



Earth Day 2015 in Traverse City

What will you do to celebrate Earth Day? Below is a list of community events sponsored by area organizations that will be going on throughout the week.

27th Annual Seedling Giveaway

Courtesy of Traverse City Light & Power

**Saturday, April 18, Sara Hardy Farmer's Market parking lot (Union Street and Grandview Parkway)
8:00 a.m. - noon (or until gone)**

As an annual Earth Day tradition since 1988, Traverse City Light & Power will be passing out free Eastern White Pine (*pinus strobus*) seedlings beginning at 8 a.m. Each seedling is potted and ready for planting, but remember, do not plant them or any tall growing tree under or near power lines.

Free Compost

Saturday, April 18

Sara Hardy Farmer's Market parking lot | 8:00 a.m. - noon (or until gone)

Get your shovels and containers ready for free self-serve, self-haul compost courtesy of the City of Traverse City and Grand Traverse County Resource Recovery (RecycleSmart).

The Sara Hardy Farmer's Market lot is located off of Union Street and Grandview Parkway.

For further information, visit recyclesmart.info.

Clean Out Your Files Week

April 17-24 | Sara Hardy Farmer's Market parking lot

This is a no cost opportunity for businesses and residents to recycle unwanted paper material. American Waste will be donating the use of a recycling container to be located at the Sara Hardy Farmer's Market parking lot from Friday, April 17 thru Friday, April 24. Accepted materials include newspapers, magazines, old files, office paper and unwanted mail.

For more information, visit recyclesmart.info.



Earth Day Fun Fact

Earth Day is recognized annually on April 22 with its origin dating back to the 1970s.

Saving Energy in 2015

2015 is the year for energy savings and Traverse City Light & Power (TCL&P) can help you! TCL&P offers a variety of incentives to help you upgrade household equipment to more energy efficient models. Incentives include:

\$150 Incentive

- Upgrade your central air conditioning unit to one with a 17 Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating (SEER)
- Purchase a high efficiency heat pump water heater
- Upgrade your furnace to a model that includes an electronically commutated motor (ECM)



\$60 Incentive

- Recycle your inefficient refrigerator or freezer

Business customers are also able to take advantage of incentives when they install more efficient lighting, motors, air systems, refrigeration, HVAC units, building management systems, and custom projects.

New This Year

TCL&P is partnering with local retailers to offer reduced pricing on LED light bulbs, exclusively for TCL&P customers. Keep an eye on your mail as additional information regarding the limited time offer will be sent out prior to the promotion.

For a full list of program incentives, equipment requirements, and the applications, see the TCL&P website at tclp.org.

\$10 to \$30 Incentive

- Purchase an ENERGY STAR rated television, refrigerator, freezer, dishwasher, ceiling fan, personal computer, dehumidifier, room air conditioner or LED lighting
- Purchase an electric hot water heater with an energy factor greater than or equal to 93%
- Upgrade your thermostat to a programmable model
- Purchase a high efficiency electric clothes dryer with moisture sensor



Spring Clean Up and Green Up April 26 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at American Waste

TCL&P will be participating in the Clean Up & Green Up free community recycling event on April 26. TCL&P customers can bring their working, yet inefficient room air conditioning units or dehumidifiers and receive a \$15 credit on their next utility bill. Customers can also bring in their working, yet inefficient refrigerators or freezers (10 to 30 cubic feet in size) and receive a \$60 bill credit.

See tclp.org for more information.

Scam Alert

Traverse City Light & Power is warning residents and business owners that phone scams to collect payment, current or past due, are on the rise. The scammer's identity can take many forms, but the message is always the same, pay now or your service will be disconnected. TCL&P will NEVER attempt to collect payment this way. Should you receive a call requesting payment, hang up the phone and call Customer Service or the local police department to report the incident. DON'T give out personal or financial information, including your utility account number. REMEMBER, we are here to assist our customers. This will not be done using aggressive or threatening tactics.



Residential Assistance and Shutoff Protections

TCL&P would like to remind its customers of the following energy assistance programs available.

Assistance: Utility customers may be eligible for economic assistance from the Michigan Department of Human Services by calling 231-941-3900.

Medical Emergency Protections: Critical care customers (individuals who require home medical equipment or a life support system) or utility customers with a medical emergency (medical condition that will be aggravated by the lack of utility service). Medical documentation from a licensed physician is required to determine eligibility.

Military Shutoff Protections: Customers that are in military active duty. Verification of active duty is required to determine eligibility.

Low Income Protections: Utility customers with household incomes that do not exceed 150% of the poverty level, or are participants in assistance from a state emergency relief program, food assistance or Medicaid. Income tax documentation or verification of enrollment in programs is required to determine eligibility.

Senior Citizen Protections: During the heating and cooling seasons, seniors will not be shutoff in the winter or if the summer temperatures exceed 95 degrees. Seniors are required to notify the utility and sign an affidavit to be eligible for this protection.

For more information on Assistance and Protections please call Customer Service at 231-922-4431.

TCL&P Mission:

To provide the public power benefits of safety, lower rates, high reliability, local control, and exceptional customer service to the City, its residents, and all TCL&P customers.

Executive Director's Update: Michigan's Energy Outlook

If you have been tuned into any media source over the past twelve months you have undoubtedly heard of a looming electric energy crisis in the Midwest, particularly Michigan. The debate in the Upper Peninsula over the potential closure of the Marquette coal fired power plant dominated news in 2014. The requirement by federal regulators that the plant couldn't close for reliability reasons and must be upgraded to meet Federal Clean Air Act requirements could have increased rates in the U.P. by as much as 30-50%. Extreme pushback from the public and utilities have delayed this action which was scheduled to take affect January 1st. It appears a resolution to this crisis is in the works, fortunately.

There are other energy issues we will face this year that may put even more pressure on utility rates. The Governor has stated that energy is his second highest goal for the year. Legislators will be working on a new energy plan that will likely increase the amount of renewable energy requirements for all utilities in Michigan. The current requirement is 10% by 2015. While TCL&P has exceeded that mandate, it did come at a cost to the ratepayers.

Another large issue for Michigan is the new carbon reductions required by the Environmental Protection Agency. It has been reported by Consumers Energy and DTE that these requirements will force the closure of up to nine coal fired power plants in Michigan in the next few years. That's enough energy to serve one million homes, or the combined populations of Detroit, Lansing, and Grand Rapids. The problem is that there is not enough new generation coming online to replace these coal plants. While nobody expects an energy shortage, or blackouts, at this time, this action will increase the wholesale cost of power. The demand for energy will not decrease, but the supply will.

To combat some of these challenges, TCL&P recently joined many other municipal utilities in securing power purchases in the coming years. The volume of purchases, when combining these utilities, provides better pricing (like buying in bulk). In fact, the cost of power for TCL&P will be less in 2016 than what is being paid today. However, the shortage of generating capacity for the utility will cost more.

TCL&P remains committed to providing a very highly reliable electric system in Traverse City. In addition, we continually look for ways to cut costs, improve efficiencies, and secure the best prices for our energy needs. A lot of the questions about our energy future and how it will impact your rates should become clearer as the year progresses. We will keep you updated on any developments that have a financial impact on you or your business.



Tim Arends

Tim Arends
Executive Director



**TRAVERSE CITY
LIGHT & POWER**

Investing Our Energy In You

1131 Hastings St. | Traverse City, MI 49686
Main Office and 24-Hour Service: **922-4940**
Billing & Account Questions: **922-4431**
Now available: Paperless billing!

See the Home Energy Saver and L&P Energy Smart Program at: tclp.org



Proudly serving our community for 103 years.