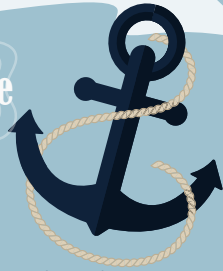


AT THE MARINA

...the water is NOT fine



Marinas are not meant to be swimming areas because docks and boats can carry sources of electricity. If this electricity seeps into the water due to faulty wiring, the water becomes energized.

If you are exposed to water that is charged with electrical current, **you can be shocked and even drown** — this is known as electric shock drowning. There are also other dangers of swimming near a marina:

DANGERS of swimming at a marina include:

1. Electric shock drowning.
2. Carbon monoxide poisoning from boat exhaust.
3. Contaminated water from a storm or spill.
4. Impact from a boat or its propellers.

Ensure marinas have **ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI)** installed and that they are tested often. Keep your boat's electrical system well-maintained and **have it inspected regularly.**

Learn more at:

 **Safe
Electricity.org**

Smart Thermostats

A smart thermostat connects to your Wi-Fi network. With a smart thermostat, you can program or change your desired schedule and control the temperature remotely through an app on your smartphone, tablet, or computer or via a voice assistant. Some programmable thermostats may offer only one schedule, but with a smart thermostat, multiple schedule options could exist. Strictly speaking, **smart thermostats don't work with all homes, but they do work with the vast majority.** You typically need a central HVAC system to be able to install a smart thermostat. Smart thermostats also require Wi-Fi and a smartphone for full control.

Do smart thermostats lower electric bills?

There is good evidence that smart thermostats can help most users save money. According to real-world data from by the Environmental Protection Agency, smart thermostats that meet Energy Star® criteria save users an average of 8 percent on their utility bills.

What happens to smart thermostats when the power goes out?



The thermostat stores the set point and schedule. When power is lost to the thermostat, the only information it "loses" is the current time. Once power is restored, **the thermostat will resume its previous settings and configuration.** It will also automatically reconnect to the Wi-Fi network.

BLP residential customers can receive a \$75 rebate on smart thermostats. To see the complete list of rebates available, download the application at mienergysmart.com. **Questions?** Give us a call at 877-674-7281 or email us at energysmart@franklinenergy.com.



Your Board of Directors:

Michael Westbrook, Chairperson
Gerald Witherell, Vice Chairperson
Todd Crum, Director
Andrea Hendrick, Director
Kurt Knoth, Director

Grand Haven Board of Light & Power
1700 Eaton Drive, Grand Haven, MI 49417
616.846.6250 | ghblp.org

PLUGGED IN



Public Power: Giving Our Community a Strategic Advantage

June 2023



Public Power: Giving Our Community a Strategic Advantage

In 2021, the City of Grand Haven celebrated a proud milestone – 125 years of community ownership and operation of a public power electric utility system! The Board of Light and Power is one of 40 fortunate municipally owned electric systems in Michigan, and also one of the longest standing with a strong history. While our community shares this distinct privilege with approximately 2,000 other publicly owned electric utilities nationally, the majority of electric customers in the US receive their electricity from much larger privately-owned for-profit companies. The public power structure of the BLP has given our community significant advantages in the areas of local control, reliability, affordability, and sustainability.

Local Control

Local control has always been a foundational principle of publicly owned municipal electric systems. To place our history into perspective, the city began operating your local electric utility system only 16 years after Thomas



Edison invented his incandescent light bulb. For the first 63 years of our system's operations, it operated isolated from other electric utilities, generating all the power the community consumed. During this period, the local electric utility operated as a "department of the City," under the control and direction of the City Council, which eventually appointed an advisory Board of Public Works.

In February 1958, a nine-member charter commission was elected to revise the outdated City Charter and a significant improvement was restructuring the governance of the municipal electric utility to prepare for the future. Part of that year long public process was a proposal to create the Board of Light and Power, whose directors are decided by the voters of Grand Haven so that the community would have direct control of their electric utility. In 1959, the revised Charter received approval by almost 70% of the voters in Grand Haven and the citizen-elected Board of Light and Power was created. The Board was tasked, by Charter, to conduct the affairs of the electric utility in a more independent fashion using "best utility practices." Over the 64 years that followed, the Board of Light and Power has successfully carried out this mission.

With revolutionary changes in the power industry over the years and the creation of the modern electric market, the complexity of local utility operations has increased exponentially, and so has the Board's implementation of "best utility practices." The interconnection and complexity with the regional energy market and the Board's

direction to move away from a single source of power by creating a diversified power supply portfolio has allowed BLP to thrive in reliability, affordability, and sustainability. The Board's voter-elected governance structure continues to serve the citizens, and the utility's customers well in these modern times.

Reliability

The BLP was awarded a Diamond level certification from the American Public Power Association's Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) program, placing the BLP at the highest level of reliability among APPA members nationwide. Over \$8 million has recently been invested in the electrical substations that our community relies on to distribute power to your homes and businesses, as well as our critical community services such as



hospitals and public safety facilities. The Grand Haven Board of Light and Power's 69

kilovolt transmission system has been rebuilt to strengthen ties to the electrical grid. The Board also monitors the month-to-month performance of the system's reliability indices, which reflects the continued improvements in vegetation management, capital investments, and system maintenance over the last several years. The Board has committed, in its 5-year strategic plan, to maintain these high standards in reliability performance.

Affordability

By operating under best utility practices, the

BLP has brought down costs (and its rates) by transitioning the business model, taking advantage of the current electric markets, and stabilize power supply costs. These efforts have allowed the BLP to reduce rates multiple times over the past six years.

Sustainability

The Board has also moved progressively into a more sustainable diversified power supply portfolio with increasing renewable energy purchases that balances costs and long-term sustainability. Our renewable energy portfolio has jumped from 9.4% in 2019 to 22% in 2022. Our plans are to increase our renewable energy portfolio to 28% by 2025. Coupling that with our efforts and successes in partnering with our community to reduce energy waste through optimization programs, the BLP has established itself as a leader in utility sustainability.

Your elected Board of Directors is proud of these accomplishments and encourages you to reach out and learn more by visiting our Facebook page or homepage at ghblp.org.

