

POWERTalk

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Michigan Country Lines

Protecting lines one tree at a time



Bill Scott
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President/CEO

One of the many things that makes our state beautiful is the abundance of trees. Many of us have childhood memories of climbing their branches or have found relief under the shade of a tree on a hot summer day. And while

it doesn't give us joy to see one cut down, the nature of our business requires annual removal of trees that threaten our lines and the reliable electrical service we provide to your home.

Trees are the most common cause of power outages to our members. None of us like going without power so to give you the reliability you deserve, our vegetation management department

performs routine maintenance of trees and other vegetation. With over 11,000 miles of overhead lines, trimming takes place on a seven year cycle. Kevin Lockman, GLE's supervisor of vegetation management, explains this more in your March 2019 Country Lines magazine.

We are committed to only trimming what is to protect your safety and prevent disrupted service.

Small actions on your part also help:

- Never plant a tree or shrub next to meters or transformers (the green boxes).
- Use proper planting methods when planting trees (see our Tree Planting Guide below).
- Before you dig, call Miss Dig (dial 8-1-1 or missdig.org) to avoid harm from underground wires.
- If you see a tree endangering a powerline, contact us right away and do not attempt to remove it yourself. Removing trees near or from powerlines can be very dangerous.

Call us at 888-GTLAKES (485-2537) or email glenergy@glenergy.com if you have questions, concerns, or comments. Our certified Arborists/Utility Specialists are available to assist you. More information can also be found at gtlakes.com.



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 = \$20
- Freezer = \$15
- Dehumidifier (ride along item) = \$15
- Energy Star TV (51"+) = \$20

Contact the Energy Optimization team to schedule a free pickup.

Shopping for new appliances?

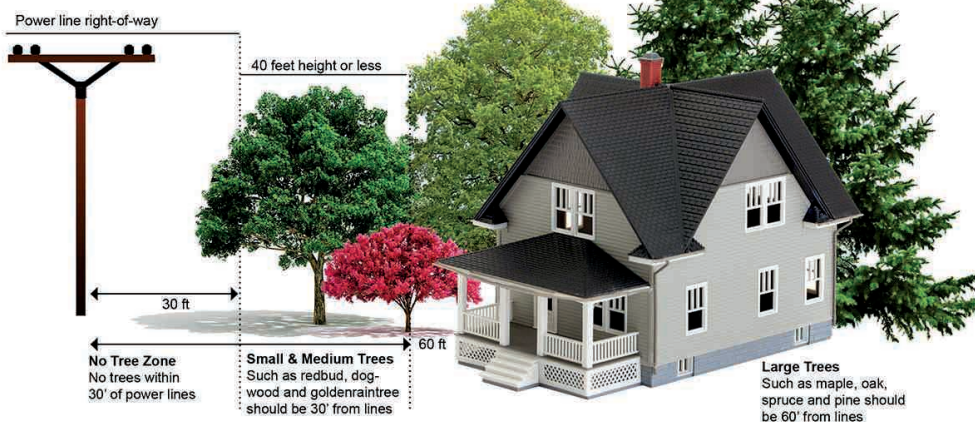
Energy Optimization offers cash incentives for qualifying ENERGY STAR® appliances. Visit our website for a complete list of savings opportunities.

ONLINE: michigan-energy.org

PHONE: 877-296-4319

Plant the right tree, in the right place

For safety, plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines



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.



Have A Comfy Home *and Save*

Stay comfortable with a heat pump and save money, too.

Save all year long because heat pumps heat and cool.

Qualifying members whose primary heating system is a heat pump (ground or air-source) can have it separately metered at a lower kilowatt-hour (kWh) rate.

The efficient electric heat rate offers a 3 cents per kWh credit year-round for qualifying ground-source heat pumps. Qualifying air-source heat pumps can receive the credit during the heating season (bills rendered November through May).

Electric heat pump must meet these energy efficiency standards to qualify for the lower rate:

- **Geothermal System** - minimum requirements of EER 17.1 COP 3.6 for closed loop water-to-air; EER 21.1 COP 4.1 for open loop water-to-air; EER 16.1 COP 3.1 for closed loop water-to-water; EER 20.1 COP 3.5 for open loop water-to-water; EER 16 COP 3.6 for direct geoechange.
- **Air-Source Heat Pump** - minimum requirements of HSPF 8.5, EER 12.5, & SEER 15 for split systems and HSPF 8, EER 12 & SEER 14 for package systems.

Rebates of \$500 (ground-source) and \$250 (air-source) are available for qualifying systems. For more information on the rebates and lower rate, call and ask for ext. 8957, or email us at: glenergy@glenergy.com.

Additional heat pump rebates up to \$750 are available through our Energy Optimization program. Does the heat pump have an ECM (variable speed) blower motor and a wi-fi enabled or smart occupancy sensing thermostat? Rebates are also available for them. Visit michigan-energy.org or call **877-296-4319**.

The Michigan Geothermal Energy Association can tell you more about heat pumps and dealers in your area by visiting their web site: earthcomfort.com.

Plus, ask your tax advisor about geothermal tax credits now extended through Jan. 1, 2022. Great Lakes Energy does not sell or service heat pumps.

Truestream *Update*

Construction plans for our fiber network have been announced and will begin this spring in parts of Emmet and Charlevoix counties. The construction will expand availability of Truestream fiber internet and voice services to thousands of rural members who do not have access to fiber at their home or business. The fiber network delivers download speeds up to 1 Gig (1,000 megabits per second), massive bandwidth, unlimited voice services and no data caps.

If you live in this area, we highly encourage you to register their interest on www.jointruestream.com. There is no obligation once registered.

The benefits of fiber are already making an impact and many are voicing how life changing fiber internet is for them.

“The numbers don’t lie,” said Brian Bates of Bear Creek Organic farm in Petoskey Michigan, who posted speed test results on Facebook after having service

installed. “Truestream is more than 400 times faster than speeds we were able to get with our previous internet provider. And for 75% less money with no contract and unlimited everything!”

Truestream opens the door for more than just downloading and streaming content at high speeds. Internet connections for many will finally catch up with modern video and voice calling technology, offering a sharper image, clearer sound, and minimized lag. The opportunity to work from home or take classes will become a reality for thousands of Michigan residents. The structure will be put in place for future connected smart-home technologies and advancements.

“Our entire community will benefit from the Truestream fiber network. Not only will members experience some of the fastest internet speeds and most reliable connectivity in the country, we believe the long-term economic boost to the

area will be substantial,” said Great Lakes Energy CEO Bill Scott. “Studies have shown that just having access to fiber can add to a home’s real estate value, and we’ve already had 9,000 people register their interest. We’re thrilled to launch in our Petoskey service area first, and we plan to continue expanding. Construction will take time though.”

Fast, reliable Internet is becoming an essential utility, as vital as power or water for many. We are confident the Truestream fiber network will build a better, more connected future.

Pre-register your interest today and save on installation (a \$149 value). No obligation, no contracts and prices start at less than \$60 per month! Visit www.jointruestream.com.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Looking Out for You

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