

## Focusing on You: October is National Co-op Month



**Shaun Lamp**

President & Chief Executive Officer

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with school, community, and sports activities in full swing. It's also when cooperatives of all kinds across the country celebrate National Co-op Month.

When I say Great Lakes Energy (GLE) celebrates Co-op Month, it really means we are celebrating you, our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. In fact, "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

That's been Great Lakes Energy's focus since a group of farmers banded together to bring electric service to unserved rural areas of western Michigan 85 years ago, and it continues to be our focus today.

In much the same way our electric lines run through our service area, our concern for community flows through all our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

Great Lakes Energy works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and a board of directors that's comprised of people who live in the communities we serve. Because of these many local ties, we understand our communities' unique needs and strive to help meet them.

One of the best examples of this is our ongoing effort to bring high-speed internet service to our members through our Trustream network. This project is a direct response to calls we heard from members about an important, unmet need in our service area.

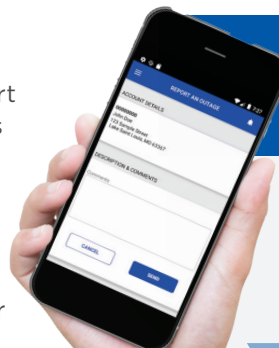
We're proud to support local youth through our classroom grants and scholarship program. With your help, our People Fund program has provided more than \$4 million in support for many community and charitable organizations across our service area since its inception in 1999.

As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you. That's why we have numerous programs in place to help, including our new Energy Wise program.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I encourage you to create an online account and download the GLE mobile app. Both will allow you to conveniently monitor and manage your energy use.

We also know that some members may struggle to pay their electric bill from time to time. We're here to help. We offer multiple payment options such as Budget Billing, FlexPay, and our Pathways Program. If you ever have questions about your energy bill or are having difficulty paying your balance, please give us a call so we can help.

For all these reasons and more, I am proud to lead a team that works hard to continue GLE's legacy of focusing on meeting the needs of our members and their communities.



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# GLE In the Community

GLE remains committed to our concern for the community, one of the seven guiding principles that cooperatives follow. Despite challenges throughout the year, we held our goal in being a positive force in our community.



## TRUESTREAM

GLE continues to make big strides in expanding our Trustream fiber internet service. We now have more than **14,000** Trustreamers and that number is growing every day. Soon, we will be finishing fielding work in the last areas where this work had not taken place. This marks yet another milestone in our network build-out plan.



## CLASSROOM GRANTS

School districts in the Great Lakes Energy service area that educate children of GLE members can apply for a grant of up to **\$2,000** to fund innovative programs. GLE has awarded more than **\$143,00** in classroom grants to 168 projects since the program began in 2012.



## PEOPLE FUND

With your help, in the past year our People Fund program has provided more than **\$270,000** in support for many community and charitable organizations across our service area. The program has awarded more than **\$4 million** in grants since its inception in 1999.





## STORM RESTORATION



Multiple storms hit the GLE service area in the past year. Of particular note, during a mid-December windstorm lineworkers made more than **80,000** restorations during a four-day period. Lineworkers and GLE employees are always ready to reconnect members as timely and efficiently as possible.



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