NewsLine

ITASCA-MANTRAP COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

August 2021

80th Annual Meeting

Itasca-Mantrap held its 80th Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 10, 2021. The Annual Meeting was a 30-minute business meeting with 50 members in attendance. Three lucky members had their names drawn and won a $100 bill credit. The Annual Meeting was also livestreamed for members to watch from home.

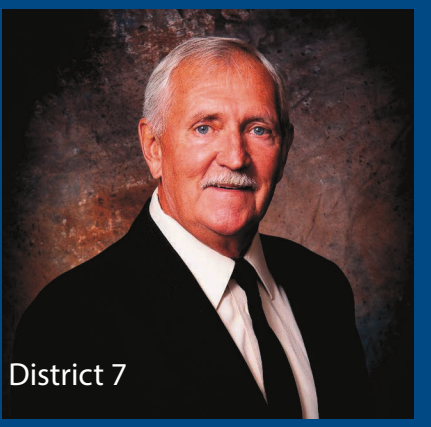
The meeting included the election (by acclamation) of the directors for districts 6 and 7, reports from the Board Chair and CEO, and an update on Itasca-Mantrap business.

This year, director seats for Districts 6 and 7 were up for election. Both positions were uncontested. The incumbent directors for Districts 6 and 7 were elected by acclamation.

Congratulations Tim Kivi (District 6) and Dan Breitbach (District 7)!

DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS


District 6


District 7

STAYING SAFE
DURING AN OUTAGE

We work hard to provide the most reliable service possible. Rest assured, if the power is out, we are on it!

The length of time it takes to restore your power depends on several factors, including the:

- Extent of the storm's destruction
- Severity of utility equipment damage
- Number and extent of outages
- Accessibility to damaged equipment

STAY SAFE UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED

- Stay far away & keep away from downed power lines, which could be live and deadly.
- If you come across a downed line, immediately call 911 to report it.
- Never enter a flooded room; the water could be energized.
- If you are standing in water, do not turn on/off power or flip a switch.

THANK YOU for your patience during outages. When the lights go off, we are working safely and efficiently to restore power.

SafeElectricity.org®

CEO Update - *By Christine Fox, President-CEO*

As promised, I am going to attempt a non-technical, technical article about our new Advanced Grid Infrastructure (AGI) project. As discussed previously, our AGI project consists of three parts: Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), Load Management (LM) and Meter Data Management System (MDMS).

The AMI system is the largest of these parts. It includes the meter at your house and all the hardware and software to get your meter readings from your house to Itasca-Mantrap. As energy flows through our lines, the meter and into your home, the meter is measuring a multitude of things including your energy use, voltage, and demand (the most energy used at any given time within the month). Once the meter has this information, it relays it through an encrypted radio frequency (RF) signal to a collector. The signal can be transmitted to a collector in a multitude of different ways. The signal can "hop" to another meter – perhaps your neighbors' meters – or it can "hop" to a repeater or directly to a collector. It may make multiple "hops" before it gets to a collector. The beauty of the system is that if there is interference in the path that the signal "normally" takes, it can find another way to get back to us. It simply finds another place to "hop" to. This is called a "mesh network". Once the signal gets to the collector, it is then sent to our server via cellular signal. Once it is received by the server it is sent into the cloud and becomes accessible by Itasca-Mantrap. This all happens instantaneously.

Once we receive the signal, the MDMS system kicks in. It accumulates and verifies the data for billing and analysis. The data is stored and used by Itasca-Mantrap for a variety of reasons, including billing, helping our members determine why they have a high bill in any given month and identifying areas in our system that need maintenance or upgrades.

The LM part of the AGI system is used for our Demand Response programs. This allows us to manage load. Part of our bill for wholesale power is based on demand (the amount of energy we are using when Great River Energy, our wholesale power supplier, experiences their peak usage during the month). With a LM system, we can turn off participating members' energy when the peak is predicted to happen, thereby reducing our costs. As we get more information out of our MDMS system, we will be able to identify these peaks better and perhaps create more programs that can also avoid the "high cost" periods. Energy is a commodity and, as such, is priced on an hour-by-hour basis. Thank you to our members who are currently on a LM program.

There are many other data and cost-related ways this new system will benefit our members.

- Data - The most evident data-related benefit includes our ability to quickly determine when a meter stops reading (i.e., during a power outage), and even predict when an outage may occur. (But please do continue to call-in—we do not want any outage to be overlooked.) Also, the combination of the AMI and MDMS systems will allow us to monitor our system more closely to ensure that we prioritize investments in our system to minimize outages due to equipment failure.
- Costs - The benefits of reduced costs include our ability to manage load, which reduces our wholesale power rate, and our ability to remotely disconnect and reconnect meters, which saves time and gas since linemen will not need to make a trip to the property to perform those tasks. This means our linemen can be focused on our grid enhancements.

So that is my non-technical, technical summary of how our new AGI system will work, and some of the ways that it will benefit you. If you have any questions or would like to talk more in depth on this or any other subject, please call us at 218-732-3377.

Watch our future newsletters for more information and member benefits regarding our new AGI system.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you!!

Chris

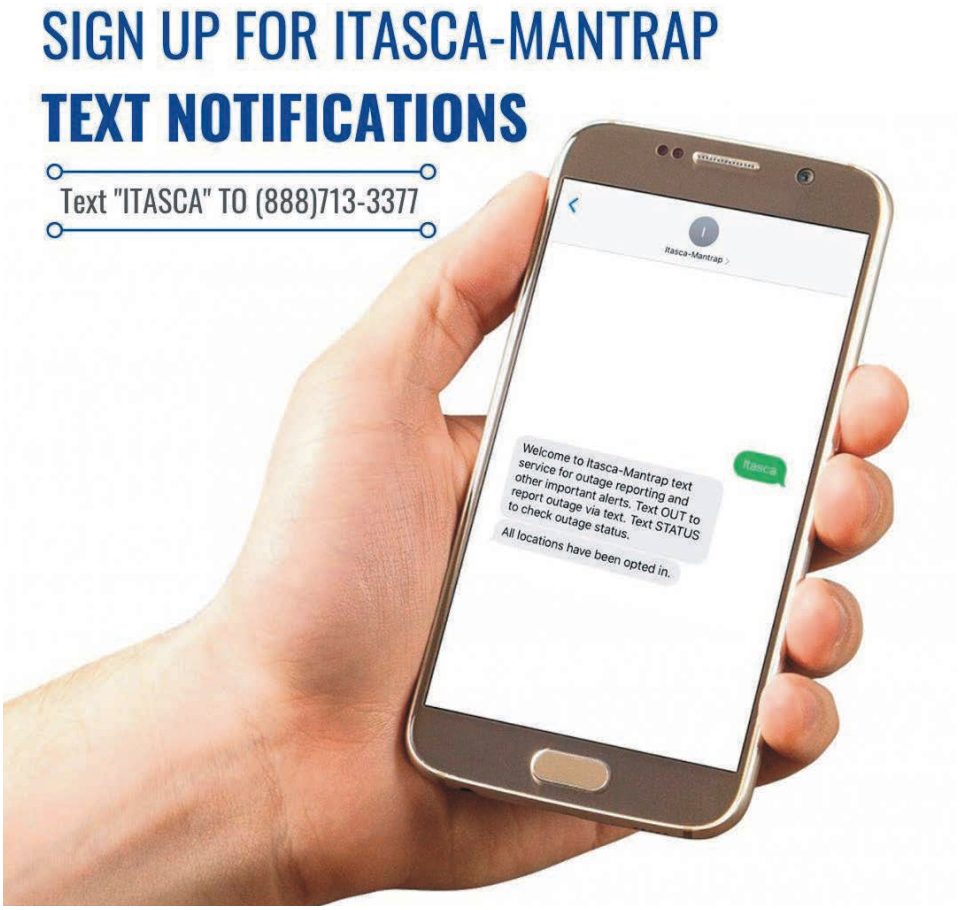
WHETHER TEMPS RISE OR FALL, YOUR ENERGY BILL WILL STAY COOL.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS UP TO **$2,000** REBATE WHEN YOU INSTALL A QUALIFYING ENERGY-SAVING AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP!

Air Source Heat Pump	Promo Rebate
≥ 8.2 HSPF	**$1,000**
≥ 9.0 HSPF	**$2,000**
Ductless Air Source Heat Pump	**Promo Rebate**
≥ 9.0 HSPF	**$450**

Air source heat pumps provide **home cooling and supplemental heating, using 72% less electricity** than conventional air conditioners and furnaces. Get up to a $2,000 rebate when you install one.

Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts are subject to change without notice. Installed centrally ducted ASHPs must be separately metered & controlled and must be installed by a participating quality installation contractor to qualify for rebate.



Energy Assistance Available

We know that COVID-19 has created additional financial hardships, placing an even larger burden on families already struggling to pay their bills or bring their accounts current. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your electric bill, the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified homeowners and renters.

The Minnesota Department of Commerce has expanded EAP by raising income eligibility and extending the deadline to apply to Sept. 1, 2021. Households with incomes at or below 60% of the state's median income may be eligible, which is about $65,000 in annual income for a household of four.

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider at the number provided for additional information and assistance.

COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

Avoid utility disconnect – apply NOW for Energy Assistance
HIGHER income eligibility for 2021
Search online for **Minnesota Department of Commerce energy assistance**

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ANNUAL INCOME LIMIT
1 person	$33,918
2 persons	$44,355
3 persons	$54,791
4 persons	$65,228
5 persons	$75,664
6 persons	$86,101

Board Report: Meeting Highlights

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was held on Thursday, May 27, 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
- April financials were received and filed subject to audit.
- CEO Christine Fox gave her monthly CEO report.
- Reviewed changes to administrative policies.
- Discussed logistical plans for the Annual Meeting.
- Appointed Director Behrens to attend the Minnesota Rural Electric Association's (MREA) District 2 meeting.
- Appointed Directors Breitbach, Cook, Czeczok and Kivi to attend the MREA Energy Issues Summit.
- Directors and CEO Christine Fox reported on meetings attended on behalf of the Cooperative.

The August meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, August 26, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

- **Becker, Hubbard and Wadena Counties** – Mahube-Otwa Community Action Partnership 1-888-458-1385
- **Cass County** – Bi County Community Action Program 1-800-332-7135
- **Clearwater County** – Clearwater County Dept. Human Services 1-800-245-6064
- **White Earth** – White Earth Energy Assistance 1-866-885-7656

If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for this program, please contact Itasca-Mantrap at 218-732-3377 to set up a payment plan.

Great River Energy Power Supply Transformation Continues

Great River Energy, Itasca-Mantrap's wholesale power provider, reached an agreement to sell the Coal Creek Station power plant to Rainbow Energy Center, LLC.

The sale of Coal Creek Station averts the plant's closure, which was scheduled for the second half of 2022 unless a buyer was found. Rainbow Energy Center will continue to operate the 1,151-megawatt (MW) power plant using current plant employees they hire. Rainbow Energy Center also plans to develop carbon capture and storage at Coal Creek Station.

"We are excited for what the future holds for our North Dakota employees and the communities surrounding Coal Creek Station," said Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer David Saggau. Selling the plant also offers additional benefits for Great River Energy's member-owners compared with shutting it down.

Nexus Line, LLC has reached an agreement to purchase from Great River Energy the high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission system that extends between central North Dakota and Minnesota. Great River Energy will operate and maintain the HVDC system under a 10-year contract.

"Great River Energy's power supply changes deliver what our members want today and set us up for success for a very long time," said Christine Fox, Itasca-Mantrap President-CEO.

Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line are affiliates of Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp. of Bismarck, North Dakota.

"The successful implementation of carbon capture and storage is central to our plans at Coal Creek Station," said Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp. President Stacy L. Tschider. "As a privately held company, we are uniquely positioned to continue the successful legacy that Great River Energy and its employees have established in North Dakota."

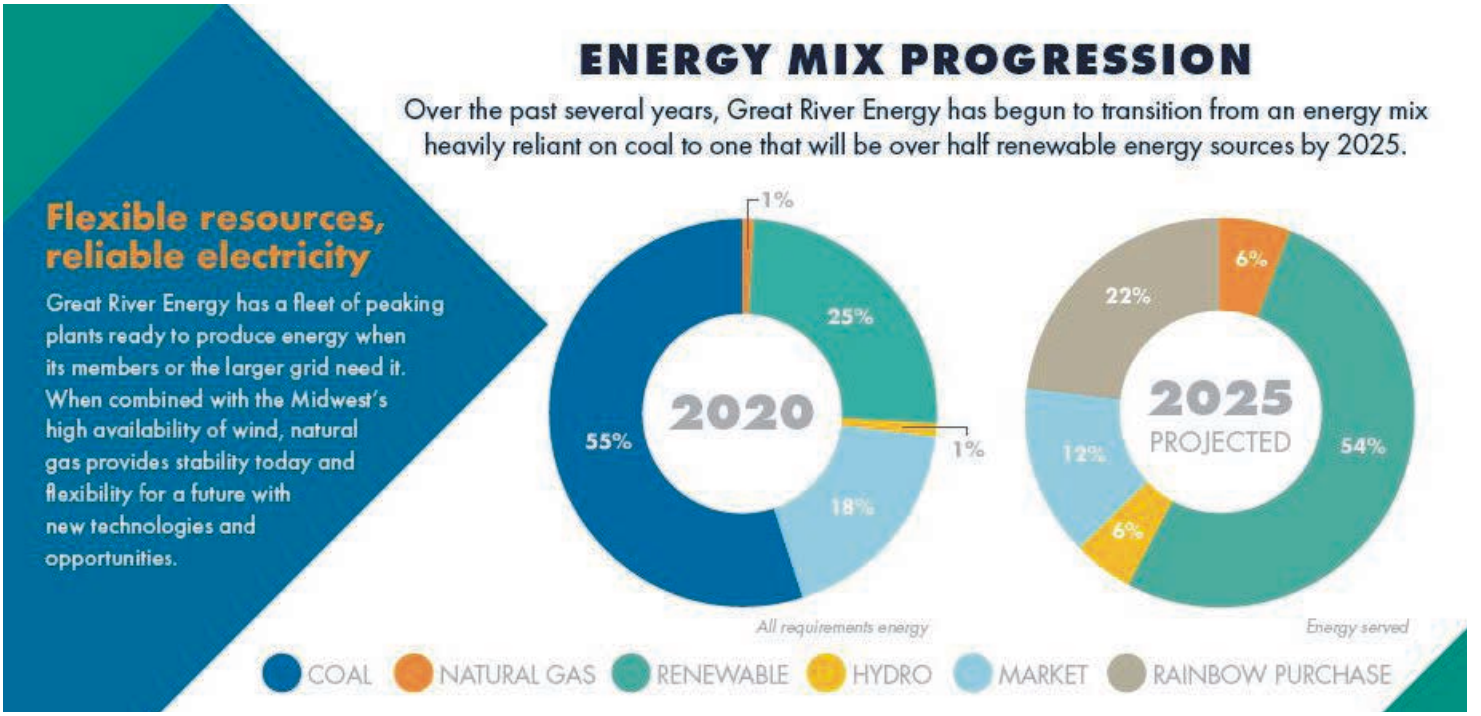
Rainbow Energy Center plans to add incremental generation from renewables to fully utilize the capacity of the HVDC transmission system.

Great River Energy will also enter into a power purchase agreement with Rainbow Energy Center, LLC.

These transactions will help ensure Great River Energy continues to provide its member-owners with reliable and affordable electricity as the cooperative builds its future power supply portfolio.

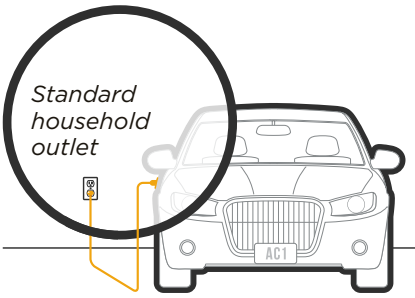
"We are building a power supply portfolio that will serve our member-owner cooperatives with clean, affordable and reliable energy for decades," said Saggau. The cooperative will add 900 MW of wind energy by 2023 and remains on track to meet Minnesota's 80% carbon dioxide reduction goal ahead of schedule.

The sale of Coal Creek Station and the HVDC system is expected to close later this year, after required approvals are obtained.



Electric Vehicle Charging Levels

AC Level One



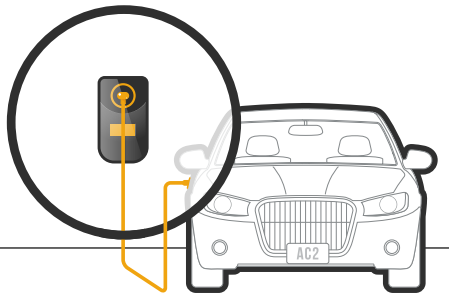
VOLTAGE:
120V 1-Phase AC

AMPS:
12-16 Amps

CHARGING LOADS:
1.4 to 1.9 KW

VEHICLE CHARGE TIME:
3-5 Miles per Hour

AC Level Two



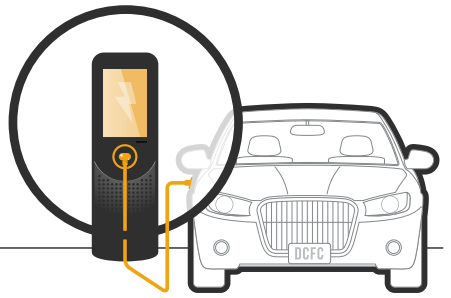
VOLTAGE:
208V or 240V 1-Phase AC

AMPS:
12-80 Amps (typ. 32 Amps)

CHARGING LOADS:
2.5 to 19.2 kW (typ. 6.6kW)

VEHICLE CHARGE TIME:
10-20 Miles per Hour
20+ for some EV models

DC Fast Charge



VOLTAGE:
208V or 480V 3-Phase AC

AMPS:
<100 Amps

CHARGING LOADS:
50-350 kW

VEHICLE CHARGE TIME:
60-80 Miles in 20 Minutes

Sources: Advanced Energy and EPA

Home Charging Options for Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicle (EV) owners have multiple options for charging their vehicle at home. There are three common EV charging levels: Level One, Level Two and DC Fast Charge.

Level One Charging

Level One is the most basic charging level. If you choose this option, your EV will typically include an adapter that plugs into a typical 120-volt outlet. This is the easiest and cheapest charging solution, but it will take much longer to charge your EV.

Level Two Charging

Level Two is about three to five times faster than Level One, but this level of charging often requires separate purchases and installation. The EV is plugged into a 240-volt outlet, which is used for larger appliances, like a clothes dryer. Most homes do not include a 240-volt outlet in garages, so the outlet must be installed by a licensed professional. You typically see Level Two charging stations at shopping malls, office buildings and multi-family community spaces.

DC Fast Charging

DC Fast Charge stations are typically seen near high-traffic public areas, like gas stations, rather than in homes. This is the fastest charging level, with the ability to charge an EV at 80% in under 30 minutes. As EVs continue to become more popular, you can expect to see more DC Fast Charge stations throughout Minnesota.

If you're charging an EV at home, please contact Itasca-Mantrap. By letting us know about your EV charging levels, we can help ensure your home is prepared for the additional energy load. Itasca-Mantrap offers two voluntary rate options for charging your EV at home. Sign up for one and you could be eligible for a rebate of up to $500 to cover the cost of adding a charger!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When shopping for new light bulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption.

Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

Source: energy.gov

smart hub Tip

Q: Do you want to go paperless and save time?

A: Once you've created your SmartHub account, follow these steps:

Go to My Profile > My information > Update My Paperless Settings.

Simply switch your paperless setting bar to ON. While you are in 'My Information', you may also update your contact information with the simple click of a button.

July 4th Parade

It was a sunny, joyous day for celebration on July 4th. Itasca-Mantrap participated in the grand parade through the streets of Park Rapids. The big Itasca-Mantrap bucket truck was a hit!

Thank you to all of the team members, families, and friends who helped hand out candy during the 4th of July parade.

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www.gopherstateonecall.org

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Dist. 2 – Patricia Roehl, Director
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Dist. 4 – Al Czeczok, Asst Sec-Treas
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Dist. 6 – Tim Kivi, Secretary
Dist. 7 – Dan Breitbach, Vice Chair
President-CEO – Christine Fox