

Upcoming Events

New Employee Orientation

Hosted by The Center for Competency Development.

April 15, 2026

7:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.

This orientation can be attended in person or virtually.

Cost to attend is \$40 per person. Registration is required.

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Equipped Live

The next Equipped Live is scheduled for April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. Additional details will be emailed in advance of the event.

Equipped Live feedback is always welcome.

Questions to be answered live can be submitted in advance.

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The IFMC Shines During Second Intense Ice Storm

The 2025 ice storm was said to be a once in a lifetime storm. And it was, until a similar storm happened again in 2026. Much like the 2025 storm, the 2026 ice storm knocked out power for tens of thousands of residents in Northeast Michigan, including a significant number of employees of ESI clients. Power was interrupted for several ESI client facilities as well.



How did ESI clients handle the interruption? With great success! Having been through something similar prior is only part of the reason for the impressive way ESI clients handled the disruption. The other part of the reason? The culture of the IFMC to meet promises made to customers.

Although power was restored to all buildings but two after just one night, there were still hurdles that had to be overcome, and ESI clients' employees pulled together to overcome those barriers.

Team members in building 167 pulled together to address a flooding issue in the building. The employees arrived and had power to the building but spent the first few hours removing water from the floor and digging trenches outside to keep water from pooling around and seeping into the building. They jumped in with anything they could find to help the cause and had it handled swiftly and before major damage could occur.

Not all facilities came back to power on Monday morning, however. At Delta-Veyor Corp. (DVC) in Ossineke, MI, the power was out with no indication of when it might come back on.

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Ice Storm, continued on page two...

Until power was reinstated on Friday, DVC team members worked with generators and extra layers of clothing to overcome lack of light and heat to continue to meet promises made to customers.

Those in building 820 knew they had a job to prepare for shipment but they did not have power Monday or Tuesday. They showed up anyway, worked without power and then transported the job to another facility for shipping.



It wasn't ice for all ESI clients. Some experienced extensive snow during the storm. Steel-Max Mfg. LLC in Cheboygan, MI had to dig their way into the building so they could meet promises to customers.

Not only did employees show up to do what was required to get the job done, they did it with positive attitudes, resilience, and in many cases, also while handling issues like power outages and storm damage to their personal properties.

We hope this ice storm doesn't become an annual event, but we are confident that no matter what hurdle shows up next, ice storm or other event, the team members of ESI clients will get through it because they are resilient and dedicated, and very much appreciated.

Leadership Brags - Happy Retirement!

Eric Kamyszek sent the following to share Joel Nowak's retirement from his long career in the IFMC.



"Beyond Joel's great personality, his knowledge and dedication to his work is what really stands out. After more than 36 years, he's seen just about everything and fortunately for his coworkers, he remembers just about everything too. He built strong relationships with the many people he's worked with, and he never took things

personally. Even when someone pushed back or told him something couldn't be done or seemed unrealistic, Joel maintained the right mindset and helped greatly in our success and growth."

Joel was inducted into the ESI Hall of Fame in the inaugural year, 2024. Congratulations, Joel, and thank you for so many years of significant value!



Brad Nugent submitted the following regarding Pauline Blanton's retirement.

"Congratulations to Pauline Blanton on her retirement! She worked with Northwood Solutions and the IFMC for 20 years and is looking forward to spending more time with her family. Pauline was highly dedicated to her work and her customers. She even caught a ride to work with a neighbor during the last ice storm at 1:30 am (due to being snowed and iced in) in order to process her weekly accounts payable checks. That's dedication! We'll miss her efforts and wish her well in her retirement years! Thank you to Pauline, for all of your contributions to the IFMC."



Your Health Matters

A special message from USI, ESI's health insurance broker. April is Alcohol Awareness Month.

Alcohol and Your Health: Risks and Recommendations



April is Alcohol Awareness Month. While alcohol is often enjoyed for socializing or relaxation, it carries significant health risks. Drinking can increase blood pressure and stroke risk, elevate triglycerides, damage the liver, and raise the likelihood of cancers (including breast, colon, liver, and esophagus). It also weakens the immune system and can lead to addiction.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, adults who choose to drink alcohol should do so in moderation — up to two drinks per day for men, and one drink per day for women. For those who do not drink alcohol, it is advised not to begin drinking for any reason. Less alcohol consumption is always better for your health.

If you want to cut back or quit:

- Swap alcohol for flavored water or low-calorie mocktails
- Identify your triggers for drinking alcohol and develop a plan to manage them
- Surround yourself with people who support your goals
- Seek professional help if needed

Summary Recommendations

- Adults who drink should do so in moderation; those who do not drink should not start for health reasons.
- Moderation: ≤ 2 drinks/day for men, ≤ 1 drink/day for women.

Sources:
1. Department of Health and Human Services. 2015. U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. <http://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>

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Your Health Matters

A message from USI, ESI's health insurance broker.

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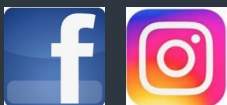
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Practicing Financial Wellness



Financial wellness is the state of having a healthy and balanced relationship with money. It can also help you prepare for financial obligations or obstacles, both now and in the future.

Research shows personal finances are a leading cause of stress for Americans. This stress comes from financial uncertainty, worrying about the future, and a lack of financial security. Stress can impact multiple aspects of your life such as sleep, your physical and emotional health, relationships, performance at work and family life.

Five ways to practice financial wellness:



Create a budget to identify financial goals — Calculate your income and expenses and determine how much you have left to work with to help you establish and maintain a budget.



Save for emergencies — Best practice suggests having 6 months' worth of living expenses in your savings account. Make sure to "expect the unexpected" by planning for financial emergencies.



Seek guidance — Talk with a financial planner who can create a strategy to help you achieve your financial goals.



Plan for retirement — Start saving as soon as you can. Create a timeline for when you would like to retire and how much money you would like to have saved. Learn what retirement plans your employer may offer.



Check your credit score — This plays a huge role in your financial situation. Make sure bills are paid on time, pay off high-interest credit cards, pay off existing loans when possible, and check for anything that could be lowering your score.

With careful planning and guidance, you can help yourself feel more secure in your financial future.

Sources:
<https://www.fidelity.com/learning-center/budgeting>
<https://www.nerdwallet.com/personal-finance/financial-wellness>

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