

What Does A Lineworker Do?

On any given day or night, one of the approximately **115,000 linemen in the U.S.** are installing and maintaining overhead and underground electrical systems in all kinds of weather conditions. Electric lineworkers **RANK 15 on the list of the 25 MOST DANGEROUS JOBS** in America!



Safety Comes First

Lineworkers have a commitment to safety above all else. They spend many hours in safety training each year and must adhere to rigorous safety regulations.

Linemen Are Trained To Safely and Efficiently:

- Climb poles to service power lines in areas inaccessible by trucks.
- Use an elevated bucket to assess and repair overhead lines.
- Install poles, overhead lines, and other equipment.
- Work on both energized and de-energized lines.
- Install and service underground lines.

Thank A Lineworker!

On Tuesday, April 18, 2023, it's Lineman Appreciation Day. We salute our BLP Line Crews who work around the clock to keep the power on.

Choosing or Upgrading Your Central Air Conditioner

Central air conditioners are more efficient than room air conditioners. In addition, they are out of the way, quiet, and convenient to operate.

Newer, more efficient air conditioners use 30% to 50% less energy to produce the same amount of cooling as older air conditioners. Even if your air conditioner is only ten years old, you may save 20% to 40% of your cooling energy costs by replacing it with a newer, more efficient model.

Proper sizing and installation are key elements in determining air conditioner efficiency. Too large a unit will not adequately remove humidity. Too small a unit will not be able to attain a comfortable temperature on the hottest days. Incorrect unit location, lack of insulation, and improper duct installation can greatly diminish efficiency.

When buying an air conditioner, look for a model with high efficiency ratings. Central air conditioners are rated according to their **Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER)**. SEER indicates the relative amount of energy needed to provide a specific cooling output. Many newer systems have SEER ratings as high as 26.

If your air conditioner is old, consider buying an energy-efficient model. Look for the **ENERGY STAR®** and EnergyGuide labels on central units which are about 15% more efficient than standard models.

Source: energy.gov



Energy Smart Residential Rebates

Central Air Conditioners (AC)

Incentive per 16 SEER or 15.2 SEER2: \$100

Incentive per 17 SEER or 16 SEER2: \$125

Incentive per 18 SEER or 17 SEER2: \$150

Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP)

Incentive per 16 SEER or 15.2 SEER2: \$75

Incentive per 17 SEER or 16 SEER2: \$125

Incentive per 18 SEER or 17 SEER2: \$175

Cold Climate Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP)

Incentive per 16 SEER or 15.2 SEER2
or 10 HSFP or 8.1HSFP2: \$500

Mini-Split System

Incentive per 18 SEER or SEER2 17 or higher: \$300

Visit mienergysmart.com
for more information.



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PLUGGED IN



Empowering Customers with Data

April 2023



Empowering Customers with Data

Utilities rely on a combination of advanced data systems to better serve customers every day. These resources include Geographic Information Systems, Advanced Meter Infrastructure, and specialized grid analytic engineering software, which work jointly to provide the user with the electric system's health, status, and usage.

In February, the Grand Haven BLP hosted a workshop presented by Robert Shelley, Distribution & Engineering Manager, with residents and business owners to help community members learn how the utility leverages this data and how they can also use these tools. You can view this presentation online at the BLP's YouTube channel.

"The data available to our customers is powerful," said Shelley, "Once you learn how to use these tools, you can uncover some key insights into how you use power every day, and what household electronics and appliances have the most impact on your utility bill."

Where's the Data Coming From?

The BLP manages a distribution system of nearly 15,000 meters covering 22.2 square miles.

"A network of four substations, 13 miles of high-voltage transmission lines, 112 miles of overhead lines, and 73 miles of underground lines requires careful planning and maintenance," said Shelley.

Over the years, the technology and software available for electrical distribution management has grown substantially. In alignment with the BLP's strategic plan, the utility has invested carefully in systems with a proven record of improving reliability and service for customers. These systems include:

- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) - GIS provides advanced, multi-layer mapping

software that helps the BLP know where its assets are located and situated near homes and other critical infrastructure.

- Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) - the BLP installed new customer meters systemwide that record usage and outage data in 15-minute increments and feed this information into other utility and customer-facing systems.

- Advanced Grid Analytics (AGA) - This engineering software integrates GIS and AMI and serves as an engineering tool to study the system performance and can then proactively prevent issues like equipment overloads. AGA can also monitor for under and overvoltage occurrences. The BLP can use AGA to work with customers in energy waste reduction programs, integration of customer-owned distributed generation resources or to evaluate the impacts of new loads on distribution system assets.

How Customers Can Benefit

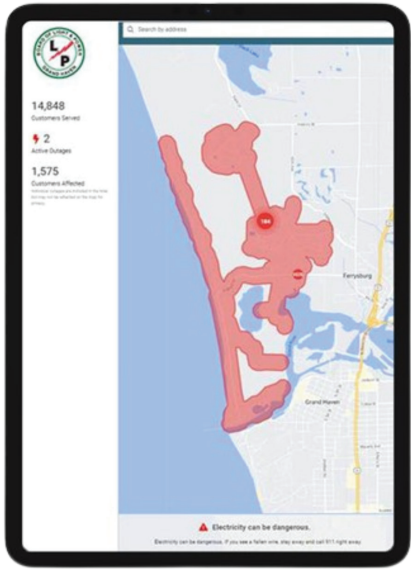
Customers benefit from these integrated systems through increased reliability, faster diagnosis and repair during outages, and more efficient billing. In addition, the following are associated tools that customers can access to make their utility experience better.

Outage Management Center

The BLP hosts a real-time outage monitoring map online, accessible from the **ghblp.org** homepage. Here, customers can see if an outage in their area has already been reported, view the extent of the outage, and also quickly provide outage details that may be helpful to our System Operators and Linemen.

"Customers should use the outage management system to report outage information whenever possible," said

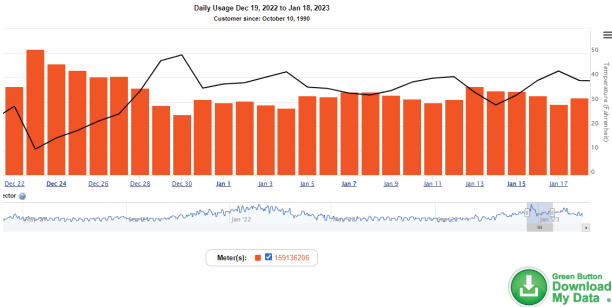
Shelley. "Sometimes folks want to use social media or our website's general contact forms to reach out during an outage, but it's important to note those resources will not reach the dispatch team in a timely manner."



SmartHub Customer Portal

SmartHub is an interactive online portal where customers can view and pay bills, review usage history, and learn how weather and appliances affect their usage. It is accessible from the **ghblp.org** homepage or download the FREE app for Apple® and Android® devices.

During February's training workshop, Shelley demonstrated how to update billing settings and contact information, sign up for paperless billing, receive email notifications, and how to review usage using SmartHub.



SmartHub enables customers to view usage over time and identify electrical "peaks" that they can tie back to a specific occasion. Using a view that shows daily temperatures mapped against daily usage allows customers to see how air conditioning and heating are used during high or low temperatures.

Shelley also explained how larger commercial and industrial customers can leverage SmartHub information. This is especially important for larger power users because they have a "demand charge" that is based on peak power draws for any given 15-minute increment. Demand charges ensure the BLP has the properly sized infrastructure in place to handle these higher demands.

By identifying and reducing peaks, businesses can reduce their costs. For example, if a business runs multiple pieces of high-wattage equipment at the same time, the peak energy necessary for those could be costing them more than if this equipment were run at separate times.

How to Get Started

For customers interested in setting up a SmartHub account, registration is simple and located right at the top of the **ghblp.org** homepage. Be sure to have a recent bill at hand for necessary identity information.

If you need assistance, please contact our Customer Account Representatives at **616-846-6250** Monday-Friday from 7:30AM-5:00PM.

