



NEWSLINE



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

October 2021

Cold Weather Rule Begins Oct. 1

The Cold Weather Rule (CWR) provides additional protections to certain members facing disconnection for non-payment. The CWR allows for the reconnection of electrical service for residential members if the disconnection affects the primary heat source of the residential unit and ALL of the following conditions are met:

1. Disconnection occurs between October 1 and April 30.
2. A member receives referrals from the co-op for energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the member's 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. Under a payment arrangement with Itasca-Mantrap, a member makes reasonably timely payments based on the financial resources of a household.

Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not completely prevent winter disconnects. 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
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

Let's talk watts! We invite you to join us at Zorbaz to enjoy delicious appetizers, and powerful conversation. Mix and mingle with co-op staff and other co-op members while enjoying a bite to eat. This is a great time to ask questions and give your feedback!

DATE: Tuesday, November 2

TIME: 5:30 P.M.

WHERE: Zorbaz

Space is limited to 50 members. RSVP by Tuesday, October 26 if you plan on attending.



CEO Update – By Christine Fox, President-CEO and David Saggau, Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer

all of us. I welcome David Saggau as a guest writer to explain what that means to us:

Great River Energy is focused on building a better future for the member-owners we serve and the stakeholders who are impacted by the things we do. Over the past several years, we have reduced costs, mitigated our carbon risk, added renewables and completed a transmission buildout. We've collaborated with member-owners to develop one of the largest demand response programs in the country while encouraging beneficial technologies that utilize renewable energy like the Revolt® program for electric vehicles. In addition, we are demonstrating a first-of-its-kind long-duration battery storage technology.

Over the years, Great River Energy has been responsibly transforming from a historically coal-dependent cooperative to one with low carbon intensity that will have zero coal. This shift allowed us to meet Minnesota's renewable energy standard (30% by 2025) eight years ahead of schedule, and we will ambitiously meet the state's carbon reduction goal (80% by 2050) 27 years early.

Last year, we announced plans to replace Coal Creek Station with 900 megawatts of wind energy, which will lower our costs and double our current renewable capacity. More recently, we decided to sell the plant because it saves our members money and allows us to preserve the jobs and communities in North Dakota. It is also the right thing to do. In addition, the company buying the power plant will pursue carbon capture and storage technology which we believe is something that could - and should - be replicated around the world. The sale of our high-voltage direct-current transmission system allows our member-owners to recover their investment in that asset, while securing the future use and operation of the critical system for the state of Minnesota and region.

Great River Energy maintains a portfolio of power supply resources designed to provide members with reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible electricity. We are building a power supply portfolio and transmission system that will serve our membership well for decades.

Great River Energy has never been in a better financial position than it is today. Currently, our wholesale power rates are 12% below the weighted regional average cost of electricity, and we project wholesale rate decreases over the next several years.

Looking to the future, we are committed to electrifying the economy. Great River Energy and our member-owners play an intrinsic role in electrifying transportation, home heating and cooling, business applications, agriculture, manufacturing techniques, and more. Again, it's the right thing to do.

Great River Energy is thankful for the support and guidance we have received from many stakeholders who understand the policy implications, but also the impact on people, costs and communities involved in a transformation like this. Specifically, a special thanks to the Minnesota-North Dakota chapter of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), Center for Energy and the Environment (CEE), Great Plains Institute (GPI), and Clean Grid Alliance (CGA) who have helped us focus on practical solutions while working together, to do what's right.

As a cooperative, our success is determined largely by how well we serve our member-owners and interact with the world and people around us. Our efforts are paying off. Today, our member satisfaction is at an all-time high, and we commit uncompromisingly to being a responsible corporate citizen and leader in the evolution of the electric industry.



The SmartHub online and mobile app help you manage your account by providing many features including, but not limited to:

- Billing & Payment Information
- Outage Reporting
- Quick, Easy Communication
- Billing Alerts
- Detailed Usage Reports

Award Presented to Sen. Utke

The Coalition for a Secure Energy Future (The Coalition) announced a series of "Energy Champion" awards to a group of Minnesota legislators. Recipients of the award have championed an all-of-the-above energy strategy for Minnesota to ensure that consumers and businesses have access to affordable and reliable electricity.

"The Coalition is proud to recognize Sen. Paul Utke as a dedicated leader for his work on behalf of Minnesotans who count on reliable, affordable, and resilient electricity," said Luke Hellier, Director for the Coalition for a Secure Energy Future. "Sen. Utke has been a career long advocate for Minnesota to utilize our diverse energy supply. We look forward to his continued leadership on this important issue."

"I am honored to receive this award from the Coalition, and I will continue to work on energy initiatives that focus on reliability and affordability for all Minnesotans," said Sen. Utke upon receiving the award.

"On behalf of the Itasca-Mantrap board of directors, I want to thank Senator Utke for his continued work as an Energy Champion

securing Minnesota's energy future. Congratulations on this great achievement," said Christine Fox, President-CEO of Itasca-Mantrap.

The award was presented to Sen. Utke by Nancy Utke, Board Chair of Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative, Christine Fox and various board members.

The Coalition was founded in 2014 to enhance, preserve, and protect our diverse set of energy resources, including coal-based electricity, to ensure a continued affordable and reliable energy supply for families and businesses in Minnesota. Learn more at www.secureenergyfuture.org

The Lignite Energy Council works to maintain a viable lignite coal industry and enhance development of the region's lignite coal resources for use in generating electricity, synthetic natural gas and valuable byproducts. Members of the Lignite Energy Council include mining companies, major users that use lignite to generate electricity, synthetic natural gas and other valuable byproducts, and businesses that provide goods and services to the lignite industry.

Press release submitted by Luke Hellier, Director for the Coalition for a Secure Energy Future.



Pictured here are Itasca-Mantrap Directors, unless otherwise noted. Front row (L-R): Brian Behrens, Senator Paul Utke, Christine Fox-Itasca-Mantrap President-CEO, Nancy Utke-Itasca-Mantrap Board Chair, Pat Roehl. Back row (L-R): Al Czezczok, Terry Cook, Dan Breitbach.

Board Report: Meeting Highlights

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was held on Thursday, July 29, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present.

Items discussed or Board action taken:

- Approved the consent agenda.
- Heard the Operations and Safety report and the Marketing and Member Services report
- June financials were received and filed subject to audit.
- CEO Christine Fox gave her monthly CEO report.
- Approved Board Leadership Courses for Director Cook.
- Heard quarterly reports for Board Expenses, Strategic Plan, Safety Incidents, Financial Ratios and Vegetation Management.
- Reviewed Administrative Policy 7.70 – Member Opt-Out of Radio Frequency (RF) Meter.
- Discussed proposals for a Strategic Plan update.
- Adopted a resolution in favor of the Great River Energy sale of Coal Creek Station and related assets, and the HVDC system and related assets, and to enter into a power purchase agreement with Rainbow Energy Center, LLC and Nexus Line, LLC.
- Directors and CEO Christine Fox reported on meetings attended on behalf of the Cooperative.

The October meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, October 28, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

Seeking Applications for the Touchstone Energy Community Award

Apply today if your organization has a positive impact on our community!

Itasca-Mantrap is seeking applicants for the Touchstone Energy Community Award, which recognizes community groups or businesses that have demonstrated a strong commitment to the community. The winning organization that has helped make the Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative service area a better place to live and work will receive a plaque and a \$500 cash award for its cause.

Community members may nominate an organization, association or business by completing an application form, available at our office or online at www.itsca-mantrap.com. The application requires a description of the project, program, or event and the positive impact it brought to the community. Completed applications must be received at Itasca-Mantrap's office by Oct. 31, 2021.

The award recipient will be announced in November and will then contend for the statewide Touchstone Energy Community Award, which has a cash prize of \$1,000. The statewide award winner



2020 Touchstone Energy Award winner: Akeley Regional Community Center (ARCC).

will be recognized at the Minnesota Rural Electric Association annual meeting in 2022.

The Minnesota Touchstone Energy cooperatives are part of a national alliance of more than 700 electric cooperatives in 46 states that adhere

to the values of integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

The Touchstone Energy Community Award highlights the Seventh Cooperative Principle - *Concern for the Community*.

It's a Matter of (Co-op!) Principles



**Community born.
Community led.
Focused on YOU.**

October is
National Co-op Month!

ACE Hardware, State Farm, REI, Land O'Lakes and Itasca-Mantrap all share something in common: we're all cooperatives.

We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values: honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater community good. October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time but also provide a framework for the future. Learn more about a few of these Co-op principles on page 5.

It's a Matter of (Co-op!) Principles

Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, Itasca-Mantrap was created out of necessity—to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. In 1939, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our community could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, any farmer could get electricity brought to his farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

While this history may be forgotten, key parts of that heritage remain—the focus on our mission to serve our members. Itasca-Mantrap strives to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire community. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory.

Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets an equal voice and a vote in how the co-op is run. Itasca-Mantrap's team members live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you. We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we continually seek and encourage your input on important co-op issues and participation in co-op elections.

Our close connection to this community ensures we understand our members' priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as community solar programs, equipment and technology upgrades, and electric vehicle programs.

Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Itasca-Mantrap. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Because we are guided by seven cooperative principles, it's not just about dollars—it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

Itasca-Mantrap is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place. And by the way, that sums up the seventh co-op principle "concern for community".



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Old, uninsulated and improperly installed exterior doors can waste energy and money.

Shut the door on wasted energy by weather stripping and sealing all exterior doors. If you have an old exterior door, consider replacing it with a newer, energy efficient model.

Source: energy.gov



AMI Project Update

One of the first steps in the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project is the deployment of the communications hardware (collectors and repeaters). This hardware is used to securely capture meter data over a radio frequency (RF) wave and transmit it to a server via a cellular signal.

Crews have begun installing the communications hardware throughout the Itasca-Mantrap service territory. As of September 10th, crews have installed 49 pieces of the communications equipment.

Crews will begin swapping out member's meters after the communications hardware has been installed. The full deployment step will take around 18 months.



If you have any questions, please contact our office or visit the Frequently Asked Questions page on our website.



ITASCA-MANTRAP COOPERATIVE

16930 County 6, PO Box 192
Park Rapids, MN 56470

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Phone: 218-732-3377 or 888-713-3377
Fax: 218-732-5890
E-mail: itasca@itasca-mantrap.com
www.itasca-mantrap.com



GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

1-800-252-1166
www.gopherstateonecall.org

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Dist. 1 – Brian Behrens, Director
Dist. 2 – Patricia Roehl, Director
Dist. 3 – Terrence Cook, Treasurer
Dist. 4 – Al Czczok, Asst Sec-Treas
Dist. 5 – Nancy M. Utke, Chair
Dist. 6 – Tim Kivi, Secretary
Dist. 7 – Dan Breitbach, Vice Chair
President-CEO – Christine Fox



THANK YOU

for your continued support of the Operation Round Up program to help local civic and charitable organizations.

This program has funded over \$1 Million worth of local projects and organizations.