

POWER*Talk*

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When The Wind Blows



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Trees and power lines - like oil and water - don't mix. With all the hard work it takes to keep the right of ways cleared, we know trees can still fall on the power lines when strong winds blow, especially during the summer months when storms are known

to quickly crop up.

So far this year, we've experienced more small wind events rather than one large storm (knock on wood!). But sometimes a short-lived windstorm can be just as difficult. A key cause of outages is winds that are just strong enough to cause damage for trees and power lines. It keeps our lineworkers and dispatchers very busy. This can create a challenge that is largely out of our control

to meet our annual reliability goal of outage minutes.

No one can control the weather, but we can control how quickly and safely we get the power back on. Big investments made in recent years are helping us do that. They include regularly clearing trees away from power lines, rebuilding major power line circuits where outages are more prevalent, taking advantage of new technologies and adding more line protection devices to limit the number of members affected by outages.

Repairing lines as efficiently and safely as possible is important, too. One of the benefits of a large cooperative is we can pull Great Lakes Energy crews from other parts of our 26 county service area to help when a storm's damage is localized over one area. The strategy is less effective when little pesky storms pop up throughout our service area, but we can count on them when larger storms blow through.

Members sometimes ask why we don't put all our lines underground and avoid damage by winds and trees. It's a good question,



but not necessarily a simple solution. The estimated cost to put approximately 11,000 miles of line underground would be roughly \$1.299 billion. The impact on your rates would be significant, so we must look at what's best for each situation when deciding whether to install overhead or underground lines.

You can't expect to always have good weather, but you can expect us to be there for you. When strong winds blow, we'll be there to get the lights back on. That's the cooperative difference.



Attend a Free Energy Seminar

Free energy seminars for Great Lakes Energy members will be held this fall at our Newaygo and Boyne City offices in October.

Learn about home heating and cooling options with geothermal and air-source heat pumps and Energy Optimization (EO) programs that offer incentives to help co-op members save energy. They include rebates for the purchase of furnaces with variable speed blower motors, heat pump water heaters, Wi-Fi-enabled or smart occupancy-sensing thermostats, refrigerators, televisions, lighting and more. In addition, information on free online audits will be provided.

Local heating and cooling companies and Great Lakes Energy staff members will be on hand to answer questions related to heat pumps.

Co-op members will learn about other incentive programs offered by Great Lakes Energy, too.

Door prizes will be awarded. Winners will receive energy saving gifts.

More details will appear in next month's PowerTalk.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: call811.com



1. NOTIFY Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



2. WAIT Wait two or three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a location to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified..



4. RESPECT Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides depending on state laws), consider moving your project.

BEATING THE HEAT

6 WAYS YOU CAN LOWER YOUR BILL WHEN TEMPS ARE HIGH

1 Keep the Shades Down: Sunlight means heat. Closing blinds and shades during the warmest part of the day helps to keep the hot air out and the cool air in.

2 Invest in Energy Star Appliances: Not only do they use less electricity, but many are eligible for a rebate through GLE's Energy Optimization program.

3 Fire Up the Grill: Cooking inside introduces extra heat into your home and uses energy-consuming appliances. Skip both the heat and the cost by cooking outside when possible.

4 Upgrade to a Smart Thermostat: Make saving money on your utility bill easy by using your smart thermostat to control your home's temperature from your mobile device or set it to automatically adjust when you're away. Plus, GLE offers rebates for qualifying units through their Energy Optimization Program.

5 Tune Up Your HVAC System: Ensure your system is operating at peak efficiency by having a professional look at it.

6 Check out GLE's Free Home Audit: Take a simple online survey to find ways you can use (and spend less on) energy each month.

More information about GLE's Energy Optimization programs can be found at michigan-energy.org

REPORT YOUR OUTAGE...

CALL
1.888.485.2537



OR

Use the GLE
Mobile App



OR

Log in to your
account online



Please do not report your outage on social media, which is not monitored 24/7.



Looking Out for You



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