

By the Community, for the Community

October is National Co-op Month



Bill Scott
Great Lakes Energy
President/CEO

October naturally brings to mind images of pumpkins, Halloween, beautiful fall foliage, and let's not forget football. But October is notable for another reason – it's National Co-op Month. This is the time of year when

cooperatives across the country, including Great Lakes Energy celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. They fill a need to offer

products and services that others won't, like high-speed internet and electricity in rural areas. That's because co-ops, like GLE, work for their members instead of investors.

Similar to how GLE was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our communities, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. GLE's leadership team and employees live in the communities which we serve. Our board of directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our members (that's you!) have a valuable perspective. That's why we are continually seeking your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels, or member meetings, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities. This enables us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as Trustream fiber internet, automated meters, and vegetation management, to name a few.

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." We partner with local organizations like the Charlevoix-Emmet Intermediate School District in their Energy Fundamentals: A Lineworker Program to introduce local high school students to the career technical field. We participate in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our communities' brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week to experience democracy in action.

Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of GLE as not only your energy provider, but also as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you – because your electric co-op was built *by* the community, *for* the community.



October is National Co-op Month.

Electric co-ops are proud to power more than 20 million American homes, businesses, farms and schools in 48 states.





People Fund Grant Helps Construct Perception Pathway

Grass River Natural Area (GRNA), in Bellaire, Michigan, used their People Fund grant dollars to help construct an educational Perception Pathway. The Pathway trail is a self-paced and self-guiding educational nature trail for people with sight impairment, and is used for the educational needs of area students and visitors as a sensory experience. Ten interpretive Braille/sensory stations were placed along the path and Braille transcription of the GRNA field guide were published thanks to grant dollars from the People Fund.

Want to help non-profit organizations like GRNA in your service area? Join the People Fund today at gtlakes.com/peoplefundenroll. By rounding up your monthly electric bill to the next dollar (an average of 50 cents per month), you put your small change to work right in your community and are entered to win a \$100 bill credit. The People Fund has awarded over \$3.5 million to local charitable groups since 1999.

New Look. New Experience. Same mobile app.

Look for updated features to the GLE mobile app in October, like one-click access on a new home screen and condensed menu to:

- Contact GLE
- View your billing
- More!
- Make payment
- Check your usage

You'll also get outage and billing alerts right on the app's home screen.

Don't have our mobile app? Get it today! Search for Great Lakes Energy in the App Store.

We're looking out for you.



Truestream Update

We're moving into the beginning construction process in our Phase 2 area in the Petoskey service district.

Areas northwest of Petoskey, in our Phase 2 area, are now past the engineering/planning phase and are moving into the pole make-ready step. As construction progresses, we will move into other parts of the Petoskey service area.

Phase 1 construction continues. Members who have turned in their service agreement and site plan (if underground) will continue to see overhead and underground construction activities and fiber splicing crews.

For those in other areas, we are depending on you to tell us where to build next. We encourage everyone interested in fiber internet to register their interest on jointruestream.com. By voicing your desire to see fiber internet in your specific community, you help us understand where to build next.



Celebrating Our Members!

October is National Cooperative Month and we're celebrating with free gifts for members plus a chance to win an LED TV. Stop into one of our offices during October and receive a free LED flashlight and Energy Optimization program information.

You can also sign up to win one of three great prizes:

1st PRIZE: 32" LED Energy Star-rated TV

2nd PRIZE: \$100 worth of LED lights

3rd PRIZE: \$50 worth of LED lights

One giveaway and one entry per account. Giveaways available while supplies last. LED light prizes were donated by Home Depot of Petoskey.



Looking Out for You



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