

A Matter of Reliability



Shaun Lamp

President & Chief Executive Officer

On April 14, the regional grid operator, MISO, announced the results of its latest generation capacity auction. This annual process is designed to determine if there is sufficient generation supply to meet this summer's maximum demand.

The results are concerning to us at Great Lakes Energy, as this auction showed that the nine Northern states, including Michigan, are significantly short of the supply needed to keep the lights on when demand is highest.

While this is certainly concerning, it is not surprising, nor is it the first time that Michigan has found itself in this situation. In fact, just two years ago, the Lower Peninsula of Michigan was short of the needed supply to meet the maximum demand for the summer

of 2020. Fortunately, from an electric standpoint, the peak demand for the Lower Peninsula was offset by lower commercial load due to COVID. As a result, the most extreme measures of controlled or "rolling" blackouts were not necessary.

Northern states, including Michigan, are significantly short of the supply needed to keep the lights on when demand is highest.

What is driving the shortfall in the necessary supply to meet demand? Simply put, the power grid is changing. Large baseload generating assets, primarily coal and nuclear, are retiring and being replaced mainly by intermittent renewable energy. The challenge placed on the grid is that for every megawatt of coal and nuclear that is retired, two megawatts of solar and ten megawatts of wind are needed to replace

that supply. Additionally, it is impossible to permit a new coal plant, new nuclear is extremely cost prohibitive, and natural gas is becoming more challenging to permit, as well. Our options are limited.

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Fortunately, our power supplier Wolverine Power Cooperative, has invested in generation supply on our behalf, meaning we at Great Lakes Energy have sufficient generation supply to meet our demand. Unfortunately, if blackouts are required by the grid operator, we must do our part as we are all interconnected to the same electric grid.

I want every co-op member to know that this isn't a statement on renewable energy versus coal and nuclear power plants. You only have to see Great Lakes Energy's 63% carbon free portfolio to realize that your cooperative has been trending to cleaner resources for the past 20 years. Our concern is about reliability and the risk that continues to grow for the lights to go out.

There is the potential for this problem to get worse. While we are already facing power supply shortages, nearly 10% of Michigan's generating fleet of coal and nuclear plants are slated for early retirement in the **next three years**. We can't let power plant closures get ahead of the new generation that must be built to replace them.

Issues like reliability are critical, and we want to keep you informed and engaged. To support these efforts, Great Lakes Energy is partnering with other electric cooperatives from around the state and country, utilizing Voices for Cooperative Power (VCP). I encourage you to sign-up for VCP; it's a great way to stay engaged, informed, and have a voice on critical energy policy issues. [Sign up at voicesforcooperativepower.com](https://www.voicesforcooperativepower.com) and find out how you can get involved.



VOTE

Next Month for A Board Member

It's time to vote! Great Lakes Energy members in three director districts will receive a mail-in ballot with their July/August issue of *Michigan Country Lines*.

Three board positions, each for three years, need to be filled. Qualifying GLE members who reside in Districts 6, 8, or 9 can seek election to the board and will be listed on your ballot.

DISTRICT AREAS ARE:

District 6 – Lake and Mason counties

District 8 – Clare, Mecosta, Newaygo, and Osceola counties

District 9 – Allegan, Barry, Kent, Montcalm, and Ottawa counties



Bob Kran

Howard Bowersox

John LaForge

The terms of directors Bob Kran of Free Soil (District 6), Howard Bowersox of Stanwood (District 8), and John LaForge of Delton (District 9) expire this year. Bowersox and LaForge plan to seek re-election.

▶ In addition to the mail-in ballot, the candidates' profiles will appear in the July/August election issue that will be sent to members in Districts 6, 8, and 9. Profiles will also be available in the online version of the July/August issue available at countrylines.com/my-co-op/great-lakes/.

Winners will be announced August 24 at the cooperative's annual business meeting.



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