
'Tho a Veteran died today.

When politicians leave this earth,  
Their bodies lie in state,  
While thousands note their passing,  
And proclaim that they were great.

Papers tell of their life stories  
From the time that they were young,  
But the passing of a Veteran  
Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution  
To the welfare of our land,  
Some jerk who breaks his promise  
And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow  
Who in times of war and strife,  
Goes off to serve his country  
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend  
And the style in which he lives,  
Are often disproportionate,  
To the service that he gives.

While the ordinary Veteran,  
Who offered up his all,  
Is paid off with a medal  
And- perhaps a pension, small.

It is not the politicians  
With their compromise and ploys,  
Who won for us the freedom  
That our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger  
With your enemies at hand,  
Would you really want some cop-out  
With his ever-waffling stand?

Or would you want a Veteran  
His home, his country, his kin,  
Just a common Veteran,  
Who would fight until the end.

He was just a common Veteran,  
And his ranks are growing thin,  
But his presence should remind us  
We may need his likes again.

For when countries are in conflict,  
We find the Veteran's part,  
Is to clean up all the troubles  
That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor  
While he's here to hear the praise,  
Then at least let's give him homage  
At the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple headline  
In the paper that might say:

**"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,  
A VETERAN DIED TODAY."**



One of the plaques at the Veteran's Memorial





Garold and Janice Whitehead at the Veteran's Memorial they built. The bell to the right was formerly affixed to the roof of the Whiteheads' Centennial Farm. When the cord is pulled, the bell chimes and a recording of the Navy Hymn plays.

## Northwoods Patriot

**G**arold Whitehead didn't plan to build a memorial honoring America's veterans, but like so many things, "One thing just led to another."

The Veteran's Memorial actually started with a single flag, and then grew into something significant enough that in 2013 the local American Legion recognized Garold with its Americanism Medal. The medal is awarded to civilians who have shown exemplary service to the country and its vets.

Garold and his wife Janice, of Wetmore and downstate Three Rivers, are Alger Delta Co-op members and the owners of the White Fawn Lodge and Forest Glen General Store on Federal Forest Highway 13. The memorial really started with a road reconstruction project, Garold says. Upon completion of a project on Straits Lake Road, Garold decided to put up an American flag at the site because "Well, I just love the American flag." One flag turned into three, and then Garold got to work at his downstate shop, U.P. Tool and Die, creating numerous items to add to the memorial. One of the most unique is a red, white and blue metal structure with a heart shaped cutout surrounded by stars, and a large metal bell in the center. The bell came from the Whitehead family's St. Joseph County Centennial Farm from 1850 to 1986, and was originally used to warn the farm's field workers of danger, especially raids by Native Americans of that time. Now, ringing the bell will only start a calm recording of the Navy Hymn, sung by The Singing Crusaders of Kalamazoo, of which Garold is a member.

The bell's original home was also the site of one of Garold's most profound memories. It is a memory that resonates with many Americans and he feels was the true impetus for him to create the memorial. "One day when I was about 14, I was out shoveling corn and Mom came

to the gate and yelled to me, 'Garold, you need to quit what you're doing and come in the house.' Now, that was unusual because normally we didn't get called in until we were done with our chores. When I went in the house, the black-and-white TV was on. President Kennedy had just been shot. I thought highly of President Kennedy, and my whole life I've never forgotten his famous quote, 'My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.' This memorial is something that I can do for my country and the veterans."

Future plans definitely include lighting for the memorial and when asked if there were any others, Janice said "Probably. As the saying goes, it's never finished till it's finished and it's never finished." ■



To see the handwork in the memorial built by the Whiteheads, travel 13 miles south of U.S. Hwy. 28 on Federal Forest Hwy 13. Turn left onto Corner Lake Road. Go 1/3 mile, turn left onto Straits Lake Road. It's just a few hundred yards ahead.



# Meet Our Deer Blind Contest Winners!

From hideouts that resemble a cozy cottage (complete with area rug) to basic shelters, we received more than 60 entries in our *Country Lines* tricked-out deer blind contest. Who knew there were so many cool deer blind styles? Thanks to all who participated—it was difficult to choose! Our winners are featured here, but visit [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) to tour the tricked-out blinds of other electric co-op members who entered.

## “Most Tricked-Out”

Congratulations to **Ward Forquer**, a HomeWorks Tri-County member, for having the most tricked-out blind. Affectionately known as “Fort Miller Lite,” it’s a two-story 10 by 14-foot insulated structure with a carpeted observation room, solar panel, propane heat and lights, 13-inch flat screen color TV, bunk beds, and customized Miller Lite memorabilia. Located in Isabella County, it can host up to 12 people.



Photos—David Trumple Photography

## “Most Interestingly-Engineered”

Kudos to **Ronald Camp** for building the most interestingly-engineered blind. Working in underground excavation for 30 years, Ron envisioned a 36-foot underground storage tank for his shelter. The HomeWorks Tri-County member set the tank upright, above ground, and added a cupola at the top that swivels 360 degrees. Getting to the top means climbing a 28-rung ladder, but he is installing a 12-volt elevator.



## “Best Story Behind the Blind”

**Dean Ronk** made his deerblind after finding that nearly every garage sale had a fake Christmas tree—usually with a bent, broken base or missing branches. The Midwest Energy co-op member decided to bend the wire tree branches around a circle of hog fencing, with heavy plastic as a roof. His idea has gained popularity, and he says, “it makes hunting affordable, and a ‘green’ way to hunt by recycling old trees.” Now he makes them for friends, and people are giving him their old trees. ■



Photo Courtesy - Dean Ronk

# Home Heating Assistance Programs • 2014–2015 Season

**Program:** Winter Protection Plan  
**Contact:** Your Local Utility Company

Income Guidelines 2014–2015	
# in Household	150% Poverty Guide Maximum Income
1	\$17,505
2	23,595
3	29,685
4	35,775
5	41,865
6	47,955
7	54,045
8	60,090

Add \$6,090 for each additional member.

**Note:** All customers 65+ are eligible regardless of income. Customers are responsible for all electricity and natural gas used. At the end of the protection period, participants in the plan must make arrangements with their utility company to pay off any money owed before the next heating season.

The **Winter Protection Plan** protects eligible senior and low-income customers from service shut-offs and high utility bill payments during the winter months (Nov. 1–March 31). You may enroll between Nov. 1 and March 31. If you are an eligible low-income customer, your utility service will remain on from Nov. 1 through March 31, if you:

- pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, **and**
- make equal monthly payments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season of any past due bills.

When the protection period ends (March 31), from April 1 through Oct. 31, you must begin to pay the full monthly bill, plus part of the amount you owe from the winter months when you did not pay the full bill. **Participation does not relieve customers from the responsibility of paying for electricity and natural gas usage, but does prevent shut-off during winter months.** You qualify for the plan if you meet at least one of the following requirements:

- are age 65 or older,
- receive Department of Human Services cash assistance, including SSI,
- receive Food Assistance,
- receive Medicaid, or
- household income is at or below the 150% of poverty level shown in the Income Guidelines chart at left.

Senior citizen customers (65 or older) who participate in the Winter Protection Plan are not required to make specific payments to ensure that their service will not be shut off between Nov. 1 and March 31. However, seniors are encouraged to pay whatever they can during the winter so they will not have large, unmanageable bills when the protection ends.

**Program:** Home Heating Credit  
**Contact:** Mich. Dept. of Treasury

# Exemp.	Max. Income	# Exemp.	Max. Income
1	\$12,842	4	26,243
2	17,329	5	30,728
3	21,786	6	35,186

Add \$4,457 for each exemption over 6.

You can apply for a **Home Heating Credit** for the **2014** tax year if you meet the income guidelines listed at left, or you qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. Additional exemptions are available for seniors, disabled claimants, or claimants with 5% or more of their income from unemployment compensation.

If you qualify, you may receive assistance to help pay for your winter heating bills. **Forms are available mid- to late-January wherever tax forms are provided, or from the Michigan Dept. of Treasury (517-636-4486, or michigan.gov/treasury).** The Home Heating Credit claim form must be filed with the Michigan Dept. of Treasury **before Sept. 30, 2015.**

**Program:** Earned Income Credit  
**Contact:** U.S. Treasury Dept., Internal Revenue Service [irs.gov/EITC](http://irs.gov/EITC)  
 Michigan Dept. of Treasury [michigan.gov/treasury](http://michigan.gov/treasury)

The **Earned Income Credit (EIC)** is a refundable federal income tax credit for low-income working individuals and families who meet certain requirements and file a tax return. Those who qualify will owe less in taxes and may get a refund. Even a person who does not generally owe income tax may qualify for the EIC, but must file a tax return to do so. If married, you must file jointly to qualify. File Form 1040 or 1040A and attach the EIC.

You may claim a **Michigan earned income tax credit** for tax year **2014** equal to a percentage of the federal earned income tax credit for which you are eligible. Visit the website or see the **2014 MI tax booklet** for details.

**Program:** Crisis Assistance Program  
**Contact:** Local Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) [michigan.gov/mdhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhs)

**State Emergency Relief Program (SER):** [mibenefitsaccess.org](http://mibenefitsaccess.org) You do not have to be a DHS client to apply for help with a past due bill, shutoff notice or the need for deliverable fuel through the SER. This program, available Nov. 1–May 31, provides most of its utility assistance during this crisis season. However, limited assistance is available outside the crisis season. If you receive a DHS cash grant, you may vendor part of it towards heat and electric bills. Contact your local DHS or call the Home Heating Hotline, 855-275-6424.

**Program:** Low-Income Home Weatherization  
**Contact:** Local Community Action Agency

You may be able to receive help with weatherizing your home to reduce energy use if you meet low-income eligibility guidelines (200% of poverty guidelines shown above) and funding is available. **Weatherization** may include caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation. Contact your local Community Action Agency for details. Visit [mcaaa.org](http://mcaaa.org) to find one in your area.

**Program:** United Way  
**Contact:** Call 2-1-1 or [UWmich.org/2-1-1](http://UWmich.org/2-1-1)

2-1-1 is a free phone service operating 24 hours daily to provide information about help that may be available in a particular area with utilities and other needs. Learn more at [UWmich.org/2-1-1](http://UWmich.org/2-1-1).

**Program:** Medical Emergency Protection  
**Contact:** Local Utility Company

You are protected from service shut-off for nonpayment of your natural gas and/or electric bill for up to 21 days, possibly extended to 63 days, if you have a proven **medical emergency**. You must provide written proof from a doctor, public health or social services official that a medical emergency exists. Contact your gas or electric utility for details.

**Program:** Shut-off Protection for Military Active Duty  
**Contact:** Local Utility Company

If you or your spouse has been called into **active military duty** you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You may request extensions. You must still pay, but contact your utility company and they will help you set up a payment plan.

**Program:** Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program  
**Contact:**

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance. Michigan Veterans Trust Fund at (517) 284-5299 or <http://Michigan.gov/dmva>

**Program:** MI Energy Assistance Program  
**Contact:** Utility or 2-1-1 in late November

Agency assistance through MEAP, which includes funds from the Low Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF), became available in early October. Visit [Michigan.gov/mpsc](http://Michigan.gov/mpsc) for details about organizations that have received MEAP grants. Shut-off protection is provided Nov. 1–April 15 for all residential customers (regardless of income) of any Michigan electric that has chosen not to collect 97 cents monthly from its customers for the LIEAF fund.

## Seize the Savings

**T**he end of 2014 is nearing, but there is still time to save money by taking advantage of energy efficiency rebates and incentives. Think of it as an end-of-the-year bonus or a gift that keeps on giving.

Alger Delta Cooperative's Energy Optimization (EO) program offers a variety of ways to help you save electricity, earn incentives and rebates, and lower future energy costs. Take comfort in knowing that your actions today will provide long-lasting benefits that extend beyond the extra money you'll have in your pocket.

### Programs for Your Home

- **ENERGY STAR® lighting** – Save every time you flip a switch. These lightbulbs and fixtures save up to 90 percent more energy than traditional options.
- **ENERGY STAR appliances** – Buy qualifying energy efficient appliances to automatically save energy.
- **Appliance recycling** – Free pickup and recycling, plus a cash reward!
- **Efficiency heating, ventilation and air conditioning** – Rebates when you install qualifying HVAC equipment.
- **Online home energy audit** – Complete a free online home energy assessment to learn about your energy use and how to save more energy and money. And, get a free energy-savings kit!

- **Low-income services** – Helps qualified homeowners improve the efficiency of their homes, manage their electric use, and reduce electric bills at no additional cost.

### Programs for Your Business

There are also dozens of EO rebates available for business upgrades. Plus, energy-efficient businesses tend to have healthier, more productive employees.

- **Commercial and industrial services** – Rebates are available for the installation of high efficiency equipment, such as CFL and LED lighting fixtures, chiller tune-ups, variable speed air compressors, and customized rebates tailored to the needs of business-specific operations.
- **Farm services** – Rebates are available for the installation of energy efficiency products and equipment, such as timers for engine block heaters, variable speed controllers for vacuum pumps, lighting controls, and customized rebates tailored to meet the needs of agribusiness operations.

### Get Your Rebate

To take advantage of these rebates, get program details, download rebate applications or locate a participating retailer or contractor, go to [michigan-energy.org](http://michigan-energy.org) or call **877.296.4319**. ■



## Save energy, save money!

There are plenty of cues telling us that the end of the year is near—the air is cooler, the leaves have fallen, and the calendar is almost open to December. Opportunities are still available to save energy AND receive rebates and incentives.

**ENERGY TIP: Do you have a plan to save energy? Electricity demand by U.S. homes is forecast to climb as much as 21 percent by 2040. Act now.**

ONLINE: [michigan-energy.org](http://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](http://michigan-energy.org).

## Employee Spotlight

# Meet Your Co-op's Newest Lineworkers

**P**lease meet **Bill Carlson and Jon Conger**, Alger Delta Cooperative's most recently hired linemen.

Bill, a 36-year-old Escanaba native, began working for Alger Delta in March 2014. When asked what the best part of his job is he quickly

responded, "I enjoy the outage calls because I like going out and helping the community." At his previous job he was involved in restoring power to the victims of hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, and said that "it was very rewarding to help people and see that I could make a difference." Bill lives

in Wells with his wife and two children.

Apprentice lineman Jon, 22, is a native of Neshkora, WI, and began working in January 2014, after relocating from Montana. When asked what he enjoys doing in his spare time, he wasted no time in responding, "Hunting

and fishing, of course!" Jon resides in Gladstone.

Bill and Jon's supervisor, Alger Delta Operations Manager Troy Tiernan, says, "Both are very good workers. I feel confident when I send them out each day that they will do a good job for the members."

Bill, Jon and Troy are all members of the Alger Delta Cooperative team that work for you, striving to provide you with reliable and cost-effective power every day.

A lineworker's job includes the installation, maintenance and repair of power lines and metering equipment. Sometimes their work has to be performed on energized (live) power lines, and is often performed in challenging weather conditions and over difficult terrain. ■



Bill Carlson (L) and Jon Conger are part of your electric co-op's line crew, helping to provide you with reliable service and restore power after an outage.

## Use Your Space Heater Safely

**M**any people use space heaters for winter warmth, but they can be dangerous if used improperly.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that 25,000 home fires every year are associated with space heaters, and cause over 300 deaths. An additional 6,000 people annually go to the hospital for related burns.

These fires are caused by contact with or nearness to the heating elements, flammable fuels used in the heaters, defective wiring, and carbon monoxide poisoning caused by improper venting or incomplete fuel combustion.

### Here are tips for using a space heater safely:

- Keep it at least 3 feet from flammables, such as curtains, clothing, furniture or bedspreads.
- Select a model with an automatic shut-off, in case it tips.
- Buy one that is certified by an independent testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Buy the right size to handle the area to be heated.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep kids and pets at a safe distance.
- Never leave it unattended, or sleep with it on.
- Never use or store flammable liquids near it.



- Do not use in a bathroom—a high-moisture area can cause damage.
- Keep it away from water to prevent electrocution.
- Check the cord for fraying and cracks, and do not use an extension cord to run it.
- Be sure the plug fits snugly in the outlet. (The cord and plug may feel warm when operating, but it shouldn't feel hot. If it does, unplug it and have a repair person check for problems.)
- Do not try to repair a broken heater yourself—go to a qualified appliance service center.

Visit <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSC/PUBS/463.html> for more safety tips on space heaters that use wood or kerosene. ■



Alpine Power Plant  
Northeast view from M-32 Hwy

## Wolverine Co-op Plans New Natural Gas Power Plant

**A** new, natural gas-fueled electric generating plant is being planned by Wolverine Power Cooperative, of Cadillac. Called the Alpine Power Plant, its location will be in Elmira Township, Otsego County, west of Gaylord. Wolverine, a not-for-profit electric cooperative, provides wholesale electric power to six electric cooperatives throughout Michigan.

“Wolverine is excited about moving forward with a new natural gas peaking plant,” said project spokesman, Ken Bradstreet. “Our Alpine Power Plant will provide a nice balance to Wolverine’s existing power supply portfolio, while at the same time increasing electrical reliability in northern Michigan and complementing the ever-increasing amount of renewable energy in Michigan.”

Wolverine intends to present its development plans to both the Elmira Township and Otsego County planning commissions within the next month. Wolverine will also apply for an air quality permit with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

After a nearly two-year evaluation, Wolverine chose the Elmira Township site and entered into property options for nearly 170 acres of land. The location was

chosen, in part, due to the convergence of existing interstate natural gas pipelines and high-voltage electric transmission lines on the property.

Wolverine expects the project investment associated with the Alpine Power Plant to exceed \$100 million and provide significant tax revenues to several local units of government. “The Alpine Power Plant will provide a major boost to the local economy,” Bradstreet explains.

Through sound financial management, Wolverine is able to build this project with existing funds. Based on preliminary cost estimates, it is anticipated there will be no rate impact on the electric co-ops that purchase power from Wolverine. Visit [alpinecleanenergy.com](http://alpinecleanenergy.com) for further details on the proposed plant.

Wolverine supplies wholesale power to Cherryland Electric Cooperative (Grawn); Great Lakes Energy (Boyne City); HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative (Portland); Midwest Energy Cooperative (Cassopolis); Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op (Onaway); Spartan Renewable Energy, Inc. (Cadillac), and Wolverine Power Marketing Cooperative (Cadillac). ■



### «« Do You Know Where This Is?

Every co-op member who identifies the correct location of the photo at left by **Dec. 10** will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 credit for electricity from their electric co-op.

We do not accept Mystery Photo guesses by phone. Enter your guess at [countrylines.com](http://countrylines.com) or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 2859 W. Jolly Rd., Okemos, 48864. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and name of your co-op. Only those sending

complete information will be entered in the drawing. The winner will be announced in the January 2015 issue.

The September contest winner is Phyllis Burge, of Manistique, a Cloverland Electric Cooperative member who correctly identified the photo as the



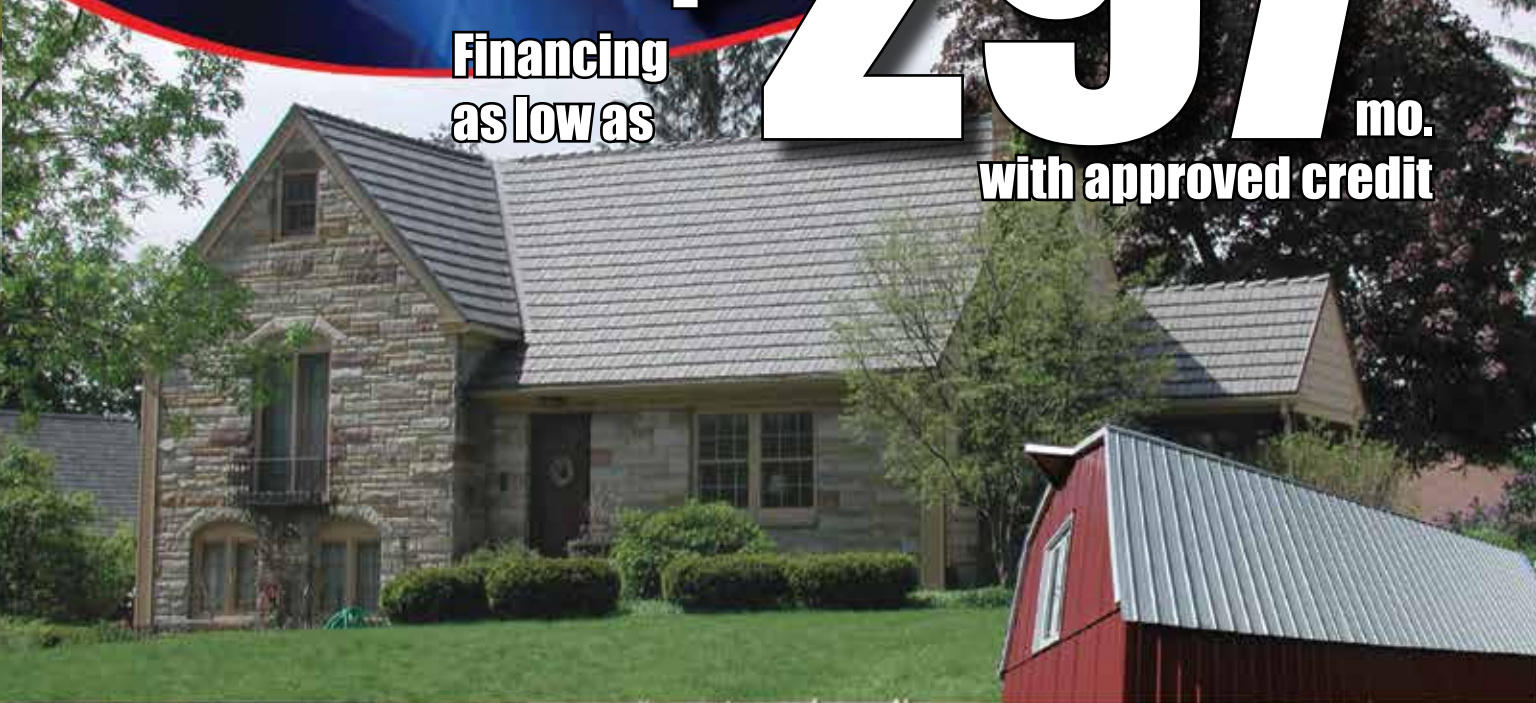
East Channel Lighthouse on Grand Island in the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore area.

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