NEWSLINE





GENERLINK WITH ITASCA-MANTRAP:
A SIMPLER WAY TO POWER YOUR HOME IN AN OUTAGE

While we do our best to prevent outages, sometimes they happen. In the event your power goes out, a portable generator can keep your home running. The hard part is connecting it. Your furnace, water heater and lighting run through your breaker panel, so an extension cord can't power them. Running cords through your home isn't ideal either.

Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative offers GenerLink to help. It's a transfer switch that installs behind your electric meter and lets you connect a portable generator in minutes.

Once it's in place, you plug your generator into GenerLink, then use your home's breaker panel to choose what you want to run. That could be your well pump, sump pump, refrigerator, furnace or lights, depending on what your generator can handle.

GenerLink is also a safety device. It automatically disconnects your home from the co-op's power lines whenever your generator is running. That prevents back feeding, which happens when generator power flows backwards onto the line. A line that crews think is inactive could be energized, and that can be deadly. GenerLink takes that risk off the table.

Installation is handled by one of our technicians at your meter. It doesn't require any rewiring of your home's electrical system. Once it's installed, you're ready for the next outage.

There are two models, and both include built-in surge protection. The 30-amp unit supports generators up to 7,200 running watts, and the 40-amp unit supports generators up to 9,600 running watts. Either one is $1,200 plus tax, which includes the device, a 20-foot power cord and installation. GenerLink works with a Form 2S meter base rated up to 200 amps.

Before you buy, check your generator. It needs a 120/240-volt receptacle to work with GenerLink. It also needs to handle both running watts and starting watts. Running watts keep an appliance going, while starting watts are the extra burst it needs when it first kicks on, often about three times higher. A refrigerator that runs on 750 watts, for example, needs about 2,250 watts to start.

Visit our website at itasca-mantrap.com/generlink for more information and to see if your generator is compatible. Interested in installing GenerLink? Contact our office today!



CEO UPDATE

BY STEVE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT & CEO

As we look ahead to the coming year, one thing remains clear: the electric industry continues to evolve at a pace we have not experienced in decades.

Across the country, demand for electricity continues to grow. New technologies, electrification, data centers, and expanding energy needs are placing additional demands on the electric grid. At the same time, the cost of generating and delivering electricity continues to rise. Fuel, labor, equipment, materials, insurance, transportation, and infrastructure investments have all seen significant increases over the past several years. Global events continue to play a role as well, as geopolitical conflicts and disruptions to major shipping routes can affect everything from fuel markets to the availability and cost of critical electrical equipment.

While these challenges are very real, our responsibility as your electric cooperative goes beyond simply reacting to rising costs. Our role is to ensure the costs of operating the electric system are allocated fairly, transparently, and in a manner that protects the long-term financial health of the cooperative.

As a member-owned organization, we strongly believe in the principle that the cost causer should be the cost payer.

For many years, electric rates were designed around a simpler model where most costs could reasonably be recovered through energy consumption, measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh). Today's electric system is much more complex. While the amount of energy used remains important, a significant portion of the costs we incur are driven by how much electricity is demanded from the system at a given moment. This demand is measured in kilowatts (kW).

In fact, a large portion of Itasca-Mantrap's wholesale power costs are based on demand rather than energy usage alone. This means two homes can consume similar amounts of electricity during a month while creating very different costs for the cooperative. A seasonal home used primarily on weekends and holidays, for example, may use less electricity than a year-round residence but require as much—or more—power at one time. These concentrated periods of use can create substantially higher peaks in demand, resulting in higher costs to provide generation, transmission, and capacity resources.

Recognizing these changing cost drivers, Itasca-Mantrap's Board of Directors and staff have spent considerable time reviewing our cost-of-service studies and evaluating opportunities to modernize our rate structure. As part of that effort, members will see a modest rate adjustment in Q2 of 2027 along with the continued implementation of demand-based rate components that more accurately reflect the actual costs of providing electric service.

These changes are not intended to generate additional revenue. Rather, they are designed to improve fairness by aligning costs more closely with the members and usage patterns that create them. In many ways, this effort is less about increasing rates and more about improving how costs are allocated across the membership.

Looking ahead, our commitment remains unchanged. We will continue to manage expenses responsibly, seek efficiencies wherever possible, advocate for affordable and reliable power supply resources, and make thoughtful investments that protect the reliability of our electric system for future generations.

The electric industry is changing, and our rate structures must evolve alongside it. By taking a measured and deliberate approach today, we can maintain a strong cooperative, provide reliable service, and ensure that costs are distributed as fairly and equitably as possible among our members.

Thank you for your continued trust and support of Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative.

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was held on Thursday, August 27, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present.

Approved:

- Consent agenda
- July financials, subject to audit
- 2027 GRE Guest Director Board Meeting Attendee

Reports heard:

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

Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap's membership
- GRE Power Cost Adjustment detail for July 2026
- Board Expenses to Budget YTD
- Scrap Material Sales
- Class Cost of Service Study Update
- Administrative Policy 2 – Miscellaneous Fees

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.



Demand Recap: *When You Use Power Matters*

Over the past several months, we've been exploring demand, a part of your electric use that matters as much as how much energy you use. Here's a quick recap.

Your electric use reflects two things. Energy, measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), is the total amount of electricity you use over time, like the miles on a car's odometer. Demand, measured in kilowatts (kW), is how much electricity you're using at one moment, like the speedometer.

Remember Ross and Rachel? Both got home at 5 p.m. and used the same appliances for the same total energy that evening: 3.6 kWh. Ross cooked dinner, washed clothes and watched a show all between 5 and 6 p.m., pushing his highest demand to 3.6 kW. Rachel spread the same tasks over three hours, and her highest demand was just 2 kW. Same energy, very different demand, all because of timing.

So why does the co-op care? Itasca-Mantrap purchases electricity from Great River Energy, and a significant part of that cost is based on demand, or how much electricity members need at the same time.

The electric system must have enough capacity to meet those needs, especially during peak-use periods. A demand charge helps better align rates with these costs, so members whose use contributes more to demand pay an appropriate share.

Here is a simple hypothetical to show how a demand charge could work. *(No demand charge has been introduced, and this is only an example.)* Suppose there was a $1 charge for each kW of monthly demand. A member whose highest demand was 10 kW would pay $10, while a member at 6 kW would pay $6. The difference is not how much electricity they used. It is how much they needed at one time.

The good news is that demand is often manageable. Running the dishwasher after the dryer finishes or starting laundry after dinner can lower your peak without costing you comfort. We know not every member can shift their use, especially with medical equipment or work schedules, and that's completely understandable.

Managing demand is not about using less electricity. It is about using it strategically. To learn more, visit itasca-mantrap.com/what-is-demand.

Fall Efficiency Checklist

Crisp nights are here. Check off these easy wins to stay cozy and keep energy use in check.

- [ ] **Layer up first. Grab a sweater, socks or a blanket before reaching for the thermostat.**
- [ ] **Flip your ceiling fans. Clockwise, low speed. Warm air heads back down to where you're sitting.**
- [ ] **Keep vents clear. Move furniture, rugs and other items away from heating vents so warm air can circulate.**
- [ ] **Stop the drafts. Tuck a towel or blanket against the gap at the bottom of doors.**

BONUS: Let the oven share the warmth. After baking, once the oven is off and cool enough to be safe, leave the door slightly open so leftover heat spreads into the kitchen.

How did you do?
Check off 3 and you're a Cozy Saver. Check off all 5 and you've got your home ready for fall.

Safety note: Never use your oven to heat your home. Leftover warmth after baking is a bonus, not a heat source.

Sales Tax Exemption

Members who use electricity as their primary source of residential heat are exempt from paying taxes on the electricity purchased during the billing months of November through April.

If more than one type of heat is used, electricity is not taxable, but only if it is the primary source of heat for the longest period of time during the heating season.

To apply for the sales tax exemption, Members must complete the exemption form, available at our office or at www.itasca-mantrap.com.

If you have already applied for a sales tax exemption, there is no need to re-apply; your enrollment will automatically carry forward each year.

Cogenerators and Small Power Producers



Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative will interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility. Itasca-Mantrap will provide information to all interested Members, upon request, regarding rates and interconnection requirements.

An application for interconnection is required for a qualifying facility to interconnect and operate in parallel with the Cooperative's distribution system and is subject to approval by the Cooperative. Any disputes over interconnection, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative Board.

Interested members should contact Itasca-Mantrap at 218-732-3377 or by visiting our website at www.itasca-mantrap.com.



Save Energy This Winter: Simple Steps That Add Up This Holiday Season

The holiday season is coming and as many of you already know, the colder the weather the more energy usage goes up. It's no secret that many of us want to stay warm in the winter months but at what cost? According to the Minnesota Commerce Department's Division of Energy Resources, about 70 percent of a typical Minnesota home's energy use goes toward heating, air conditioning, and water heaters. With prices up on just about everything, we know home upgrades aren't always possible. The good news is that some of the most effective ways to save take little to no money.

The cold is here, but you don't have to wait on a big project to start saving. Here are some things you can do right now that cost little or nothing.

Start with the thermostat. When you're home, set it to the coolest temperature you're comfortable with. When you're away, turn it down a few degrees rather than a lot. A modest drop saves energy without a big swing to recover from when you get back.

Check your water heater. Turning it down to 120°F still gives you plenty of hot water while cutting the energy it takes to keep that water hot. Your owner's manual will show you how to adjust it safely, and if you're unsure, a qualified professional can do it for you.

Quick checks this month

A few small checks and habits now can help your home stay safe and efficient through the cold months.

- Let the sun help. Open curtains and blinds on south-facing windows during the day to bring in natural warmth, then close them at night to cut the chill from cold glass.
- Take shorter showers. Skip the bath and keep showers short. Water heating is a big part of your home's energy use, so every minute counts.
- Replace your furnace filter. A dirty filter makes your heating system work harder than it needs to, so swap it as recommended for your system.
- Test your CO detectors and smoke alarms. Make sure they're working, and replace the batteries each year.
- Go LED with your holiday lights. If you're hanging lights this month, LED strings cost less to run than traditional ones.

Down the road

There's no rush, but when you're ready, a few projects are worth planning before next winter. By next fall, consider having your heating equipment inspected or getting a home energy audit before the heating season begins. Weather-stripping around doors and windows, interior window film, low-flow showerheads, and the ENERGY STAR label on new products can all add to your savings over time.

You don't have to do it all at once. Start with an idea or two that fits your home and your budget, and build from there. If you have questions about saving energy this winter, your neighbors at Itasca-Mantrap Electric Cooperative are always here to help.

ITASCA-MANTRAP ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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



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