

Schedule a **FREE In-Home Estimate!**

Call **888-332-4783** or visit **EmpireToday.com/newspaper.**

*Discount is applied to the regular price of select styles of carpet, hardwood, tile, vinyl, and laminate, basic installation, standard padding, and materials. Excludes upgrades, stairs, take-up of permanently affixed flooring, non-standard furniture moving, other miscellaneous charges, and prior purchases. Product may not be sold separately from installation. Residential installations only. Not available in all areas. Valid through 04/09/2023. Subject to change. Details at EmpireToday.com. Sales (except CA, MA, UT) and installation are provided by independent contractors. Licensure at EmpireToday.com. CSLB 1047108 © 2023 Empire Today, LLC

Lansing State Journal



MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023 | LSJ.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

For DTE and Consumers: A lesson from Lansing

Mich. utilities among worst in the US at fixing outages



Lansing Board of Water & Light certified arborist Cory Caswell cuts branches above utility lines on March 15. PHOTOS BY MATTHEW DAE SMITH/LSJ.COM

Keith Matheny
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Michigan's two largest electricity providers, DTE and Consumers Energy, are among the worst-performing utilities in the country at how long it takes them to get the lights back on after a power outage, a review of reliability data shows.

Despite that, Michiganders pay more for electricity than their neighbors around the Great Lakes.

About 700,000 DTE and Consumers Energy customers faced outages of up to five days or more following late-February ice storms, and many were then left in the dark by a second winter storm less than two weeks later. It was a familiar feeling, the fourth outage since July 2019 involving 470,000 or more DTE and/or Consumers customers that took days to restore.

Officials with the two utilities blame more severe weather happening more often in Michigan — and it is. But the data shows the utilities perform even worse compared with similar size counterparts on the duration of power outages that don't involve severe weather.

Advocate: Utilities fall short in hardening grid, enforcement lax

Amy Bandyk is executive director of the Michigan Citizens Utility Board, an organization formed in 2018 to represent ratepayer interests in utility rate cases and other matters before the state's utility regulator, the Michigan Public Service Commission. She said DTE and Consumers take longer to restore power because they aren't investing enough in hardening their electrical grid and cost-effective outage prevention measures, and state regulators aren't forcing them to do more.

"We see that in the data, for years, Michigan has had worse power outages than neighboring states dealing with similar weather," she said. "Michigan utility customers already pay some of the highest rates in the Midwest compared to our neighbors and the country, but it doesn't address the basic problems with how our major utilities are regulated."

See **OUTAGES**, Page 4A

Power failures from February ice storm share similarities to blackouts BWL handled a decade ago

Mike Ellis
Lansing State Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK — MICHIGAN

LANSING — More than half an inch of ice blanketed homes, streets and trees in frigid below-freezing temperatures that lingered for weeks. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses were without power, some for nearly two weeks.

If that scenario sounds familiar it's not a description of the ice storm in February in southeast and southern Michigan that left more than 900,000 people in darkness.

See **BWL**, Page 2A



Lansing Board of Water and Light General Manager Dick Peffley emphasized the value of trimming trees and vegetation to minimize power disruptions when ice storms hit, as unpopular as the approach might be to residents. "It's going to be ugly for four or five years if you want this problem fixed," he said.

Take Advantage Of Record Highest-Ever Gold Prices! Put Ca\$h In Your Pocket Today!

Since 1971, Liberty Coins in the Frandor Shopping Center has been the top cash buyer! Take advantage of the highest-ever gold prices (and the highest silver prices in many years) by coming to Michigan's largest rare coins and precious metals dealer. For more details go online to www.libertycoinservice.com and click on "Cash In Your Treasures." Since 1971 Over \$500 Million Paid to Sellers



Liberty Coins

400 Frandor Ave in the Frandor Shopping Center (next to Kirklands)
www.libertycoinservice.com

351-4720 or 800-933-4720

Open 6 Days a Week

Mon-Fri 9:30 AM-5:00 PM • Sat 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
(Closed some holiday weekends)

Put Ca\$h in your pocket Today!



Tom Coulson, Owner

Get the latest news, sports and more
See today's top headlines, local breaking news, area scores, things to do and subscriber exclusives at lsj.com.

Subscriber-only eNewspaper
Use your computer or app to access your paper online. Subscribers also get access to USA TODAY's eNewspaper, plus updated news and sports Extra sections.

Volume 168 | No. 274
Home delivery pricing inside
Subscribe 877-599-6685
©2023 **\$3.49**

