

BWL Wine and Cheese Extravaganza, March 8.

Benefits Pennies for Power.

Details in February's Connections!



Q: Somewhere I got the impression you were not supposed to use CFLs in closed fixtures (the standard ones where the bulb and the globe fit snugly to the ceiling. True or false? – C.H., Lansing

A: Look at your light fitting. If it is an indoor recessed can light – one completely recessed into a ceiling or wall and covered – you will need a CFL designed for use in such fittings. Look for a bulb labeled “indoor reflector,” which can operate efficiently at the high temperatures that result from lack of airflow in completely enclosed spaces. If the fitting is enclosed but not recessed, you can use a regular CFL.

You can use a standard spiral-shaped CFL for use in outdoor enclosed fittings.

CFLs are energy efficient and last about 10 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs, according to www.EnergyStar.gov. Using CFLs in your home can save time, energy and money, and they can be used almost anywhere. Enclosed fittings with little airflow can reduce the life expectancy of CFLs, however.

For more information, go to www.EnergyStar.gov

Do you have a question for the Q Corner? Email us at mdn@lbwl.com, call (517) 702-6735 or fax us at (517)702-6855.

2012: Great for energy savings!

Join Mayor Virg Bernero and BWL's **Hometown Energy Savers**® program in making Lansing greener! Check out free services and cash incentives for residential and business electric customers. And visit lbwl.com/EnergySavers!



Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero

BWL's Residential Energy Solutions (free services and cash!)

- **Appliance Recycling:** We pick up working refrigerators or freezers FREE and you get a \$30 check! Recycling qualifying appliances earns \$15 per appliance at Recycle Rama events.
- **High Efficiency Products:** This program extends rebates from \$10 - \$150 toward purchase/installation of qualifying equipment.
- In 2012 BWL partners with retailers offering ENERGY STAR® qualified lighting products including CFLs and LEDs. Visit lbwl.com/EnergySavers for information. Dispose of burnt-out CFL bulbs at **20 CFL Recycling Sites**.
- **Multi-Family Efficiency:** This program works with property managers to install lighting and water-saving measures.

For information: **800-573-3503**.

But wait; there's more!

See the free **Home Energy Calculator** at lbwl.com/EnergySavers. Calculate energy savings. Get tips to lower bills. Also visit the **Home Energy Library** on homes and outdoor living. For education projects visit **Kids Korner!**

BWL's **Lower My Bill** program is FREE for residential electric customers. Home energy assessments can cut costs. There's also free installation of energy-saving products including CFLs. Additional programs, cash incentives, free weatherization services and payment assistance might be available. Call **702-6006** to schedule your Lower My Bill energy assessment.

Assistance for Limited Income Customers. You may qualify for a free weatherization program installing energy-saving measures/appliances. Contact Capital Area Community Services (CACS): **393-7077**.

Business Energy Solutions for Commercial Property

BWL offers **Commercial & Industrial Cash Incentives** and technical assistance to businesses purchasing/installing energy-efficient upgrades. Lower electrical use through BWL's **Prescriptive** or **Custom Rebate** programs. Call **877-674-5295**.

Business customers: Receive BWL's free **Hometown Energy Solutions eNewsletter**. Get industry updates and information. Email srs@lbwl.com to sign up.

For Your Organization

Experts from BWL's **Energy Speakers Bureau** are available for group presentations in our service area. Call **702-6903** or email tah@lbwl.com.

Report Outages

Power or Streetlight
1-877-295-5001

Water Main Break
517-702-5490

SeeClickFix.com

Medical Alert Form

If in-home medical equipment depends on electricity or water, you probably should be on 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.

Water, water everywhere? Not if we're not careful!

According to the website, American Rivers, a family of four in the United States uses 400 gallons of water every day. That's lots of gushing and flushing. Following are tips from American Rivers for cutting back our use. More suggestions can be found on their website.

- Turn off water while brushing your teeth. Teach your kids this line from an old Barney song: "When I'm brushing my teeth and having so much fun, I never let the water run!"
- Repair dripping faucets and running toilets. A drip of one drop per second wastes 2,700 gallons a year.
- Replace inefficient water-using appliances and showerheads. Look for products with a WaterSense label.
- Dispose of hazardous wastes properly.

If we all pitch in and make a few simple changes, the entire planet can benefit. Well worth the effort, right?



It's not too late to lower winter heating costs

Even though it's gotten cold, there's still time to lower your heating bill. Here are some simple steps to follow to keep warm and save money:

- Pull on a sweater and turn down your thermostat. For every degree you lower your thermostat, you can save up to 5 percent of your heating bill. However: please check with your physician before lowering your thermostat if there are any concerns about possible effects on your health.
- Consider purchasing a programmable thermostat. Properly set, a programmable thermostat will keep temperatures down while you're away, then automatically start heating your home before you return.
- Change furnace filters often. Dirty filters restrict air flow and compromise furnace efficiency. During coldest months some filters need to be changed once a month.
- Check ceiling fans to ensure they rotate clockwise to push warm air near the ceiling down into the living area.
- Have a licensed company or individual service your furnace once a year to maximize its life and efficiency.

For people struggling to pay utility bills, there can be help available. Please see Page one of Connections for information on utility shut-off protections for vulnerable customers.

If you have fallen behind in your utility payments, contact our Customer Service Department at (517) 702-6006. We will do our best to help set up a payment schedule.

Those customers who can are encouraged to join us in building our Pennies for Power fund to assist needy families in paying for utilities. Please see the Pennies for Power coupon below.



Free and clear

When you're outside shoveling, please make sure to clear a path to your meter. Property owners in Lansing are required by law to clear sidewalks adjacent to their property within 24 hours after a snowfall. The law is designed to protect pedestrians.

And since BWL meter readers are pedestrians, too, please take the time to clear a path to your BWL meter.

The safety of our meter readers is a top priority at the BWL. Meter readers contend with snow and ice and often unseen objects under the snow that can threaten their safety.

And here's something else you should know: Meter readers are instructed to not approach meters blocked by snow or ice. In these situations, the BWL may end up estimating your electricity and water usage.

Please help keep meter readers safe by keeping pathways to business and residential meters clear. Meter readers will be safer and you'll receive an accurate bill.



YES! I WANT TO HELP NEEDY FAMILIES

Pennies for Power helps provide shut-off protection for local families that are struggling to make ends meet. Help out by mailing this coupon back to us with your utility payment.

- Round my utility bill each month to the nearest dollar and contribute the difference to Pennies for Power
- Please add \$ _____ to my bill each month as a contribution to Pennies for Power
- Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ as my one-time contribution to Pennies for Power

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

BWL Account Number: _____



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