



Warm Up To Energy Saving Ideas

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President & Chief Executive Officer

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. During the coldest months, members are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. This winter safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips:



1. Don't overload outlets.

Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.



2. Never leave space heaters unattended.

If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.



3. Inspect heating pads and electric blankets.

These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads—look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.



4. Use portable generators safely.

Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

See Us at the Home Show

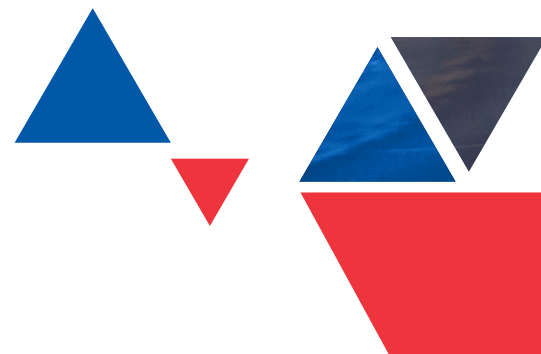


NORTHERN MICHIGAN REGIONAL HOME SHOW
March 13th & 14th

North Central Michigan College, Petoskey

Visit the Great Lakes Energy booth at the home show.

Stop by and speak to a representative to learn more about Energy Optimization programs designed to save you energy and money.



Stay Powered Up in All Conditions

Never connect a portable generator directly to a home's wiring or into a regular household outlet. The result could be a fatality or property damage.

Great Lakes Energy offers meter base equipment with a transfer switch for safely operating a portable generator in an emergency for \$350. The switch not only eliminates the risk of damage to your generator and appliances when your power is restored, but also prevents the generator from back-feeding electricity into the power line and potentially electrocuting line workers working to restore your service.

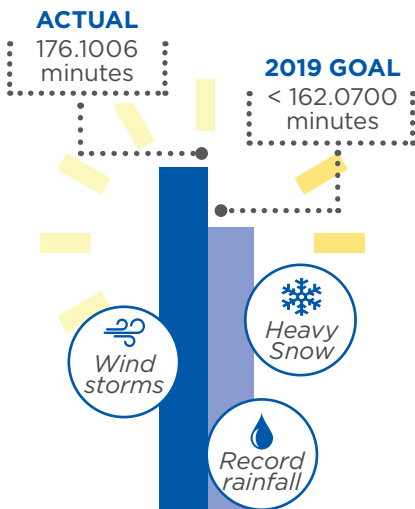
▶ For more details, contact us at 888-485-2537, ext. 1372.

Meter base equipment with a generator transfer switch protects damage to your generator and the lives of line workers.



2019 POWER OUTAGE MINUTES

2019 proved a challenging year. Strong weather events have lead to more power outages than average.



We continue our commitment to providing quality service, and meeting our service goal, as we have regularly for over 10 years.

2020 Areas Scheduled for Tree Work

Tree re-clearing along Great Lakes Energy power lines is scheduled this year in the counties and townships below.

Our annual vegetation management program helps us provide safe and reliable electric service. See the February issue of *Michigan Country Lines* for more information.

Allegan County: Fillmore, Martin, Overisel, Salem, Wayland

Antrim County: Banks, Warner, Star

Barry County: Orangeville, Yankee Springs

Charlevoix County: Bay, Boyne Valley, Chandler, Charlevoix, Hayes, Hudson, Marion, Melrose, Wilson, South Arm

Emmet: Bear Creek, Maple River, Littlefield, Pleasant View, Resort

Grand Traverse: Fife Lake

Kalkaska: Boardman, Excelsior, Kalkaska, Orange, Rapid River, Springfield

Lake County: Elk, Lake, Pleasant Plains, Sauble, Sweetwater, Webber, Yates

Missaukee: Bloomfield

Newaygo County: Denver, Home, Lilley, Merrill, Troy

Oceana County: Benona, Ferry, Golden, Greenwood, Hart, Newfield, Otto, Pentwater, Shelby, Weare

Osceola County: Cedar, Hartwick, Hersey, Highland, Leroy, Lincoln, Marion, Middle Branch, Richmond, Rose Lake

Otsego County: Bagley, Corwith, Elmira, Hayes, Livingston

Ottawa County: Jamestown, Zeeland



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