

# WINTER PROTECTION PLAN

The Winter Protection Plan helps eligible seniors and low-income members avoid service shut-offs and managed electric bill payments during the winter months (Nov. 1 - Mar. 31), with the understanding that payments will be required later.

Enrollment begins Nov. 1. To participate, you must agree to the Terms of Service for the upcoming heating season. If you are an eligible low income member, your utility service will remain on from November 1 though March 31, if you pay at least 7% of your estimated annual bill each month during the protection period. If a previous balance exists at the time you apply, you must pay the previous balance in equal monthly installments between the date you apply and the start of the next heating season.

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. *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:

- ▶ Age 65 or older
- ▶ Receive Medicaid
- ▶ Receive Department of Human Services cash assistance, including SSI
- ▶ Household income is at or below the 150% of the poverty level based on the income guidelines (contact us for guidelines)
- ▶ Receive Food Assistance

Senior citizen members (65 or older) who participate in the Winter Protection Plan 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 888-485-2537.

## ▶ 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](http://michigan.gov/treasury). The filing deadline is September of each year.

## ▶ Crisis Assistance Program

State Emergency Relief (SER) Program: You do not have to be a DHHS client to apply for help with a past-due bill, shut-off notice, or the need for deliverable fuel through the SER. SER is available Oct. 1-Sept. 30 with crisis assistance available Nov. 1-Mar. 31. If you receive a DHHS cash grant, you may vendor part of it towards heat and electric bills.

**CONTACT:** Your local DHHS or call the Home Heating Hotline, 855-275-6424 or visit [michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://michigan.gov/mdhhs).

## ▶ 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 the poverty guidelines) and funding is available. Weatherization may include caulking, weatherstripping, and insulation.

**CONTACT:** Your local Community Action Agency for details. Visit [nmcaa.net/low-income-weatherization/](http://nmcaa.net/low-income-weatherization/) 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 888-485-2537.

## ▶ 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 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 888-485-2537.

## ▶ 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](http://michigan.gov/dmva).



Power. Purpose. You.

[gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com) (888) 485-2537

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GREAT LAKES  
ENERGY



Helpful programs for  
paying your electric bill

# PAYMENT & ASSISTANCE GUIDE

Visit [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com)  
or call 888-485-2537



# Help for when you need it

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 888-485-2537, 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. 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 888-485-2537 or login to your account at [gtlakes.com](http://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 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](mailto:billing@glenergy.com) with your request, name, daytime phone number and account number. You can also call us at 888-485-2537.

### CONNECT WITH US

to get the latest updates and discuss topics with other members.



### ► Pre-Paid Billing

Manage your energy usage on a daily basis with GLE's 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. If the balance is depleted, the service will be remotely disconnected and can be reconnected when payment is received. There are no late fees, no reconnect fees and no deposits with this program.

**HOW TO ENROLL:** Call 888-485-2537. Some restrictions may apply.

## OTHER PAYMENT OPTIONS

Manage your account and pay your bill by setting up an online account at [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com). You can also pay-by-phone through our automated payment system.

**MORE INFORMATION:** Call 888-485-2537 or visit [gtlakes.com](http://gtlakes.com) to pay online.

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



## 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 [gtlakes.com](http://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.

► Dial 2-1-1 or visit [211.org](http://211.org).