



Community memo

March 4, 2015

From: Supervisor Leo Savoie

To: Township residents

Subject: DTE Energy

When DTE Energy recently began its “ground to sky” tree removal program in Bloomfield Township and Bloomfield Hills, it unleashed a firestorm of protest from residents who watched grand old trees reduced to sawdust and stumps.

Almost immediately my office was inundated with calls from concerned residents demanding that action be taken to halt the tree removal. I called DTE, which agreed to stop the work. I, along with DPW Director Tom Trice, met with DTE officials onsite where trees were being removed. We expressed our extreme disappointment and displeasure in how this matter was being handled. A follow-up meeting was held on Feb. 6. Along with myself, attending was Mike McCready, Jay Cravens, Bloomfield Hills Mayor Michael Dul, Bloomfield Hills City Commissioner Michael Coakley and several representatives from DTE.

As a result of the meeting it was determined:

- DTE will reach out to property owners along an affected line route using a combination of mailings, door hangers and phone calls.
- DTE will meet with representatives of the Township and go over its entire plans for properties in the Township.
- DTE will mark all areas of clearance and mark every tree it plans to trim or remove.
- DTE will meet with every affected homeowner to go over their scope of the project and will not remove trees on private property outside of its easements without the written permission of the property owner.
- DTE will not initiate the program on the property of homeowners who object to it until first meeting with Township or City officials to go over the impact on that property and what the options are.
- DTE will remove any logs, stumps, brush and debris from the property unless the homeowner objects.
- In some cases, DTE will replace removed trees with other trees or vegetation.

Additionally, we discussed the possibility of DTE placing wires underground. However, that is cost prohibitive. It is estimated that it would cost each household in excess of \$150,000 to place wires underground. That option is not feasible.

However, we did recommend that DTE confer with the Hubbell, Roth & Clark engineering firm to learn how it has worked with neighborhoods during the construction of the safety path system in the Township. HR&C has a long association with the Township and understands the sensitivities of the residents and how to deal with that.

This communication will be sent to the United Homeowners Association of Bloomfield Township and made available to all members of the community. Our goal is to maintain a free-flowing open line of communications with all persons and let them know that we, as Township officials, are attuned to their concerns.

Our message to the community is that we are here for you.