

# NEWSLINE



## CELEBRATING NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH: THE POWER OF MEMBERSHIP

Each October, electric cooperatives across the country celebrate National Co-op Month, a time to honor the unique role cooperatives play and recognize you, our members, for making it all possible. For us at Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative, it's more than tradition; it's a reminder of what makes being part of a cooperative special.

Unlike investor-owned utilities, Itasca-Mantrap doesn't exist to generate profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve you, our members, neighbors and communities. At the heart of our cooperative is a simple principle: member-owned and locally controlled. You have a voice in how the co-op operates, and board members live in our communities, understanding the challenges we face together.

This local accountability drives our focus on safe, reliable and affordable electricity. We invest in infrastructure and new technologies to strengthen the grid, manage costs and keep rates as low as

possible. When storms or outages occur, our crews respond quickly because we live here too.

Itasca-Mantrap goes beyond electricity. From supporting schools and youth programs to volunteering, we strive to improve quality of life. Programs and rebates help members save energy and lower costs while events like Member Appreciation and Energy Forums keep you engaged.

Our cooperative operates under guiding principles: voluntary membership, democratic control, economic participation, autonomy, education, cooperation and concern for community. These principles prioritize people over profits, empowering members and supporting local economies.

This Co-op Month, take pride in being a member of Itasca-Mantrap. You're not just a customer, you're an owner and a vital part of keeping our community strong, connected and energized. Thank you for your trust and support. Together, we are powered by purpose.



## CEO UPDATE

BY STEVE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT & CEO

### Preparing for Cold Weather: Smart Tips to Stay Warm and Save Energy

With my first fall back in Minnesota underway and cooler temperatures setting in, I am finding now is the ideal time to prepare our homes for the upcoming fall and winter seasons. Cold weather not only challenges our comfort, but it can also increase electricity use as heating systems work harder to keep up. By taking a few simple steps, you can stay warm, protect your home, and help reduce wasted electricity.

#### Weatherproof Your Home

- **Seal leaks:** Check around windows, doors, and outlets for drafts. Even small gaps can let cold air in and warm air out. Caulking, weather stripping, or outlet gaskets are inexpensive ways to reduce heat loss.
- **Insulate wisely:** Ensure your attic, walls, and basement are properly insulated. This helps your heating system work more efficiently and keeps your home comfortable.

#### Use Heat Efficiently

- **Adjust your thermostat:** Lowering your thermostat by just a few degrees when you're away or sleeping can make a noticeable difference in energy use. Smart thermostats can help manage this automatically.
- **Let the sun in:** During the day, open curtains on south-facing windows to naturally warm your home. Close them at night to help hold heat inside.
- **Reverse ceiling fans:** Set fans to run clockwise at a low speed to push warm air down into living spaces.

#### Cut Electricity Waste

- **Unplug idle devices:** Many electronics continue to draw power when turned off. Unplug chargers, gaming consoles, and small appliances when not in use.
- **Switch to LED lighting:** Shorter winter days mean lights are on longer. LED bulbs use about 75% less energy than traditional bulbs and last much longer.
- **Maintain heating equipment:** Schedule a tune-up for your furnace or heat pump and change filters regularly to ensure peak performance.

#### Plan Ahead

Taking time to prepare now not only keeps your household comfortable but also helps manage electricity demand across our cooperative system. By working together, members can reduce unnecessary energy waste, ease strain on the grid, and keep costs stable for everyone.

#### Consider an Air Source Heat Pump

Air source heat pumps (ASHPs) are energy-efficient systems that extract heat from the outside air and use it to heat your home and water. Even when it's cold outside, they can still operate effectively. Some models can even reverse operations to provide cooling in summer (like an air conditioner). Combine an ASHP with Itasca-Mantrap's rebate and load management program and you could save significantly on your bill.

Itasca-Mantrap is here to help. Visit our website at [www.itasca-mantrap.com](http://www.itasca-mantrap.com) or call our office for additional energy-saving tips and resources available to our members.

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was held on Thursday, July 31, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present.

#### Approved:

- Consent agenda
- June financials, subject to audit
- Adoption of Board Policy 5.25, Capital Credits
- Rescission of board policies 2.85, Capital Credit Retirement and 7.10, Transfer of Capital Credits
- Revisions to Board Policy 8.40, Idle Services
- Vote in favor of GRE's NextEra Energy/Amendment to Dodge County Wind PPA

#### Reports heard:

- Operations and Safety
- Financial
- Marketing and Member Services
- CEO
- Summaries of director meetings attended

#### Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap's membership
- GRE Power Cost Adjustment detail for June 2025
- Board Budget YTD
- Transformer Disposition Certificate
- Update on the Itasca-Mantrap solar array
- Charitable funding opportunities

#### NEXT BOARD MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, October 30, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.



**The Cold Weather Rule (CWR)** offers added protection for members facing disconnection due to non-payment.

Under the CWR, residential members may have service reconnected if the shutoff impacts the home's primary heat source **and** all of the following conditions are met:

1. Disconnection occurs between October 1 and April 30.
2. The member receives referrals from the co-op for energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs designed to lower energy bills.
3. The household income of the member is at or below 50% of the state median household

income. Local energy assistance providers (listed to the right) may verify income.

4. The member enters into a payment arrangement with Itasca-Mantrap and makes reasonably timely payments based on the household's financial resources.

Please note: Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not guarantee protection from disconnection during winter months.

Contact Itasca-Mantrap promptly if you receive a disconnection notice, or if you have questions about the Cold Weather Rule or energy assistance programs.

### **LOCAL ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS**

**Becker County Human Services**  
218-847-5628

**Bi-County CAP, Inc.- Bemidji**  
800-332-7161 & 218-751-4631

**Bi-County CAP, Inc.- Walker**  
218-547-3438

**Hubbard County Human Services**  
218-732-1451

**Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership**

Detroit Lakes: 218-847-1385

Park Rapids: 218-732-7204

Wadena: 218-632-3600

**White Earth Housing Authority**  
218-473-4663

**White Earth Energy Assistance**  
218-473-2711 & 866-885-7656

# **Apps & Amps**

**Date: Thursday, Oct. 23      Location: Zorbaz**

**Time: 5:30 – 7:00 pm      22036 County 7, Park Rapids, MN 56470**

Space is limited to 50 members. RSVP by Tuesday, October 21 if you plan to attend.



MAKE THE SWITCH TO

# DUAL FUEL

FOR COMFORT AND SAVINGS THIS WINTER!

Dual fuel combines two heating sources to fit your budget and keep you warm all winter. Itasca-Mantrap's dual fuel program pairs a low-cost electric heat source with a backup system, such as propane, fuel oil, natural gas or electric storage heat.

Dual fuel is a controlled program that helps conserve energy and lower costs. During peak demand, your electric heat is temporarily shut

off—up to 12 hours at a time, with no more than 400 hours each season. During these control periods, your backup heating system provides comfort without interruption.

Members enrolled in the program qualify for a reduced rate. To ensure your system is ready, have a heating professional check your equipment before winter. Learn more at [www.itasca-mantrap.com](http://www.itasca-mantrap.com).

## Pick Your Combo!

Installing an electric heat source—such as baseboard, heat pumps, electric radiant floors, or plenum heaters—allows you to pair it with another fuel type, such as propane, fuel oil, natural gas or electric storage heat. Pick what works best for your home and budget!

## Cost Savings

- Lower Electric Rates – Members enrolled in the program receive a discounted electric rate of 6.8¢ per kWh for their primary heating system.
- Rebate – Itasca-Mantrap offers a rebate of \$25/kW to help offset the cost of installing dual fuel equipment.

## Comfort & Reliability

- Automatic Switch-Over – When load control is activated, the electric heating system switches seamlessly to the secondary fuel source.
- Continuous Comfort – Homes remain heated with no manual intervention required from the member. Homes with a properly sized backup system maintain reliable heating, even during prolonged control periods.

## Grid & Community Benefits

- Energy Conservation – Shifting electric heating away from peak times helps reduce wholesale power costs.
- Environmentally Responsible – Electric heating runs clean, reducing emissions compared to burning fossil fuels alone.



## Keep the Chill Out, Keep the Savings In:

*Easy, no-cost tips to stay cozy and save money this fall*

Cooler days and crisp nights as fall approaches serve as a reminder that winter is quickly approaching. Even though seasonal changes frequently result in increased energy consumption, there are free and easy ways to maintain comfort while saving money.

### **Dress for the Season**

First thing: Don't sprint for the thermostat. Grab an additional layer rather than the thermostat. Cozy blankets, socks, and sweaters can significantly improve your comfort without raising your energy costs.

### **Make Use of Your Ceiling Fans Sensibly**

Think your ceiling fan is only useful during the summer? Think again. If you switch them to spin clockwise (yep, there's a little switch) on low, they push all that warm air hanging out near your ceiling back down where you're actually sitting.

### **Take Advantage of the Sunshine**

If the sun's out, don't waste it. Open up those blinds during the day for free heat and a little serotonin boost. When it gets dark, shut the curtains tight to keep the warmth from escaping through the windows.

### **Shut Down Drafts**

Prevent heat loss by using a blanket or towel to cover gaps at the base of doors. This easy tip can help you save money by reducing the amount of work your heating system must do.

### **Cook with Intention**

Fall = baking. Who isn't baking during the fall season? In addition to baking a delicious treat, using the oven warms your kitchen and the rooms around it. Once the oven is off and safe to use, leave the door slightly open to allow the heat to spread after you're finished.

### **Small Steps Add Up**

Saving money on energy this fall doesn't have to mean big investments or complicated changes. By layering clothing, adjusting ceiling fans, taking advantage of natural heat, blocking drafts, and using kitchen warmth to your benefit, you can stay cozy while keeping energy costs manageable.



## ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

### ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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itasca@itasca-mantrap.com  
www.itasca-mantrap.com



#### OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

#### GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

(800) 252-1166  
www.gopherstateonecall.org

#### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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##### DISTRICT 2

Patricia Roehl, Treasurer

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#### PRESIDENT & CEO

Steve Johnson

\*Great River Energy Director Representative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

*Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative is an  
equal opportunity provider and employer.*

# We would LOVE your review!

We work hard to make sure your  
service and reliability are 5 stars. If  
you agree, would you take a minute  
to leave us a review on Google?

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## Itasca-Mantrap Electricity Bill Payment Options

Pay through  
the SmartHub  
app



Mail in  
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payment



Setup  
autopay



Pay in  
office



Pay online  
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website



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payment in  
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