



# NEWSLINE



October 2022



## Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH**



## APPS & AMPS

Let's talk watts! We invite you to join us at Stompin' Grounds 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: Thursday, October 20**

**TIME: 5:30 P.M.**

**WHERE: Stompin' Grounds**

Space is limited to 50 members. RSVP by Tuesday, October 18 if you plan on attending.



## CEO Update - By David Saggau, GRE President and CEO

This month the CEO Update features a guest article written by David Saggau, Great River Energy President and Chief

Executive Officer.

### Cooperatives Handle the Heat

The electric system is designed to provide all the energy members need, even during the hottest times of the year.

As the summer began, you may have heard news about a shortage of electricity in the Midwest or concerns about the stability of the electric system. While it was true that there was less surplus energy than we typically have, the Midwest electric system still had nearly 8% more electric generating capability than required to meet the expected demand.

In Minnesota, the situation is even better. All utilities in our state, including Great River Energy, have more electric generating capacity than required. As expected, the electric system performed reliably throughout the summer season, keeping members cool and comfortable even during prolonged heatwaves.

When service interruptions do occur, they are typically due to weather events resulting in physical problems with the system, and not a lack of planning for adequate supply. As the electric industry continues to transition to more renewables and we face the impacts of more extreme weather events, Great River Energy is focused more and more on resiliency.

In emergency situations, the region's grid operator calls on additional power supply resources, imports energy from other regions and performs voluntary load reductions to manage the electric system. Temporary controlled manual load sheds, or periodic power outages, are used as a last resort to keep the system in balance.

The reliability of the electric system is paramount to electric cooperatives. Great River Energy and Itasca-Mantrap operate and maintain an electric system that is dependable today and carefully planned to be resilient as we continue to make and use electricity in new ways.

Great River Energy is transitioning the way we generate electricity by reducing the use of fossil fuels and adding cost-effective renewable resources, such as wind energy. These resources require no fuel, which makes them environmentally responsible and economically advantageous. Because their production depends on

the weather, however, we must have a dependable backup plan to reliably meet the needs of our members.

We plan power supply resources 15 years in advance to ensure we have what we need to serve members. Furthermore, every spring the team at Great River Energy performs detailed maintenance on our fleet of natural gas and fuel oil powered "peaking" power plants in preparation for response to the peak needs of the system. These plants can produce electricity in a matter of minutes when needed.

In addition, Great River Energy methodically designs, plans and operates a system of transmission lines that can handle high heat and elevated electricity demand. We also work with Itasca-Mantrap to reduce electricity use during strategic times to provide relief to the electric grid and ultimately save members money.

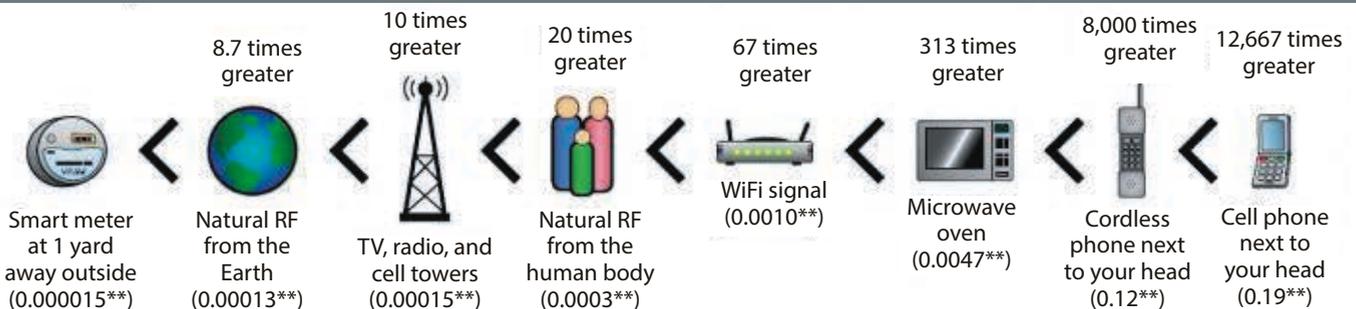
As a member of Itasca-Mantrap, you are served by Great River Energy's diverse and flexible portfolio of resources to ensure you have the energy you need, all year round.

### - David Saggau

Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer

*Itasca-Mantrap is one of 28 cooperatives that own and receive wholesale electricity from Great River Energy.*

## RF exposures from smart meters are much lower than RF sources\*



\*Based on the FCC average exposure standard which averages exposure over 30 minutes of usage \*\*Measured in milliwatts per square centimeter (mW/cm<sup>2</sup>)

# AGI Project Update

As part of our commitment to continuously improve service and reliability, we are in the process of replacing all of our electric meters.

## Why are we changing out meters?

The existing automated metering system has reached its end of life. The manufacturer is no longer supporting this outdated equipment. Therefore, Itasca-Mantrap is in the process of installing a new advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system. With the new metering infrastructure, we will have the ability to:

- Provide members hourly data to assist them in better managing their usage.
- Provide information faster to assist in situations such as power outages.
- Refine and manage the internal engineering portion of our business, such as line loss, transformer loading, voltage readings, etc.

## Some additional benefits of the new meter are:

- Improved Member Service: The AMI system will allow Itasca-Mantrap to offer more timely information regarding members' energy consumption, allowing them to make wise decisions about how they use energy.

- Improved Reliability: Having two-way communication with the AMI meters will enhance Itasca-Mantrap's outage management system by narrowing the location of outages more quickly.
- Improved Power Quality: The AMI system will report variances in voltage and other line conditions that will help Itasca-Mantrap maintain a more reliable power distribution system.

## Electrical service during the installation

Members will lose electrical service during the installation, however the impact of the disruption in service will be minimal. Co-op members can expect to lose power for a just a few minutes on the day of installation. You may need to reset electronic clocks and other devices.

## Current Schedule

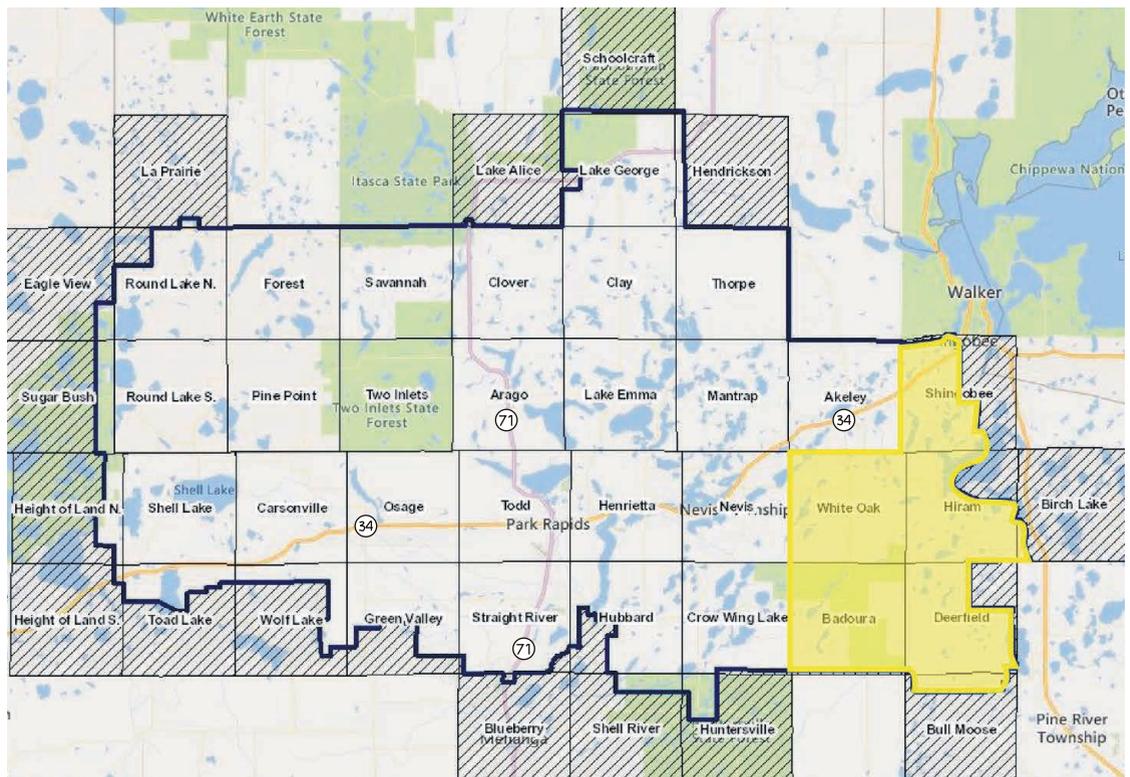
Itasca-Mantrap is currently working in the area highlighted on the map. You will see lineworkers working on the East side of the Itasca-Mantrap service territory.

## RF Exposure

Any radio wave energy from the meters being installed is very limited and has not been found to create health problems. The system is 900 MHz equal to a baby monitor, garage door opener buttons, and a cordless telephone.

You would need to stand in front of your meter for 50 years to obtain the same amount of frequency you receive with 1 cellphone call.

If you have any questions about the meter exchange, please visit our website at [www.itsasca-mantrap.com](http://www.itsasca-mantrap.com) or contact our office at 218-732-3377.



## Beat the Heat!

Members pulled up to Itasca-Mantrap on Friday, August 12 to see a tent with balloons, rootbeer floats, face painting, puppy petting, and a variety of crafts for the kids! Even though it was a chillier day than we expected, it was quite the successful event with 167 attendees!

We partnered with Headwaters Animal Shelter, Park Rapids Future Farmers of America, and Shari Emerson (face painter). Thank you to these organizations for providing fun entertainment and helping make this event a success!



## 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

# 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](http://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, 2022.

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



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

\$2,000. The statewide award winner will be recognized at the Minnesota Rural Electric Association annual meeting in 2023.

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*.



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- Quick, Easy Communication
- Billing Alerts
- Detailed Usage Reports

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit [www.energy.gov/energysaver](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver) to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



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## 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 28, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present.

### Approved:

- Consent agenda
- June financials, subject to audit
- 2023 Annual Meeting date as Tuesday, June 13, 2023
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Retirement Security Plan amendment and restatement
- Rescission of Board Policy 3.98, Disciplinary Action, in lieu of Administrative Policy 3.98, Disciplinary Action.

### Reports Heard:

- Operations and Safety report
- Marketing and Member Services report
- CEO report
- 2022 Youth Tour report
- Quarterly reports for Board Expenses, Safety Incidents, Strategic Plan, Financial Ratios and Vegetation Management plan
- Directors and CEO Fox reported on meetings attended on behalf of the Cooperative.

### Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap's membership

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, October 27, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.



Your continued support of the Operation Round Up® program to help local civic and charitable organizations is appreciated.

**Thank you!**

### 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](mailto:itasca@itasca-mantrap.com)  
[www.itasca-mantrap.com](http://www.itasca-mantrap.com)



### GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

1-800-252-1166  
[www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org)

### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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