

## **Member Rights & Responsibilities** **Updated Oct. 2014**

Information about our rates and rules, as approved by the Great Lakes Energy board of directors, is available for review upon request at any Great Lakes Energy (GLE) office and online at <http://www.gtlakes.com/billing/rates/>. If you have a question about our service or your electric bill, please contact one of our offices. You may also write us at P.O. Box 70, Boyne City, MI 49712 or e-mail us at [glenergy@glenergy.com](mailto:glenergy@glenergy.com).

If you don't receive a bill or misplace it, please call us at 1-888-485-2537. You are responsible for paying for your electric use on or before your bill's due date.

### **Billing Frequency and Payments**

Great Lakes Energy sends bills monthly. Members are permitted a period of not less than 21 days to pay their bill. Payments are accepted at each office location, by mail, or over the phone in the form of cash, credit card, check or money order. Payments received after 2 p.m. may not be posted to your account until the next business day.

### **Meter Reading**

Great Lakes Energy obtains your monthly meter reading for billing purposes electronically, through our Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) equipment. Field personnel may need access to your meter, so please be sure it remains accessible at all times.

### **Estimated Bills**

With our AMRs we rarely lack a meter reading. If we need to estimate your bill, the estimate will be based on historical AMR data using a 45-day daily average applied to the number of days for the current billing period. As little as 14 days of AMR data will be used to obtain the daily average if 45 days of historical AMR data is not available.

### **Budget Billing**

The Great Lakes Energy budget billing plan allows you to pay the same amount each month. There is a reconciliation month each year, and you must have at least a 12 month billing history for us to use to establish your payment. Contact us if you want more information about budget billing.

### **Payment Arrangements, Delinquent Amounts**

If you are unable to pay your bill in full, call us to make payment arrangements. If your account remains unpaid after the due date, it is considered delinquent and our usual collection procedures, including notice of intent to discontinue service, will begin.

A one-time late charge of 2% is applied to delinquent amounts, excluding taxes.

### **Checking the Accuracy of Your Bill**

Current rate schedules and worksheets are available from GLE offices or our website [www.gtlakes.com](http://www.gtlakes.com).

### **Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor**

The Power Supply Cost Recovery Factor listed on your bill reflects the changes in the cost of wholesale power to Great Lakes Energy. The factor is shown as cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

### **Inquiry, Service and Complaint Procedures**

Call us for assistance when you:

- Buy, sell or rent property with electric services in place.
- Need electric service at a new location.
- Need greater capacity at your present location.

- Have questions or problems regarding your electric service or bill.

If you have a problem or complaint, contact us immediately. If it is about a bill, don't wait until the due date has passed. Errors or misunderstandings can be cleared up promptly when called to our attention.

If you believe any billing is incorrect, you may register a complaint disputing all or part of that billing. This may be done in person, by mail or by phone.

### **Extended Payment, Settlement Agreements**

If you don't dispute the amount of the bill but are unable to pay it in full by the due date, you may request extended payment terms. We will offer you an opportunity to enter into a written settlement agreement that provides a reasonable payment plan. The payment plan will be based on the amount owed, your ability to pay, your payment history, how long the amount has been past due, and the reason it has not been paid.

You will receive a copy of any settlement agreement you sign, and we are both committed to its terms. If you keep the agreement and stay current with your bills, electric service will continue to be provided. If you fail to keep the agreement, your service is subject to shut-off.

GLE is not required to enter into a subsequent settlement agreement with you until you have complied fully with the terms of a previous settlement agreement, unless you can demonstrate that a significant change in economic circumstances has occurred and a modification of the settlement agreement is requested.

GLE is not required to enter into a subsequent settlement agreement if you have defaulted on the terms and conditions of an agreement within the last 12 months.

### **Security Deposits**

You may be required to pay a security deposit if:

- You left an unpaid bill (that is not in dispute) with a Michigan utility during the last six years.
- Your request for service is for a residence where you do not reside.
- You misrepresent your identity or credit information when you apply for service.
- You fail to provide proof of your identity, such as a driver's license, state identification card, or social security card.
- You were a member of a household when another member who still resides there incurred a past-due utility bill that remains unpaid and is not in dispute.
- You have written one or more checks for insufficient funds or no account within the last 12 months.
- You cannot provide prior, satisfactory utility credit information.

In addition, a deposit may be required if:

- Your service was shut off for failure to pay past-due bills.
- You used service in an unauthorized manner, or tampered with our equipment.

If we require a deposit the amount requested can be twice the average monthly bill for the premises or, if the current customer's consumption history is unavailable, twice the system average monthly bill for residential service.

We will not require a cash deposit or other guarantee as a condition of service based upon any of the following: commercial credit standards, race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, income, location, or home ownership.

Security deposits earn interest at a rate set in our rules and regulations. We refund your deposit, including interest, when you establish good credit by paying your electric bills on time for 12 consecutive months.

If we require the deposit because of tampering or unauthorized use, we hold it 24 months and refund it on satisfactory payment during the last 12 months.

Your deposit refund is credited to your monthly bill. If it exceeds the bill amount, it will carry forward as a credit balance towards your next bill. We will, upon request, issue a check to you for the credit balance.

If you discontinue service before you have established good credit, we credit the amount of your deposit, with interest, to your final bill. If it exceeds the final bill, we will issue a check to you for the balance.

### **Guarantor Agreements**

Instead of a cash deposit, GLE will accept a written guarantee from a member in good standing. We waive the deposit when payment is the responsibility of the Dept. of Human Services.

### **Voluntary Termination of Service**

- Customer must notify the utility at least 10 days prior to requested termination date
- Allow access to the meter
- Provide an address for the final billing.
- The utility must provide a final actual meter reading within 10 days of the request for termination or estimate the final reading and offer customer the option to provide an actual meter reading.
- The utility must schedule the customer's final reading within a 4-hour window if utility cannot access the meter.

### **Discontinuation of Service**

Your electric service may be disconnected for any of the following reasons:

- Non-payment of a past-due bill.
- Failure to post a security deposit, or provide a guarantor, when required.
- Unauthorized use, interference or tampering with electric service.
- Failure to comply with the terms of a settlement agreement.
- Refusal to allow our employees access to our equipment on your property.
- Misrepresenting your identity to obtain service.
- Violation of any other rule that affects the safety of members or others, or the operation of Great Lakes Energy's distribution system.
- Failure to apply for service.

Your meter may be disconnected between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. If you request that we reconnect your meter after regular working hours, a guaranteed reconnect fee may apply.

### **Disconnection Notice**

We will mail a written notice of intent to disconnect your service to your last known address not less than 10 days before the proposed action, or leave a notice at your residence whenever it is more feasible.

The notice will include:

- Name and address of the customer.
- GLE telephone number and address.
- The reasons for the proposed discontinuation of service.
- The date, or a reasonable time after that, when the service will be discontinued.
- Your right to enter into a settlement agreement.
- Your right to present a complaint about the billing or other conditions of service to GLE before the proposed date of discontinuation.
- The requirement that you must pay the part of the bill not in dispute within 10 business days.
- Your right to represent yourself or be represented by counsel or another person of your choice at a complaint hearing.
- A statement that service will not be discontinued until the resolution of such a complaint.

If you do not respond after a disconnect notice has been sent, Great Lakes Energy will make a reasonable effort to contact you by telephone at least 24 hours before the proposed discontinuance of service.

Our employee may be authorized to accept payment from you. Your service will not be disconnected if you make full payment, including any applicable service charges. You can pay by cash, credit card, money order, or by check if you have not made payment with an insufficient funds check within the past 12 months.

If you are not on the premises and a field representative disconnects your service, we will leave a notice in a conspicuous place explaining that service has been discontinued, and giving the address and telephone number of the office where you may arrange to have service restored.

### **Medical Emergencies**

If a medical emergency exists, disconnection can be delayed, not to exceed 21 days. Please contact us if you or a member of your household is a critical care customer or has a certified medical emergency. The certificate shall identify the medical condition, any medical or life supporting equipment being used, and the specific time period a delay is needed. Postponement may be extended by renewal of the certificate.

### **Reconnection of Service**

Meters equipped with a remote Reconnect Disconnect Unit (RDU) may be reconnected and disconnected remotely from the GLE office. If a GLE employee accepts payment in the field to prevent disconnection of an electric meter, a service charge may be added to your account. If we

disconnect service for nonpayment, a reconnection fee is added to the total amount due before the meter can be reconnected.