

The Basics of Truestream Fiber

What is Truestream Fiber?

Truestream is a new fiber network provided by Great Lakes Energy. Since 1937, Great Lakes Energy has provided rural Michigan members with essential electric services, even in remote areas. Recently, our members asked us to investigate the option of providing high-speed internet to our service area. We listened and have launched Truestream Fiber—providing advanced fiber internet and phone services.

Will the launch of Truestream Fiber increase my Great Lakes Energy bill or can I expect returns if the business is profitable?

Truestream is a 100% wholly-owned subsidiary of Great Lakes Energy. We want to be sure that all members understand the structure: Truestream Fiber will operate as a for-profit business that is 100% owned by Great Lakes Energy and its members. Great Lakes Energy does not expect to make profits off the venture in the short run, but when profits do occur there will be a few options to consider. It is important to note that initially, Truestream will use its revenue to operate the business.

The profits from Truestream could be used to pay credits back to Great Lakes Energy to help offset the costs of electric service and stabilize rates or the profits could be allocated to the individual members of Great Lakes Energy and refunded as capital credits. We will be sure to keep all communications open and welcome questions.

What is fiber service?

Fiber is known for being “future-proof,” meaning the fiber we install today will be able to handle increased data loads as the need for more and more bandwidth and speed grows. Fiber technology makes it possible to deliver speeds up to 1 Gig (1,000 Mbps, or megabits per second)—this is 100x faster than what the average home or business can get currently. Fiber is more reliable than other types of networks, less prone to interference and complications from lightning and other natural elements. Studies have shown that fiber also tends to raise the property value of homes by as much as \$5,000.

What services can I get?

Truestream Fiber is bringing internet with speeds up to 1 Gig (1,000 Mbps). We will have three internet plans, 100 Mbps, 200 Mbps and 1 Gig, available for residential homes. We will also offer a voice service. This will work just like your standard telephone service but will include unlimited local and long-distance calling, plus tons of features. Eventually the service will also be expanded to businesses.

How much will the service cost?

Plans starts at just \$59.99 per month for residential internet and \$34.99 for the residential voice package. Plus, you'll receive a \$5 discount when you have both services. Check out all your options and pricing at jointruestream.com.

How can I get Truestream Fiber?

Truestream Fiber is currently building service in the Petoskey service district (Emmet County and small parts of Charlevoix and Cheboygan counties). Member interest will drive where we build service next! To express your interest, pre-registration is required through jointruestream.com. As we see interest grow in communities, we will set goals for how many homes and businesses need to take service before construction will begin. Pre-registration goals must be met before construction plans can be finalized. Our goal is to build fiber throughout our service area, just like electricity.

[Pre-register at jointruestream.com](http://jointruestream.com)

Pre-registration Details

Why is there a pre-registration process?

In order to minimize risk, Great Lakes Energy's board of directors chose to move forward in a phased-in approach to protect co-op ratepayers and the financial integrity of the electric cooperative. Construction will begin in the Petoskey service district over a period of years. Before any construction work takes place in another service district, we must see that members want the service by how many have pre-registered. Pre-registration ensures that Great Lakes Energy will spend money to build a fiber network in areas where members want it and where it can be financially sustained.

What does it mean when I pre-register?

By pre-registering, you are expressing interest in service. If a zone has a goal set by pre-registering, you agree you are going to take service if/when Truestream comes to your community. At the time of preregistration though, no signed contract is required. When construction begins in your area, we will contact you to complete a contract for service. A minimum package level of \$59.99 per month must be maintained at all times. If you are a snowbird/seasonal member, we may offer an option for reduced rate for suspended service in the future, but at this time we do not offer a service suspension option.

What will I have to pay when I pre-register?

There is no payment collected during pre-registration. This process just allows you to complete a simple form to let us know what services your home or business is interested in. By pre-registering now though, you guarantee FREE installation, when the time comes. This includes all wiring and a powerful WiFi router. Before construction begins in your area, we will contact you to complete the sign-up process and to confirm your service selection.

I am not sure if my location is eligible to pre-register?

All Great Lakes Energy locations are eligible to pre-register. Areas with large interest for service may get fiber the soonest—member interest will help drive the construction process. The Petoskey service district will be the first area, but yours could be next if enough interest is shown. Do not wait for us to knock on your door or for a community goal to be set. Pre-register today at jointruestream.com.

Is there a deadline to pre-register and what are the benefits of pre-registering now?

Pre-registration is open until construction is complete in that area. We encourage all members to pre-register as soon as possible because community interest will help drive the construction process. You can pre-register for Truestream now even if your community does not show a set goal. You will see some areas with goals at jointruestream.com. The benefit of pre-registering now is to lock in free installation and help bring the service to your area sooner.

The length of time your zone is active depends on how fast people in your area pre-register for service. Once Truestream has fully constructed a zone, pre-registration and the introductory free installation offer may no longer be available. You are encouraged to preregister now if you are interested in receiving service from Truestream.

Can I change my package at any time or do I have to select now to guarantee my pricing?

You can change your package at any time as long as you maintain the minimum package level of \$59.99 per month. Pre-registration only indicates your interest. It is important to know that internet service is not required for voice and voice is not required to order internet. If you choose to upgrade your plan to include voice or a higher internet speed, you will pay the listed price of your new package. View all packages and prices at jointruestream.com.

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Construction and Equipment Details

What does the construction process entail and what is the timeline?

Once a community meets the set goals, we will communicate a build timeline to all those interested in service. Construction will begin by building the network in the community, followed by bringing fiber to actual homes and businesses. Once we have the fiber to the outside of the home or business, we will schedule an appointment to actually install the service inside the home or business. Installation will include all wiring and a powerful WiFi router. From the first step until service is installed, you can expect the process to take multiple months. Thank you for your patience!

What kind of equipment (router or modem) is needed? What is the cost?

As a Truestream customer, you will be supplied with a WiFi router that is built to handle up to 1 Gig internet speeds. The cost of the router is included.

Do I own the router?

No. Truestream retains ownership so that we can support the device and any troubles you may experience. Truestream will replace the router free of charge if the device malfunctions due to manufacturer issues.

What is a WiFi router?

The WiFi router will bring the service into your home and supports all broadband connections. During installation, our technicians will set up and show you how to use your new wireless network. Wired connections to the router will provide the fastest speeds but the WiFi router will also create a powerful wireless network in your home or business to ensure all devices from laptops, tablets, smartphones, smart TVs, and other smart devices can connect wirelessly.

Will I be able to hard-wire devices to the router as well as connect wirelessly to devices?

Yes. The router is equipped with four traditional ethernet ports to which you can physically connect computers and other devices. You can also connect devices wirelessly.

Will the router support a printer that is also a fax machine?

Yes, as long as you have voice service. The router we provide is designed to handle state-of-the-art equipment and the fastest internet speeds available. A fax communication will require a voice subscription to function (send/receive faxes).

Is the network secure?

Yes. Every home and business will have its own secure connection with passwords to access the network wirelessly.

What kind of technical support can I expect from Truestream for the router?

If you experience issues with your service, Truestream Fiber will be able to troubleshoot and remotely examine your router to help determine where problems may be occurring (no cost). If needed, Truestream will send technicians to your location to troubleshoot (costs may be incurred).

Will that technical support be available without charge?

During installation, Truestream technicians will ensure your router is properly installed, fully blanketing your home, and that you are comfortable with operating any devices – free of charge. As mentioned earlier, Truestream can also remotely troubleshoot your router to help identify issues, also at no cost to you.

Do you offer maintenance packages for additional support?

This service may be offered in the future.

[Pre-register at jointruestream.com](https://jointruestream.com)

Technical Specifications

What kind of equipment (router or modem) is needed? As a Truestream customer, you will be supplied with a WiFi router that is built to handle up to 1 Gig internet speeds. The wireless router supports 2.4GHz and 5GHz.

Can I use my own hardware with Truestream's service? Truestream can connect with customer-owned gigabit routers. However, we cannot offer additional technical support or guarantee the quality of the service from customer-owned equipment. There is no additional fee for this setup at the time of installation; there may be a charge to return to the home to install customer equipment.

Where will the router be placed? We will likely place the WiFi router next to your primary device—it should be centrally located in your home. Our technicians will work with you to identify the ideal placement. Also, for optimal WiFi signal, it should not be placed in a closed entertainment center, closet, basement, etc. The router is designed to be upright with adequate ventilation. The reach of the router signal is affected by building construction and placement.

Can I move my router? Once our technicians have placed your router, we recommend you do not move it. Please contact us if you need to move your router to a different room. A technician visit fee may apply.

How do I connect to my wireless network? Your WiFi SSID (the name of the wireless network as it appears on the device you are trying to connect) and WPA Key (password) are located on the router. To connect to your WiFi, first make sure the wireless feature on the device you are using is turned on. Next, find your network (WiFi SSID) and connect your device to the signal. Enter your password to complete the connection.

Is there a limit on data usage? There is no limit on the amount of data you can use each month.

What download speed am I getting on my new device? You can quickly find out the download speed of your connected device by conducting a speed test, search online for internet speed test. To get the best results in running a speed test on your new connection, follow these helpful tips: use the newest device you have available to you, connect your device with an ethernet cable to your router directly, and ensure no other applications are running on your device. Note: If you disable Windows Firewall and any anti-virus software running on the device you may see improved results, but do so at your own risk.

Why is my device seeing lower than Gig (1,000 Mbps) or 100 Mbps speeds (based on subscription)?

There are many factors that could contribute to the fact that your device may not be operating at full Gig (1,000 Mbps) or 100 Mbps speeds even though we are delivering that speed to your doorstep.

You'll get the highest connection speed possible when you connect your device with an ethernet cable to your router. Wired connections operate with less environmental interference than wireless connections. Wireless connections will never hit maximum subscribed speed. Things that can affect wireless performance include:

- distance (the further you are from the router, the slower the speed)
- placement of the router (ideally the router should be centrally located and on the second floor of a multi-story home)
- construction of your home (the building materials your home is made of can have a negative effect on signal strength resulting in speed reduction—especially thick masonry and metal framing)
- interference from other wireless networks or devices (such as microwaves, cordless phones, baby monitors, Bluetooth devices, wireless mice, fluorescent lights, and wireless surveillance cameras)
- equipment (older devices operate on older wireless standards, which will produce slower speeds)
- the quantity of devices connected because all devices share that one pipeline (e.g. 100 Mbps is shared among all devices connected)

Please note that internet speeds can be affected by a number of additional factors, including your connection type, the number of devices in use, the age of your device, site traffic, content provider server capacity, and internal network factors.