

MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES

A photograph of a smiling couple standing in front of a utility building. The woman on the left is wearing a black jacket and a plaid scarf. The man on the right is wearing a black leather jacket and blue jeans. They are standing on a pile of large rocks. In the background, there is a building with a blue roof and several electrical meters mounted on a wall.

DR. POL

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**New Renewable Energy
Programs Available**

**GLE Exceeds State
Performance Standards**

**High Water Doesn't
Stop GLE Linemen**



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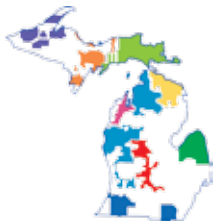
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Photos courtesy of E. Michael Stankevich and National Geographic



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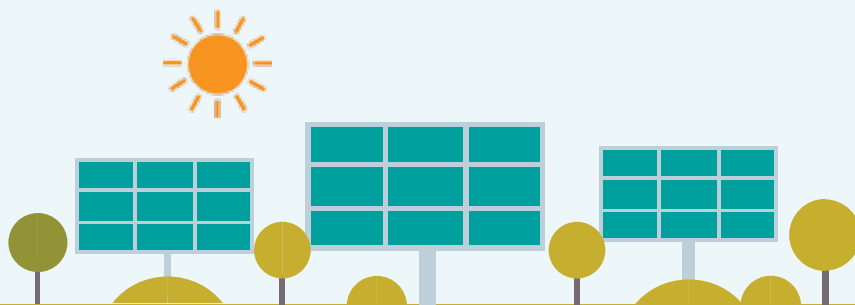
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New Renewable Energy Options



Bill Scott
Great Lakes Energy
President/CEO

Starting this month, our renewable energy programs offer three options for members who want to become more involved in renewables. Community Solar and Buy-All/Sell-All are two new programs available in addition to our existing Net Metering renewable energy program, which is changing slightly.

With three programs, you can pick the one right for you. First, you have to decide how involved you wish to be in supporting clean energy.

Let me help make that decision easier.

- If you are interested in supporting renewable energy but don't have a lot of time and money to invest in it, consider the **Community Solar** program. With this program you can buy a subscription and put solar energy on the electric grid for \$600 or, if you prefer to pay over time, \$10 per month for 60 months. There are no solar panels to buy, install and maintain on your property. Energy Optimization rebates up to \$150 per panel are also available for a limited time when you pay in full.
- The electricity you put on the grid with the Community Solar program likely won't end up in your home. If that's important to you, consider the **Net Metering*** program. Net Metered members use their own renewable energy generation system to supply electricity to their homes. What is the cost to have your own system? That depends on the type (solar, wind, etc.) and size you want. A professional who installs these systems can help you with that information.
- If the goal is to put more renewable energy on the grid than you use, you will want to invest in a larger more expensive system. You may be a business or industrial owner on our lines who is capable of making a larger investment. The **Buy-All/Sell-All** program is designed for you.

If you're not able to take advantage of these programs, Great Lakes Energy has you covered. Nearly 20 percent of the electricity we provide already comes from renewable energy sources. That's due in large part to the investment our power supplier has made in wind energy generation in Michigan. And that percentage could increase in the years ahead.

Please take a moment to read more about these programs on the next page. Together we can build a cleaner energy future. ■

**Program changes in effect for new systems in production after June 1, 2017.*

Helping Members Build A Brighter Future

Great Lakes Energy is helping its members take a bigger role in supporting clean, renewable energy with two new programs.

The Community Solar and Buy-All/Sell-All programs were created by our power supplier, Wolverine Power Cooperative (WPC), with the help of Great Lakes Energy and WPC's other member co-ops. The programs have been created in addition to our existing Net Metering renewable energy program that has been revised.

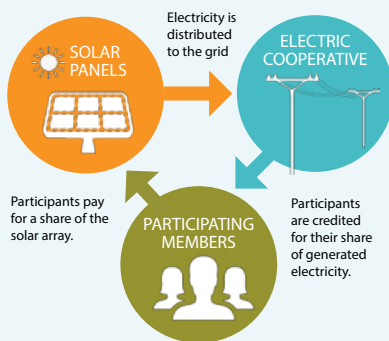
1

Community Solar

Community Solar offers members the benefits of solar without the installation and maintenance expense involved with owning your own solar panels. Of the three programs, it is the lowest cost option for those interested in investing in renewable energy.

How does it work?

Members purchase a subscription in the SpartanSolar community array located across from WPC headquarters in Cadillac. One subscription entitles a member to a share in the energy produced by the solar array. GLE continues delivering energy to the subscribing members, who receive a solar credit on their bills. Members have nothing to install or maintain and can cancel at any time.



Option Details

- 15-year agreement
- Credit of \$0.10/kWh generated
- Subscription cost: \$600/panel upfront or \$10 monthly bill charge for 5 years
- Energy Optimization rebates up to \$150 per panel for 20 panels when you pay in full

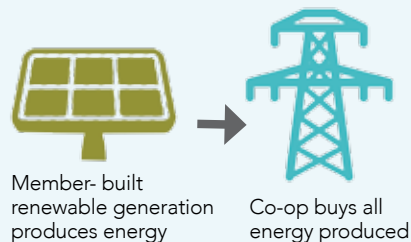
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Buy-All/Sell-All

If a member's goal is to produce more renewable energy than they use, this program is for them. Of the three programs, this could involve the largest investment due to the larger renewable energy generating system the member would likely install.

How does it work?

The member installs up to a 1 megawatt (MW) renewable energy generating system (solar, wind, etc.). WPC buys all electricity the system generates at \$0.10 per kWh. This option turns a member into a true energy supplier to the co-op.



Option Details

- 20-year agreement
- \$0.10/kWh for energy generated on premises and placed on the grid
- One MW cap
- Energy Optimization rebates up to \$3,000

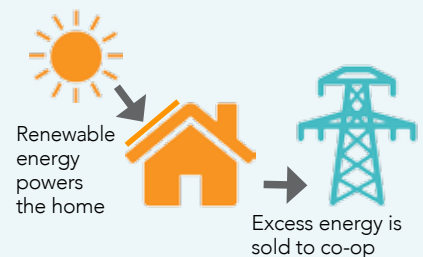
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Net Metering

This program was revised and is for members whose goal is to meet their home's energy needs with their own renewable energy generating system.

How does it work?

Every kWh of renewable energy produced by the member and used in their home is a kWh the member doesn't have to buy from GLE. The savings is based on our retail rate. Should a member produce more energy than they use, they will receive a bill credit of \$0.056 per kWh for any excess energy they put on the grid.*



Option Details*

- 10-year agreement
- Retail offsets for kWh produced and used on premises
- \$0.056/kWh for energy generated and placed on the grid
- 20 kW cap
- Energy Optimization rebates up to \$3,000

*Program changes in effect for new systems in production after June 1, 2017. Contact us for details.

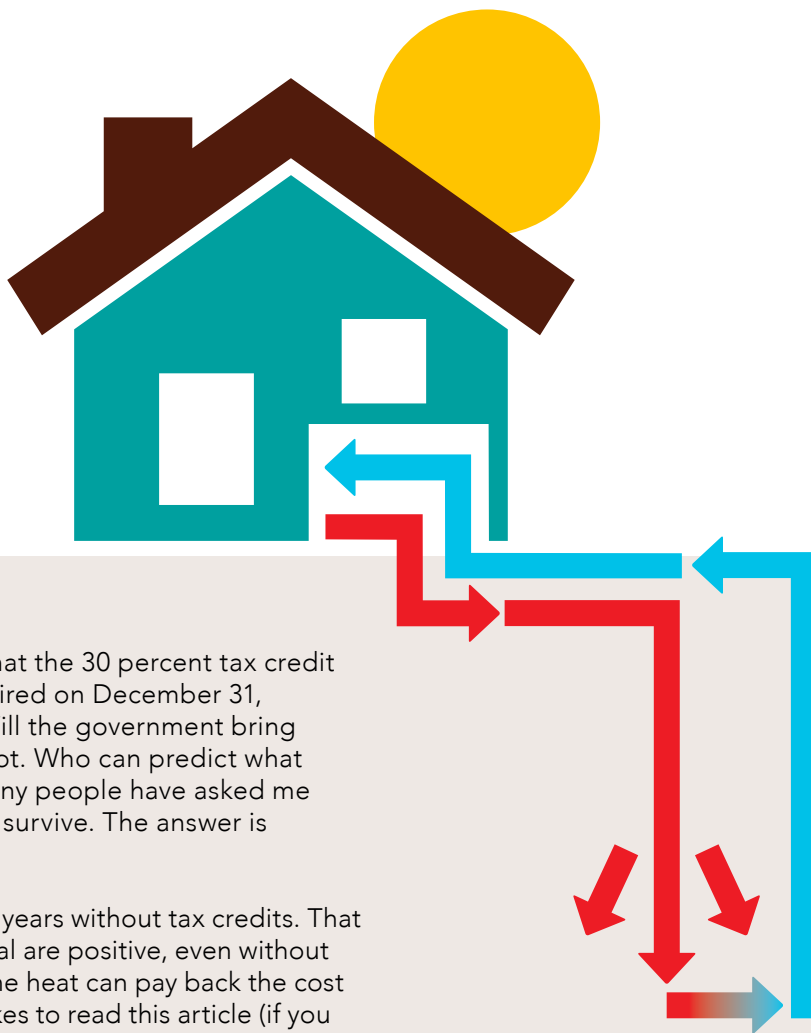
In addition to these programs, all members receive nearly 20 percent of their power from clean, renewable sources due in large part to WPC's investment in wind energy generation in Michigan.

Visit spartansolar.com for more information or call 888-GT-LAKES, ext. 8957.

Geothermal Systems

The rumors of their demise are greatly exaggerated.

By Larry Kaufman



Many of you have heard or read that the 30 percent tax credit for geothermal heat pumps expired on December 31, 2016. That is completely true. Will the government bring the tax credits back? Maybe...maybe not. Who can predict what the government will do? A question many people have asked me is whether the geothermal industry will survive. The answer is absolutely, positively, undeniably, YES!

The geothermal industry survived many years without tax credits. That is because the economics for geothermal are positive, even without the tax credit. Anyone with oil or propane heat can pay back the cost of a geothermal system in the time it takes to read this article (if you are a very slow reader). When coupled with the environmental benefits, comfort benefits, and that there is no outdoor unit—geothermal makes sense.

For 20 years I have had geothermal at my house. People tell me that they won't spend the extra money for geothermal. However, you are going to spend it—either on geothermal or by paying the utility. If you spend it on geothermal, you keep this extra money. Otherwise, you continue to pay this extra money forever. It's your choice.

The Michigan Geothermal Energy Association's annual conference is April 27 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Soaring Eagle Casino in Mt. Pleasant. This is a great place to learn more about geothermal. The fee is \$20 at the door or free if you request a quote on geothermal from any dealer at the conference. ■

Larry Kaufman is the Executive Director for the Michigan Geothermal Energy Association.

Visit earthcomfort.com or geoexchange.org to learn more about geothermal.

Michigan Legislature Approves Energy Package



Craig Borr, CEO
Michigan Electric
Cooperative
Association

After nearly two years of discussion, dialogue, committee hearings and, at times, frustration, the Michigan Legislature passed an energy reform package as their last initiative prior to recess in late December. The two-bill package is 200-plus pages in length and is the first major piece of state energy legislation since 2008.

One of the principal goals of the legislative package was ensuring additional “marketplace certainty” so that additional generating capacity can be constructed in our state. Michigan’s generating capacity, particularly in the Lower Peninsula, has been declining significantly over the past few years due to the many plant retirements necessitated by new, more stringent federal environmental standards.

Thankfully, electric cooperatives in Michigan are in a much better position than many of their neighboring municipal and investor-owned utilities when it comes to generating capacity and the ability to meet member demands during peak load periods. The 430-megawatt Alpine Generating Plant built by Wolverine Power Cooperative near Gaylord last year is a prime example of how Michigan’s electric co-ops are preparing for their members’ future needs. The Alpine plant required an investment of nearly \$200 million and is fueled by natural gas.

What are some of the specifics included in the energy legislation signed by Michigan Governor Rick Snyder in December, and how will they impact you and your electric cooperative?

- **Renewable Energy** – The new energy legislation increases the state’s Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) from the current 10 percent level to 15 percent in 2021. The majority of Michigan’s electric cooperatives already exceed the 15 percent renewable energy threshold required in 2021 from their extensive use of solar, wind and hydroelectric generating resources located in Michigan. Electric co-ops are Michigan’s renewable energy leaders.
- **Net Metering** – As member regulated utilities, Michigan’s electric cooperatives will continue



to set the parameters of their own net metering programs so that member-consumers can access their electric co-op’s net metering programs without regulatory involvement.

- **Electric Choice** – Like the state’s largest electric utilities, electric cooperatives will continue to offer “choice” to their large commercial and industrial members through Michigan’s electric customer choice program. However, electric choice suppliers will need to prove they have ample supplies of electric capacity to meet the energy requirements of “choice” customers. This is particularly important as much of Michigan’s electric generation fueled by coal continues to dwindle due to age and federal environmental requirements.
- **Energy Optimization** – Electric co-ops will continue to provide their members with energy optimization programs designed to reduce electric usage through LED lighting, installation of energy-efficient appliances and more extensive efficiency programs for commercial, industrial and agricultural members.

Michigan’s electric cooperatives were supportive of the new energy legislation and believe strongly that it will be good for our member-consumers throughout rural Michigan. We are hopeful that this package will result in the construction of new and cleaner forms of electric generation in Michigan, including new natural gas, wind and solar facilities. ■

Recycle And Save!

Do you have an old refrigerator or chest freezer taking up valuable space in your basement or garage? While you may not think about these appliances often, they could be adding hundreds of dollars onto your utility bill each year.

Declutter your home and save money with our Energy Optimization program. You can earn \$50 for removing and recycling a secondary refrigerator or freezer!*

Free appliance pick up made easy:

The Energy Optimization team will pick up and recycle your old refrigerator(s) or freezer(s) for FREE. You can choose to send along an old window air conditioner or dehumidifier for recycling as well. NOTE: All items must be in working condition.

How to participate:

Contact the Energy Optimization team at 877-296-4319 to schedule an appointment. A representative from our team will come to your home for the pick up, and a cash incentive will be mailed to you. It's that simple!

Cash incentives are available for the following:

Appliance Type	Pick up or Ride-Along Item	Incentive Amount
Refrigerator	Pick up	\$50
Chest Freezer	Pick up	\$50
Window Air Conditioner	Ride-Along	\$15
Dehumidifier	Ride-Along	\$15

**Limit two appliances per year, per residence.*

More ways to save!

Are you working on a remodeling project? Your electric utility's Energy Optimization program offers cash incentives for qualifying ENERGY STAR® appliances, including refrigerators, washers and dryers, ceiling fans, room air conditioners, televisions, and more.

Please visit **michigan-energy.org** for more information, or call **877-296-4319** with any questions. ■



Ready to upgrade or get rid of an old refrigerator or freezer?

Recycle it and save! Earn cash incentives for recycling your old, functioning appliances.

- **Refrigerator = \$50**
- **Freezer = \$50**
- **Dehumidifier** (ride along item) = **\$15**
- **Window Air Conditioner** (ride along item) = **\$15**

Contact the Energy Optimization team to schedule a free pick up.

Shopping for new appliances?

Energy Optimization offers cash incentives for qualifying ENERGY STAR® appliances. Visit our website for a complete list of savings opportunities.

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org

PHONE: 877-296-4319



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

Your Family Photos

GLE Photo Contest

Each month members can submit photos on Facebook or online for our annual photo contest. The photo with the most votes on Facebook is published here along with other selections. Enter again in March; see details below.

Most
Votes on
Facebook!



Randy Handwerk, Petoskey—Eight Are Great, All Of Our Grandchildren



Nikki Quick, Newaygo—Family—Life's Greatest Blessing



Donald Gotham, Custer—Family Came From As Far As Tennessee For Ludington's New Year's Eve Ball Drop



Madeline Lundy, South Boardman—Shhh...! Am Taking A Nap With My Little Sister



Skye Vawter, Newaygo—Meeting Little Brother



Enter Our Photo Contest and Win!

Visit Facebook.com/greatlakesenergy and click "Photo Contest" from the menu tabs. Not on Facebook? You can also enter the contest at gtlakes.com/photocontest/. Make sure to vote, and encourage others to vote for you, too. The photo receiving the most votes from our online and Facebook contest will be printed in an issue of *Michigan Country Lines* along with some of our other favorites. All photos printed in the magazine throughout the year will be entered to win a \$200 bill credit in December 2017.

Submit your best shot and encourage your friends to vote! The March theme is **Planes, Trains and Automobiles**. Photos can be submitted between **March 1 to March 20** to be featured in the May issue.

SOUPS & STEWS

Warm up with these hearty, comforting recipes.

Larry's Mushroom Soup

Larry Rospierski, Great Lakes Energy

- 1½ pounds mushrooms (larger ones are easier to clean and slice)
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 medium sweet onion
- 2 medium cloves garlic, minced
- 3 teaspoons flour
- 1 cup half & half
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon white cooking wine
- pepper, to taste
- 4–5 large leaves fresh basil, shredded or finely cut
- ½ cup chopped scallions or chives (fresh is best)

Begin by wiping clean (do not wash) the mushrooms and slicing thin (⅛" or so). Melt butter in a large stockpot and cook mushrooms covered for about 5 minutes on low heat. While mushrooms are cooking, dice the onions. Add salt to the stockpot and stir. Then reserve about ¼ of the mushrooms on the side. Add the onions and garlic. Cover and cook for another 5 minutes. Add the flour and mix well. Remove the pot from the heat. After the mixture is completed, add the half & half slowly and whisk on low heat. Add the stock slowly, whisking on low heat. Then add the yogurt, whisking on low heat. Add the basil, stirring (not whisking) in well. Then add the wine and stir in. Using an immersion blender (or mixer), combine and chop all ingredients thoroughly. The texture will not be smooth. Add most of the mushrooms that were set aside, saving about 2–3 slices for each serving. Cover and continue cooking slowly, bringing the soup to just below boiling. Serve with two or three of the sliced mushrooms in the middle and pepper to taste. Garnish with scallions or chives.



Minestrone

Carolyn Davis, Midwest Energy

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 pound stew meat, cubed (can substitute with browned turkey or Italian sausage)
- 7 cups beef broth or beef stock
- 2 (15-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1 (14-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons dried parsley flakes
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon thyme
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 cup zucchini, thinly sliced
- 1 cup carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 (15-ounce) can garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 cup macaroni, uncooked
- 3–4 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese



In a 6–8 quart Dutch oven, melt butter over medium heat. Add stew meat and cook until browned. Stir in broth, tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, onion, celery, and seasonings. Bring to a boil then reduce heat to low.

Cover and simmer for 1 to 1¼ hours or until beef is tender, stirring occasionally. Add cabbage, zucchini, carrots, garbanzo beans and macaroni. Return soup to boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer for 20–25 minutes or until the vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally. Ladle soup into bowls and top with Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

Up North Venison Stew

Deb Finedell, Great Lakes Energy

- 2 pounds venison, cubed
- ¼ cup butter
- 2 cups sliced celery
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, cut up
- 3 medium potatoes, cut up
- ¼ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 3 beef bouillon cubes
- 10 ounces spaghetti sauce
- 2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley



Brown venison in butter (Dutch oven or large pot) over medium heat. Add remaining ingredients, mix, cover and simmer on low heat for 2–3 hours. Enjoy hot!

Submit your favorite recipe for a chance to win a \$50 bill credit and have your recipe featured in *Country Lines*:



- “On The Grill” due April 4
- “Chicken Challenge” due May 4

Go to micoopkitchen.com for more information and to register.



Olie Bollen (Dutch Fritters, pictured above)

Dr. Jan and Diane Pol

This Dutch pastry is similar to a doughnut-style fritter. A reminder from his childhood in the Netherlands, Dr. Pol says that big celebrations, especially on New Year's Eve, were never complete without this delicious treat.

- 1 package active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¾ cup warm water
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups milk
- 3 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 (1 pound) package raisins
- 4 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 quart vegetable oil for frying

Dissolve yeast and sugar in water; let stand in a warm place for 30 minutes. Combine eggs, milk, corn syrup, raisins, and yeast mixture in a large pot. Sift flour and salt into the mixture and mix well for 2 to 3 minutes. Test a spoonful of dough to see if it will fall in a lump from the spoon. If not, add a little more water or milk. Let rise in warm place for 2 hours. Heat the oil for frying to 350 degrees in a heavy bottomed, deep skillet. Drop by tablespoon into the preheated oil; fry the fritters until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side. Remove them to a paper towel-lined plate and repeat with remaining dough. Dust with sugar while warm.

Read the full story about Dr. Pol, Michigan's TV reality star, on page 14 and visit micoopkitchen.com for this recipe and others.



Meeting High Standards

GLE exceeds all state performance standards.

Great Lakes Energy exceeded all 10 state-mandated standards for electric service and reliability in 2016.

Thousands of Great Lakes Energy members are benefiting from improvements in reliability and service. It has led to our success in meeting all 10 state performance standards in eight of the last 10 years. The addition of more line protection devices, use of new technologies, improvements to major power line circuits, and ongoing vegetation management to limit tree damage to power lines are all helping to get the lights back on safely and more quickly for members during storms.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) requires state-regulated electric utilities to annually report how well they were able to meet standards established to protect consumers from unacceptable levels of electric service and reliability. Standards to help measure utility performance in emergency outage situations are included. ■

2016 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS RESULTS

Complaint Response. The 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: 100 percent.

Call Blockage. No more than five percent of incoming calls should receive a busy signal.

GLE score: 1.38 percent.

Meter Reading. At least 85 percent of the meters must be read within the approved time period.

GLE score: 99.57 percent.

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: 94.1 percent.

New Service Installation. At least 90 percent of new services must be installed in 15 business days or less. Great Lakes Energy handled 911 new service installations last year, excluding those installed in combination with primary lines.

GLE score: 98.8 percent.

Average Call Answer Time. Calls must be answered on average in less than 90 seconds. In 2016, the cooperative handled nearly 34,600 calls through its Call Center, outage and operator queues.

GLE score: 28 seconds.

Outage Restoration (Normal Conditions). At least 90 percent of the customers should have their power restored in eight hours or less.

GLE score: 99.6 percent.

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.

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.

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: 100 percent.

Same Circuit Repetitive Interruption. No more than five percent of the utility's electric circuits should experience five or more outages in a 12-month period.

GLE score: 0.09 percent.

Getting the lights back on quickly is another way Great Lakes Energy looks out for you.

Cycling Season Draws Near



The Top of Michigan Trails Council is one of many community organizations helped by the Great Lakes Energy People Fund. (Photo courtesy—Trails Council)

It won't be long before bicyclists will again explore approximately 300 miles of trails in Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Otsego, Montmorency, Presque Isle and Alpena counties. They are primarily non-motorized trails available for cycling, hiking and other recreational uses. Overseeing the regional trail system is the Top of Michigan Trails Council that received a \$5,000 Great Lakes Energy People Fund grant to help fund furnishings for its new trail center on M-119 in Petoskey. The center offers trail users information on Northern Michigan trails. It is also a base for youth and family programs/events, and a meeting place for area trail organizations.

Visit trailsCouncil.org for more information on the trails and related events.

Getting The Job Done

High water didn't stop Great Lakes Energy lineworkers from replacing a broken utility pole in a flooded swamp in Allegan County. The new pole was floated down to a tracked vehicle that lifted it into position. Wood planking was used to support the heavy vehicle in the deep water.



DR. POL

AMERICA'S FAVORITE TV
VETERINARIAN & LOCAL LEGEND



Renewable Energy

Dr. Pol, his wife, Diane, and their team care for countless animals, but they also care about renewable energy. The Pols have a long history with renewable energy, installing solar panels on their farm as early as the 1970s.

"I grew up in the Netherlands," said Dr. Pol. "With the windmills all around, renewable energy has always been a part of my life."

The Pols have invested in two additional solar projects, including their most recent which included installing approximately 5,000 square feet of high-efficiency monocrystalline panels to the barn on their property. They worked closely with their local co-op, HomeWorks Tri-County Electric, as well as Ecojiva and CNR Electric.

The system is equipped to generate up to 57 kW. By incorporating solar panels on their property, the Pols hope to take full advantage of the renewable energy generated in order to offset their residential usage. The Pols plan to sell their excess energy back to the utility for the benefit of their fellow co-op members.

"It's great watching how much energy is being generated, just since October," noted Dr. Pol. "Even on overcast days power gets generated. I'm looking forward to watching the meter this summer!"

By Emily Haines Lloyd

Photos courtesy of E. Michael Stankevich and National Geographic

Don't let his frank demeanor fool you. Dr. Jan Pol, also known as *The Incredible Dr. Pol* on National Geographic's WILD channel, is all heart.

Even his journey from his native country, the Netherlands, to rural Michigan was an act of love. Pol was an exchange student, staying with a family in Mayville, Mich. That's where he met his future wife, Diane. After he returned to the Netherlands, Diane traveled to Europe where they eventually fell in love.

Growing up on a dairy farm in the Netherlands, Dr. Pol's love of animals led him to veterinary school. After graduation, the Pols were married, and Dr. Pol joined a veterinary practice in Harbor Beach, Mich. "It was a great place to start," said Dr. Pol. "But I also knew I wanted to start my own practice one day."

After 10 years in Harbor Beach, the Pols sought out a more centrally-located area to open their practice. They settled on Isabella County, in the



Check out Dr. Pol's book, *Never Turn Your Back on an Angus Cow*, which is full of amusing and poignant tales from his four decades as a vet in rural Michigan.

heart of Michigan. It was there that the Pols built their practice and their lives.

The life of a country vet is anything but redundant. Dr. Pol has treated everything from large farm animals to beloved family pets. "I've castrated 16 different species of animals," he jokes with a laugh.

It's these offhanded, hilarious and all-too-true comments that likely landed Dr. Pol his own television show. When his son, Charles, now a producer on the show, pitched the idea to some friends in the television business, he described his father as "a real character."

"I'm just a stubborn Dutch boy," said Dr. Pol. "I go around, do my work, and the camera follows. I think people are looking for reality TV that is real."

People certainly are—*The Incredible Dr. Pol* had more than 1 million viewers for its Season 7 premier, making it National Geographic WILD's most-watched telecast in its network history.

Even with his recognizable face, Dr. Pol still sees himself as the local vet.

"I love what I do. I try to help animals the best I can and make their owners happy," he said. "I'd love to see every kid grow up with animals. Kids who are taught to treat animals well become compassionate adults."

Compassion is the hallmark of Dr. Pol's practice and his life—a life that is full of love, adventure and all things incredible. ●

The Pols are members of HomeWorks Tri-Country Electric Cooperative.





Country Lines, Your Communications Partner

For more than 35 years, our co-op members have received *Michigan Country Lines* because it is the most effective and economical way to share information with our members. An empowering communication tool, *Country Lines* keeps members up-to-date about everything going on within their electric co-op. Issues contain news about our services, director elections, member meetings and management decisions members' need to know about as owners of the co-op. The magazine also includes legal notices that would otherwise have to be placed in local media at a substantial cost. And, sending *Michigan Country Lines* to you helps the co-op fulfill one of its important principles—to educate and communicate openly with its members. The board of directors authorizes the co-op to subscribe to *Michigan Country Lines* on behalf of each member at an average cost of \$4.01 per year, paid as part of members' electric bill. The current magazine cost is 49 cents per copy. *Michigan Country Lines* is published for us, at cost, by the Michigan Electric Cooperative Association in Lansing. As always, we welcome and value your comments.

See If A Data Breach Affects You



Mike Youngs

Great Lakes Energy
Business Security &
Networks Director

Greetings and welcome back!

I hope you found some value in my January *Country Lines* cyber security article explaining how using a password manager makes online life easier and more secure. My hope is that some of you have found a password manager you like and are now using it regularly.

This month, I would like to discuss “data breach notification services.” As you may have read in this space earlier, we know that data breaches are as common as popcorn at the movies. So how can you keep track of all of them, and more importantly, how can you tell if the data breach contains any of your information?

Last May, you may have heard that the professional social networking site LinkedIn experienced a data breach. That was a big one, with more than 164 million email addresses exposed online. Additionally, LinkedIn should have notified you about the breach directly, and perhaps that prompted you to change your password.

However, did you know that the social networking site MySpace was breached in 2008? Even if you can't remember creating a MySpace profile all those years ago, that breach is still relevant. The information stolen in 2008 is actively being sold on the “dark web” as recently as May of 2016. Chances are good that many of the email addresses stolen from MySpace nine years ago are still active today. That means that even if you do not use that service anymore, it is still relevant to you. Also, it is not hard to imagine a data breach from nearly a decade ago will not make today's headlines.

To find out if any of my information is included in any of these data breaches, I use a free service called Have I Been Pwned. “Pwned” is simply a typo of the word “owned.” The <https://haveibeenpwned.com/> website is run by Troy Hunt (Twitter: @TroyHunt), a well-respected and trustworthy security researcher. When you type in your email address or username, the service will rummage through over two billion “pwned” accounts to see if yours is included, as well as provide additional information about the specific data breach your information was found in. When I discovered this project a few years ago, I visited the website and typed in both my work and personal email accounts. You guessed it—pwned.

My favorite feature is the “Notify Me” service. When you subscribe, you can add your email address to the service and be alerted the instant a new data breach containing your information is uploaded into the Have I Been Pwned database.

The great thing is that it can alert you to a data breach you might not be aware of. If you are ever notified, you can quickly take appropriate action, such as changing your password and storing it in your favorite password manager.

That's it for now. I'll be back again with more tips on how to get the most out of the online world as safely and securely as possible. ■



Who Are Your Directors?

What does Great Lakes Energy Director Ric Evans do in his spare time? He often can be found at the Mt. McSauba Recreational Area in Charlevoix where he is a long-time volunteer.

He helped design (and later redesign) the popular disc golf course at the recreational area. Ric also organizes disc golf events and helps youngsters learn the game.

Putting concern for the community into practice, and having fun, too. That's the cooperative difference. ■

Statement of Non-Discrimination

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1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
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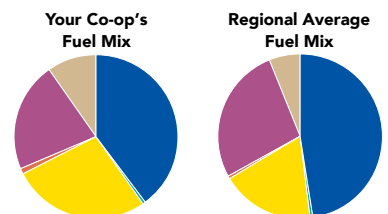
Fuel Mix Report

The fuel mix characteristics of Great Lakes Energy Cooperative as required by Public Act 141 of 2000 for the 12-month period ending 12/31/16.

COMPARISON OF FUEL SOURCES USED

Regional average fuel mix used		
Your co-op's fuel mix		
FUEL SOURCE		
Coal	39.8%	47.7%
Oil	0.5%	0.6%
Gas	27.2%	18.1%
Hydroelectric	1.3%	0.8%
Nuclear	21.5%	26.7%
Renewable Fuels	9.7%	6.1%
Biofuel	0.6%	0.8%
Biomass	0.4%	0.5%
Solar	0.1%	0.1%
Solid Waste Incineration	0.1%	0.1%
Wind	8.1%	4.1%
Wood	0.4%	0.5%

NOTE: Biomass above excludes wood; solid waste incineration includes landfill gas; and wind includes a long-term renewable purchase power contract in Wolverine's mix, but does not include banked renewable energy credits (RECs) that bring the total for renewable fuels to 10%. The 2016 Historical Fuel Mix numbers reflected here do not reflect current and ongoing renewable percentages of fuel mix now near 20%.



EMISSIONS AND WASTE COMPARISON

TYPE OF EMISSION/WASTE	lbs/MWh	
	Your Co-op	Regional Average*
Sulfur Dioxide	5.4	7.6
Carbon Dioxide	1,578	2,170
Oxides of Nitrogen	1.5	2.0
High-level Nuclear Waste	0.0068	0.0083

*Regional average information was obtained from MPSC website and is for the twelve-month period ending 12/31/16.

Great Lakes Energy purchases 100% of its electricity from Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative, Inc. which provided this fuel mix and environmental data.

I Remember...

Thinking back to my fondest Michigan memories, some of them came during the darkest days of my life.

I am not only a member of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, but also an employee for the past 25 years. To me, it is much more than just a place to work; it is like family. We sometimes disagree and squabble—just like family. We tend to get on each other's nerves—just like family. And then we come together when a brother or sister is in need—much like family. When tragedy strikes, we come together in many ways. Whether it be in one another's offices to talk, at a funeral, or as a group meeting with counselors on hand.

I felt like part of the PIE&G family in 2000 when I lost my 2 ½-year-old son, Jordan, suddenly after a very short illness. My co-op family rallied together for my family. They literally delivered a truck load of food to my house. I only remember the pan of chocolate covered cookie bars that I hid in my walk-in closet under a stack of clothes. (Yes, I ate the entire pan of cookies myself.) At the funeral, bucket trucks lined up in front of the church. It was a breathtaking sight for my family. They still talk about it today. As a result of my son's death, I heard positive stories of marriages reconciling, family feuds being settled, and an attitude among many friends and family that life is just too short to not live in harmony with others.

When I returned to work, my PIE&G family was there for me and ready to listen at any moment I needed. And, exactly one year later, my family was able to meet a very sweet little girl that received my son's liver. These were truly some of my fondest memories.

Heather Homan
Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op

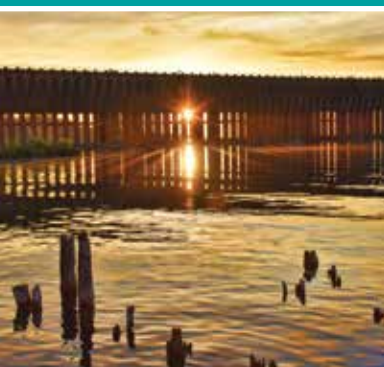


We invite members to share their fondest memories.

Country Lines will pay \$50 for stories we publish.

Guidelines

1. Approximately 200 words
2. Digital photos must be at least 600 KB
3. Only one entry per household, per month
4. *Country Lines* retains reprint rights
5. Please include your name, address, email, phone number and the name of your electric co-op
6. Submit your memories online: countrylines.com



«« Where In Michigan Is This?

Identify the correct location of the photo on the left by April 10 and be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 electric bill credit. Enter your guess at countrylines.com or send by mail to: *Country Lines* Mystery Photo, 201 Townsend St., Suite 900, Lansing, MI 48933. Include the name on your account, address, phone number, and the name of your co-op.

Our Mystery Photo Contest winner from the January 2017 issue is James Pelkey, a Thumb Electric member who correctly identified the photo as the Emergency Ark (Boat Barn) near Caseville on Oak Beach Road.

Winners are announced in the following issues of *Country Lines*: January, March, May, July/August, September and November/December.



Jan. Photo



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