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Starting Sunday afternoon, the exit ramp from northbound I-275 to eastbound I-696 will be closed for reconstruction and traffic detoured about five miles onto eastbound M-6.

From northbound I-275, motorists looking to exit to eastbound I-696 will be directed onto the eastbound M-6/Grand River exit and follow two lanes onto that portion of M-6 now known as the Keith Deacon Memorial Highway in Farmington Hills.

Motorists will drive 2.5 miles east. That will take them past the Grand River exit, then they will turn around on a temporary ramp, then proceed on westbound M-6 another 2.5 miles to the eastbound I-696 exit.

Construction crews also continued work this weekend on the Eight Mile Road entrance and exit ramps. Motorists are advised to use Seven Mile or Six Mile interchanges as alternate routes. Once Eight Mile ramps are completed, crews will move to Seven Mile for construction there.

Mayor chides Edison

■ While Detroit Edison cuts tree limbs in the area, Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi shot off a letter to Edison criticizing the utility for power outages and what he says is a lack of responsiveness.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Detroit Edison continues to cut tree limbs in attempt to prevent downed wires, but it's far from an olive branch a Farmington Hills elected official wants.

Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi is upset with the utility's lack of response to demands made by city officials regarding frequent power outages.

Some 8,000 Farmington Hills residents lost electricity as a result of a severe thunderstorm

Aug. 7.

Detroit Edison is spending \$40 million this year — compared to \$32 million in 1998 — on line clearance, which reduces potential for power outages.

Farmington Hills was one of the areas targeted before the recent power losses, an Edison spokesman said.

"This is a continuation of Detroit Edison's line clearance activity," said Carl Just, utility spokesman.

Please see EDISON, A4



Way up: A crew member works to remove overhanging tree limbs from Power lines on Shiloh Road. Edison had crews throughout Farmington and Farmington Hills clearing lines this past week.



Safety: While crews were cutting tree limbs others were ensuring safety by guiding traffic around the trimming process.

TV Book: The Observer Newspapers have discontinued the TV cable guide. Reader surveys have shown that the guide hasn't been popular with the majority of our readers. We will continue to focus our attention on improving other aspects of your newspaper. We apologize for any inconvenience.

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New fund debuts for Civic Theatre facelift

BY TIM SMITH
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The Farmington City Council established a special budget fund Aug. 16 earmarked solely for operations and renovations of the recently purchased Civic Theatre.

Council members also approved a 10-

year loan for start-up costs. About \$180,000 will be transferred from the capital improvement fund into the new community theater fund, said Frank Lauhoff, Farmington city manager.

Repayment of the loan is not considered problematic. Budget projections for several years "anticipate increased attendance and revenues," enough so

that the \$180,000 begins to be paid off in June 2004, according to Lauhoff's report to the council.

That capital will "only be used as needed," Lauhoff explained, such as for any renovations that Wixom-based construction manager M.K.A. Inc. intends to make over the next several months, after the city takes over the Civic from

longtime owner Greg Hohler.

Some of those changes are already being studied, such as relocation of the box office, extension of the main concession stand and the installation of new seats in the lower auditorium.

"We don't want to have a 'grand

Please see CIVIC, A4



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CANNIGIE

Learning: Ellen Wiland learns how to keep attendance on the computer. New teachers attended an orientation Thursday to prepare for their new duties.

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