



A sincere apology and a renewed commitment to serve

To our loyal customers,

I sincerely apologize to our customers who suffered hardships and difficulties because of the catastrophic December 22 ice storm, and the time it took to reconnect your service. We did not meet the needs of you, our customers, or our own standards for superior service.

Now it is time to repair our relationship with you by determining how the Lansing Board of Water & Light can restore service faster and communicate better. We can do better, we will do better, and I pledge that we will work tirelessly to regain your trust as your hometown power company.

This devastating ice storm that occurred in the early morning hours of December 22 was unprecedented in modern Michigan history. The ice storm hit every part of our service territory, resulting in an estimated 40,000 customer outages, or about 40 percent of our service territory. More than 2,400 power lines succumbed to the ice and tree limbs needing to be repaired. There has not been a comparable loss of service experienced by a Michigan utility.

With the help of line crews who came from communities all over Michigan, we restored power within four days to 90 percent of the customers who lost power. It took us much longer to restore power to the remaining 10 percent of our customers. That was not nearly fast enough, especially for customers who were without power during the Christmas holiday and into the New Year.

We know many of you were angry, and some of you still are. We have listened to your concerns and frustrations, particularly on how we failed to communicate with you during the ice storm crisis. We also have heard your constructive criticism and input, and we thank you for your suggestions on how we can improve.

As part of our top to bottom review of our restoration efforts, changes are already underway that will help us improve our preparedness, and strengthen how we communicate during a crisis. We aren't waiting until the next storm hits to fix the areas where we fell short.

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Report Outages

Power or Streetlight
1-877-295-5001

Water Main Break
517-702-6490

SeeClickFix.com

Medical Alert Form

If in-home medical equipment depends on electricity, sign up for our medical priority list. Call (517) 702-6006, or go to www.lbwl.com and click on Medical Alert Form.



Seniors Shut-off Protection

If you are 65 or older, the BWL will not shut off your electricity during the heating season. Call (517) 702-6006.

Military Families

Families with active members of the U.S. Military are protected from shut-offs. For details, call (517) 702-6006.

Low-Income Families

You may qualify for a winter protection payment plan. Call (517) 702-6006.

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While some changes to our system will take time, we are making the following key improvements right now:

- We have entered into new retainer agreements with several contractors, tripling the number of line crews that can help us in an emergency. This will give us more manpower to immediately deploy in a catastrophic storm.
- We have tripled the number of tree trimming crews who are working now to make sure lines in our service area are clear of limbs and vegetation. This will reduce the chances of major damage during a significant weather event.
- We have begun to hire more line workers and a dispatcher.
- Beginning immediately, all customer outage and downed lines calls can be made to one number: **877-295-5001**. In addition, we are exploring retaining a third-party customer service call center to deploy during emergencies to help us handle a sudden surge in calls.
- We have identified and addressed the weaknesses in our Outage Management System, allowing us to more accurately track where power is out, communicate better with our customers, and restore power faster during future outages.
- We now have an outage map on our website (www.lbwl.com) available to our customers during outages. That map will show if an outage has been reported to our system and the extent of that outage.
- We know we need to improve communications with our customers, so we have hired a local communications firm to help us shore up and implement a crisis communications plan and assist during emergencies.
- We also recognize that people depend on social media to gather information during natural disasters. We are in the process of hiring a social media manager to fully engage our customers across all social media channels and to help disseminate important information during a crisis.
- We are conducting a top to bottom internal review of our response during this power outage to assess our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. A report on this review will be released in mid-February.
- In addition to all of these actions, and as part of our internal review, we sought input from our customers during a series of community forums held East Lansing, Delta Township and Lansing in January. We wanted to hear from you about what we can do better to serve you during a power outage. This included invited input from BWL's customers who live in our electric service territory, which includes Lansing, East Lansing, Lansing Twp., Delta Twp., Meridian Twp., DeWitt Twp., Delhi Twp., Watertown Twp., Windsor Twp. and Alaiedon Twp.
- We also announced that customers who experienced an electric outage for 120 hours (five days) or more due to the December 22 ice storm are eligible for a \$25 credit, and an additional \$5 per day after that. Eligible customers will have the outage credit applied to their bills. The credit form can be found at the top of the BWL website (www.lbwl.com) by clicking the button labeled, "Apply for Catastrophic Storm Outage Credit."

Along with a comprehensive internal review, I wholeheartedly support Mayor Bernero's call for an independent investigation of the BWL's outage response and review by the Michigan Public Service Commission. Together, these findings and any recommended improvements will help us achieve our goal of restoring the trust and confidence of our customers and being the best utility we can be.

The BWL has a dedicated team of employees who worked long hours to restore power. I am grateful for their efforts. Together, we are committed to our customers and to ourselves to be even more responsive, responsible and reliable.

The BWL is proud to have been a part of the Lansing community for more than 125 years. We are hometown people providing hometown power. We want to engage with you, our customers, to help us improve. With your help, we will make the BWL stronger, delivering the level of customer service you expect and deserve.

Sincerely,



J. Peter Lark
General Manager

