

power talk

Community is at the heart of who we are

A message from Shaun Lamp, President & CEO



One of the most rewarding aspects of serving Great Lakes Energy members is witnessing the strength and generosity of the communities we call home. While our primary responsibility is providing safe, reliable electric and internet service, our cooperative's mission extends beyond power lines and fiber optic connections. We are committed to improving the quality of life in the communities we serve, and that commitment comes alive through the programs, events, and partnerships that connect us with our members every day.

Great Lakes Energy employees regularly take part in community celebrations across our service territory. We proudly sponsor and participate in festivals, parades, and events throughout the communities we serve. These events give us an opportunity to connect directly with the people we serve. They remind us that cooperatives are different: we are locally governed, community-focused, and driven by our members' needs. Whether serving at community events, supporting local nonprofits, or participating in educational programs, our employees are proud to be active members of the communities where we live and work.

Among the programs we are most proud of are those that invest in the next generation. Each year, we provide opportunities for local students through multiple programs. The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour gives young people a chance to learn about government, leadership, and the cooperative business

model while building friendships and experiences that can last a lifetime. Likewise, our scholarship program helps students pursue higher education and career goals, supporting the future of our communities one student at a time. We also know that strong communities start with strong schools. Through our Classroom Grant program, educators receive funding for innovative projects and resources that enhance student learning. Many teachers have used these grants to create meaningful educational experiences that might not otherwise be possible. Seeing the creativity and dedication of our local educators is both inspiring and encouraging.

Another powerful example of the cooperative spirit is the People Fund. Supported by members who voluntarily round up their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar, the fund provides grants to nonprofit organizations that are making a difference throughout our service area. Those small contributions add up to make a significant difference, helping neighbors in times of need and supporting organizations that strengthen our communities.

Community involvement is not simply something we do; it is central to our cooperative identity and one of the defining principles that sets us apart. Thank you to our members, employees, volunteers, educators, students, and community partners who make these efforts possible. Together, we continue to demonstrate the power of cooperation and the positive impact of neighbors helping neighbors.



People behind your power: Meet Derek Smith



At GLE, it's the people behind the scenes who keep everything running, and we're shining the spotlight on Derek Smith, director of operations!

Derek joined Great Lakes Energy in March 2011 and has built an impressive career through hard work, dedication, and a commitment to serving our members and communities. Over his 15 years with GLE, he has progressed through a variety of roles, including apprentice lineworker, journeyman lineworker, supervisor, manager, and now director of operations. His journey reflects not only professional growth, but also the leadership and experience that help keep our cooperative strong.

As director of operations, Derek works closely with teams across the organization to ensure members receive the reliable service they count on every day. His passion for helping others and supporting those around him is what makes his role especially meaningful.

"I enjoy helping others and making a difference, whether that's with coworkers at GLE or members of our communities."

That desire to make a positive impact can be seen in the way Derek approaches both leadership and service, always striving to support his team and provide value to the members we serve.

When he's not at GLE, Derek enjoys spending quality time with his wife, Arica, and their two sons, Bronson (11) and Brady (6). Whether cheering from the sidelines at sporting events, spending time outdoors, or creating family memories together, he values every opportunity to be with his family. Derek is also an avid outdoorsman who enjoys hunting and fishing, taking advantage of Michigan's beautiful seasons whenever he can.

Thank you, Derek, for your leadership, dedication, and the positive impact you make every day. Your commitment to Great Lakes Energy, your coworkers, and the communities we serve helps make GLE a stronger cooperative for everyone.

Five ways to save this summer



1. Raise your thermostat.

The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temp, the more you'll save.



2. Install window coverings.

Blinds or light-blocking curtains are a good way to prevent indoor heat gain during the day.



3. Seal leaks.

Stop air leaks around windows and doors with caulk and weatherstripping to reduce energy waste.



4. Run ceiling fans.

Run ceiling fans counterclockwise for a cooling breeze, and switch them off when you leave.



5. Lower water heater temp.

Lowering your water heater temp to 120 degrees reduces standby heat loss.

Do you have our Mobile App?



All your account information, right at your fingertips. The Great Lakes Energy app is available for both Apple and Android

devices. Simply search "GLE" in your mobile app store to download. With the app, you'll have 24/7 access to your account, outage reporting, energy usage, and bill payments—anytime, anywhere. You can even sign up for notifications to stay informed about outages, payments, and usage updates.



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