



Michigan Electric Cooperative Association

The Michigan Electric Cooperative Association (MECA) is the statewide trade association for Michigan's 11 electric cooperatives. MECA's members include the following:

- **Alger Delta Electric Cooperative Association**
Gladstone, Michigan
- **Cherryland Electric Cooperative**
Grawn, Michigan
- **Cloverland Electric Cooperative**
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan
- **Great Lakes Energy Cooperative**
Boyne City, Michigan
- **HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Cooperative**
Portland, Michigan
- **Midwest Energy Cooperative**
Cassopolis, Michigan
- **Ontonagon County REA**
Ontonagon, Michigan
- **Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op**
Onaway, Michigan
- **Thumb Electric Cooperative**
Ubyly, Michigan
- **Wolverine Power Cooperative**
Cadillac, Michigan
- **Wolverine Power Marketing Cooperative**
Cadillac, Michigan

MECA is participating in joint energy industry responses to several of the website questions, particularly in the area of energy optimization. In addition, MECA will submit a few individual answers to specific questions in both the energy optimization and renewable energy areas. Further, Wolverine Power Cooperative, one of MECA's members, intends to submit responses specific to its situation as an owner of bulk transmission in the State of Michigan.

This information and other matters of public record should be considered in developing energy policy. As a general matter, MECA urges caution and restraint in developing major changes to regulatory policy including consideration of these key matters:

- Be wary of the unintended consequences that can flow from policies, such as the difficulties experienced with energy optimization—particularly for small utilities such as Michigan's electric cooperatives.

- Stability in government policy is important and frequent policy change can be disruptive to costly long-term investments that are intended to address long-term needs.
- The utility industry in Michigan has multiple providers and diverse service areas (e.g. U.P. vs. Lower Michigan) and a “one size fits all” policy does not necessarily lead to optimal results.
- The 2008 energy package was generally well done but a dialogue on how we improve that legislation, particularly in the area of energy optimization, is certainly in order. In addition, an examination of eliminating the in-state requirement for compliance with the RPS is also an important dialogue that needs to be encouraged in the name of ensuring that renewable energy supplies are more competitive.
- This energy dialogue must balance reliability, affordability and the environment.

There is an enormous amount of information and numerous studies regarding energy issues available in public forums. Many of these sources are cited and discussed in the current process. Often, studies are done on behalf of advocacy groups that focus narrowly on specific issues, such as environmental protection, green energy and energy optimization. A degree of reasonable skepticism and inquiry should be applied to this information in consideration of developing “no regrets” policies that avoid costly disruption of the industry structure developed over many years of operation and regulation.