

POWER*Talk*

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Great Lakes Energy

A supplement to
Michigan Country Lines

What's In Store *This Winter?*



Bill Scott
Great Lakes Energy
President/CEO

I hope you enjoyed our mild, comfortable summer and fall. Will they be followed by a mild winter, too?

As we all know, Michigan winters can bring anything from bitter cold and heavy snow to wintry mixes and flooding thaws. Flip a coin and you'll always be partially correct.

A winter with enough snow to help our local economy without prolonged periods of extreme cold that strain heating budgets would be ideal.

Regardless of what the months ahead bring, one thing is certain. Great Lakes Energy is working for you. Members who need assistance can contact us for payment arrangements or take advantage of our Energy Optimization (EO) programs that offer rebates, incentives and even free energy efficiency measures for qualified members.

In addition to Energy Optimization programs to help reduce your energy use

(visit michigan-energy.org), we offer a simple way that you can find agencies to help you pay your bill or provide other services.

Dial 211 to connect with a free community health and human services information and referral service that connects eligible residents with energy payment assistance help and much more. By simply dialing 211, available 24/7, callers are connected with a trained, caring professional who will confidentially assess their situation, identify their needs and refer them to local resources for help.

Although it varies by location, local resources include basic needs such as food, housing, shelter, temporary financial assistance, transportation, utility assistance and more. In addition, local resources include mental health care and counseling, health care, individual/family life assistance and other services.

If you should experience trouble accessing 211, you can search for the closest provider in your area by visiting www.mi211.org.

Tell us how we're doing!

You could win a \$25 gift of energy

We'd like to hear from you. Have you had a positive interaction with a GLE employee? Tell us about it and you could win a \$25 gift of energy.

Contact us with specific details of the interaction, including the employee name, by phone, mail or email. You can also share the feedback through an online form or on our Facebook page. We'll print all of your great comments in our employee newsletter. Employees who are recognized will be entered in a quarterly, random prize

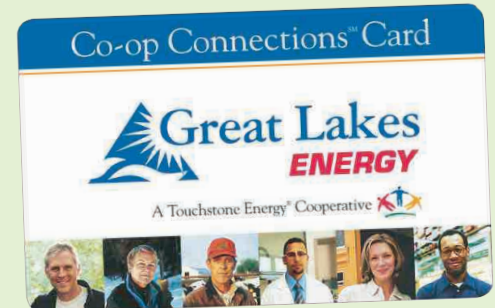
drawing. Plus we'll award the member who submitted the winning employee's feedback a \$25 gift of energy!

We also welcome any suggestions or concerns with our service. While we won't print these in our employee newsletter, we will work with you to resolve your concern as quickly as possible.

Share your feedback today.

Please be specific and include the employee name.

888-GT-LAKES | glenergy@glenergy.com
gtlakes.com/honorroll | facebook.com/greatlakesenergy



Shop and Save This Season

Do your holiday shopping and save with the Co-op Connections® card available free to Great Lakes Energy members.

Use the Co-op Connections® discount card at participating area businesses. Here are just a few of the many discounts available:

- **Gaylord Bowling Center** – Buy one game of open bowling, get one free.
- **Morat's Bake Shop, New Era** – 10 percent off total purchase on Thursdays.
- **Cross Country Ski Headquarters, Higgins Lake** – 2 for 1 facility pass good anytime, includes groomed trails, day lodge.

Find bargains online or use your Co-op Connections® card at participating businesses, which includes valuable offers from national merchants, too.

In addition, save up to 85 percent on prescription drugs and refills at participating retailers. Other healthy savings discounts are available, too. Visit healthysavings.coop for more information.

Review the discounts by visiting our website, gtlakes.com, or use the Co-op Connections mobile app. Visit the App Store and search for Co-op Connections.

Don't have a card or Internet access to the list of discounts? Simply call us at **888-485-2537, ext. 8957**, and start saving today.

Safety *First!*

Free electrical safety demonstrations are available to schools and youth groups within the Great Lakes Energy service area.

Great Lakes Energy presenters will come to your classroom and give students a free demonstration using a tabletop display.

The display is a miniature energized power line. The presenter uses an insulated tool to show the arc given off by the power line when touched. Accidental contact with overhead and underground power



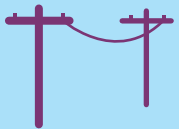
line equipment that results from common activities such as climbing trees, playing near electrical equipment and flying kites can be vividly demonstrated. The power line can be removed from the pole to show the dangers when a downed power line touches a vehicle, fence or other object.

Visit gtlakes.com/safety-demonstrations, then fill out the safety demonstration request form online to reserve a time. School presentations are for second to seventh grades. Our show dates fill fast, so please reserve a time soon.



We're Keeping the **Lights On**

Reliable service means fewer power outages. We're making improvements to provide you with better service.



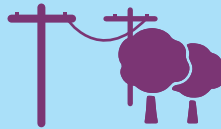
More Power Line Protection Devices



New Technology

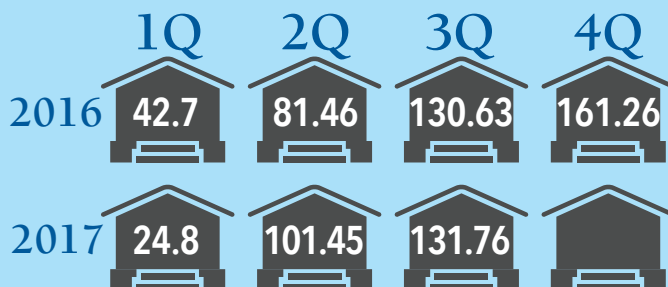


Major Power Line Improvements



Aggressive Tree Maintenance

AVERAGE OUTAGE MINUTES YEARLY COMPARISON



OUR YEARLY GOAL: UNDER 157 MINUTES



Report Outages Online

Members can report an outage and view status updates online at my.gtlakes.com, or through our mobile app. Search for Great Lakes Energy on the App Store.

Your information is instantly transmitted to GLE's outage management system. When it is possible to estimate restoration time, the information will appear in real time on your computer or mobile device. Members using either option will also receive an automated call when their power is restored.

You can continue to call **1-888-GT-LAKES** to report an outage, too.

Do not report your outage by e-mail or on social media, as such messages are not monitored 24 hours a day.

Visit Storm Central on gtlakes.com to view current outages.



Looking Out for You

1323 Boyne Avenue, P.O. Box 70
Boyne City, MI 49712

WEB: gtlakes.com

TEL: 888-GT-LAKES (888-485-2537)

EMAIL: glenery@glenergy.com

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/greatlakesenergy

Great Lakes Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Winter Protection Plan

The Winter Protection Plan protects eligible senior and low-income members from service shutoffs and electric bill payments during the winter months (November 1 – March 31). Enrollment begins Nov. 1. To participate, you must agree to the terms of the Winter Protection Plan for the upcoming heating season. If you are an eligible low-income member, your utility service will remain on from November 1-March 31, if you pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month, and you make monthly payments of 1/12 of any past due bills.

When the protection period ends you must begin to pay the full monthly bill, plus part of the amount you owe from the winter months when you did not pay the bill in full. Participation does not relieve members from the responsibility of paying for electricity, but does prevent shut-off during winter months.

You qualify for the plan if you meet at least one of the following requirements:

- › are age 65 or older,
- › receive Department of Human Services cash assistance, including SSI,
- › receive Food Assistance,
- › receive Medicaid, or
- › household income is at or below the 150% of poverty level based on the income guidelines (*contact us for guidelines*)

Senior citizen members (65 or older) who participate in the Winter Protection Plan are not required to make specific payments to ensure that their service will not be shut-off between Nov. 1 and March 31. However, seniors are encouraged to pay whatever they can during the winter so they will not have large, unmanageable bills when the protection ends.

How to Enroll:
Call 888-GT-LAKES.

HOME HEATING CREDIT

You can apply for a Home Heating Credit if you meet the income guidelines or qualify based on alternate guidelines including household income, exemptions, and heating costs. If you qualify, you may receive assistance to help pay your winter heating bills. Forms are due by Sept. 30.

Forms are available from the Michigan Department of Treasury, online, or wherever tax forms are provided.

Contact: Call the Michigan Department of Treasury **517-636-4486** or visit michigan.gov/treasury.
The filing deadline is September of each year.

CRISIS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

State Emergency Relief Program (SER): You do not have to be a DHS client to apply for help with a past due bill, shutoff notice or the need for deliverable fuel through the SER. This program, available Nov. 1–May 31, provides most of its utility assistance during this crisis season. However, limited assistance is available outside the crisis season. If you receive a DHS cash grant, you may vendor part of it towards heat and electric bills.

Contact: Your local DHS or call the Home Heating Hotline, **855-275-6424** or visit mibenefitsaccess.org.

LOW-INCOME HOME WEATHERIZATION

You may be able to receive help with weatherizing your home to reduce energy use if you meet low-income eligibility guidelines (200% of poverty guidelines) and funding is available. Weatherization may include caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation.

Contact: Your local Community Action Agency for details. Visit mcaaa.org to find one in your area.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROTECTION

You are protected from service shut-off for non-payment of your electric bill for up to 21 days at a time, not to exceed 63 days, if you have a proven life threatening medical emergency. You must provide written proof from a doctor that a medical emergency exists.

Contact: Great Lakes Energy at **888-GT-LAKES**.

SHUT-OFF PROTECTION FOR MILITARY ACTIVE DUTY

If you or your spouse have been called into active military duty you may apply for shut-off protection from your electric or natural gas service for up to 90 days. You will still be required to pay, but we will help you set up a payment plan.

Contact: Great Lakes Energy at **888-GT-LAKES**.

MICHIGAN VETERANS TRUST FUND EMERGENCY GRANT PROGRAM

The Trust Fund provides temporary assistance to veterans and their families facing a financial emergency or hardship including the need for energy assistance.

Contact: Michigan Veterans Trust Fund at **(517) 284-5299** or Michigan.gov/dmva.

You may be able to receive help with weatherizing your home to reduce energy use

Connect With Us
Great Lakes Energy
888-GT-LAKES
gtlakes.com



Payment AND Assistance GUIDE

Helpful Programs for
Paying Your Electric Bill

Visit gtlakes.com or call 888-GT-LAKES

We're
**Looking
OUT For
YOU**

Payment assistance is available for Great Lakes Energy members through many resources and programs listed here. You may be eligible for more than one program. Please contact us for more information at 888-GT-LAKES or for specific resources, contact the agency listed.

Please note that some restrictions and eligibility requirements may apply for all programs listed.

Manage Your Payment Method

AUTOMATIC PAYMENT

We offer an Automatic Bill Payment program where you never have to mail your payment in again. Your electric bill can be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account or charged to your credit/debit card on the due date. This makes it more accurate than paying with a check, when you never know when your payment will be deducted from your bank account. With Automatic Bill Payment, you will get the security of knowing that your payment will never be late. It's easy and reliable and best of all, there's no charge for this service.

How To Enroll: Call 888-GT-LAKES or login to your account at gtlakes.com.

BUDGET BILLING

If your electric bill fluctuates greatly from month to month, you can take control with our tailor-made Budget Billing plan. With Budget Billing, your electric bill will stay roughly the same every month year-round despite changes in the weather. Your monthly payment is based on the previous year's energy use at your current residence. To be eligible for budget billing we must have 12 months of billing history and your account balance must be zero at the time of enrollment. Your account is balanced each year in August.

How To Enroll: Contact us at billing@glenergy.com with your request, name, daytime phone number and account number. You can also call us at 888-485-2537.

You may be eligible for more than one program.

Call 2-1-1 for information and referral services for energy bill payment assistance

PRE-PAID BILLING

Manage your energy usage on a daily basis with GLE's new flexible pre-paid billing. Simply pay for your energy how and when you choose; your consumption is billed and deducted daily. You're billed using current rates and fees. Monitor your usage online or by phone to stay aware of how much electricity you use. We'll notify you if your balance is low. Your service is remotely disconnected if the account balance is depleted and reconnected when a payment is received. There are no late fees, no reconnect fees and no deposits with this program.

How To Enroll: Call 888-GT-LAKES. Some restrictions apply.

OTHER PAYMENT OPTIONS

We accept most credit cards and also accept payment by check over the phone or online. Other ways to pay your bill include e-billing and a local pay station.

More Information: Call 888-GT-LAKES or visit my.gtlakes.com to pay online.

Past Due Accounts

TROUBLE PAYING YOUR BILL?

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.

We accept payments over the phone or online 24 hours a day. To make a payment online visit my.gtlakes.com.

DISCONNECT NOTICE

Great Lakes Energy will print past due amounts and/or a delinquent notice on your monthly bill. If you receive this notice, please contact our office immediately to arrange payment. If your service is shut off, additional fees may apply.

2-1-1 REFERRAL LINE

One simple call to 2-1-1, a free community health and human services information and referral service, connects eligible residents with energy payment assistance help and much more.

Call 2-1-1 for information and referral services for [energy bill payment assistance](#) and other health and human service needs. Calls are confidential and answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Contact: Dial 2-1-1 or visit 211.org.

Connect With Us
Great Lakes Energy
888-GT-LAKES
gtlakes.com