

power talk

A SUPPLEMENT TO MICHIGAN COUNTRY LINES



The ice may be gone, but chilling effects remain



Shaun Lamp

President &
Chief Executive Officer



Unless it precedes the words “tea” or “cream”, ice isn’t something most people think about in August. As we move into the final weeks of summer, it’s hard to imagine the bitter cold and destructive ice that gripped northern Michigan just a few short months ago.

While the visible reminders of the March 2025 ice storm — snapped trees, broken poles, and tangled lines may have faded from view in many locations, the impacts of that historic storm are far from over for your electric cooperative.

In the days following the storm, we leveraged every available resource — our dedicated crews, mutual aid partners, and outside contractors — to bring power and internet service back online as quickly and safely as possible. Although the initial emergency response concluded months ago, we are still very much in a recovery phase, particularly concerning the financial repercussions. The sheer scale of the damage to our infrastructure was unprecedented. Thousands of poles were broken, miles of line torn down, and countless pieces of equipment destroyed. The cost of replacing these vital assets, coupled with the ongoing cleanup work, has already added up to more than 60 times what we budget annually for storm restoration.

As the magnitude of these costs comes into sharper focus, it has also become clear that we will need to adjust our electric rates to ensure GLE’s long-term financial stability in the wake of the storm.

The degree to which you, our members, will feel the financial impact of this storm will hinge largely on what, if any, federal or state disaster relief funding becomes available to us.

On June 25, the entire Michigan Congressional Delegation signed a letter to the President urging him to approve Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s May 16 request for a major disaster declaration for the counties affected by the ice storm. Approval of this request is a crucial step in clearing the way for GLE and others to receive disaster relief funding. As of mid-July, we are still awaiting word on the status of the declaration request.

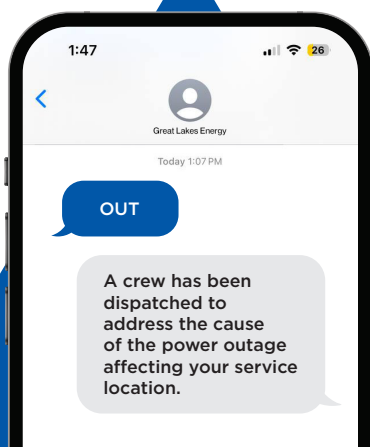
Even if GLE is ultimately awarded disaster relief funding, it will only cover a portion of the storm-related costs, and it will take some time before we receive any of the funding. As a member-owned electric cooperative, our members are our owners and share in the costs of the co-op, including all storm costs. Our costs are recovered through our rate structure, not through any type of insurance or shareholders.

Our board of directors will soon be reviewing rate adjustment options, and we expect to have more information to share in the coming weeks. Rest assured, all of the decisions our board and leadership team make have one priority in mind: **providing our members with reliable service as the best value possible.**

We appreciate your continued support as we work to ensure the long-term resilience and financial health of your cooperative.

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For the safety of our employees, please do not interrupt crews during restoration efforts.



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