

NEWSLINE



SHINING A LIGHT ON SOLAR POWERED UP ENERGY FORUM RECAP

On August 8, Itasca-Mantrap hosted the Powered Up Energy Forum: Solar Solutions at The Event Room in Park Rapids. The event brought together members, solar professionals, and co-op staff to explore growing interest in renewable energy—specifically residential solar.

Presentations were given by Wolf Track Energy, a solar installation company, and Star Energy Services, our solar engineering contractor. Speakers offered insight on how homeowners can begin the process of adding solar to their homes. They covered key steps like system design, installation, and grid interconnection, along with updates on emerging technologies.

Financial considerations were also a key part of the conversation. Including available federal tax credits, projected savings, and the long-term value of solar investments. Discussions also touched on how Itasca-Mantrap is preparing to

meet future energy needs and support members interested in renewables.

The forum wasn't just about delivering information, it was also a chance to hear directly from our members. Attendees asked thoughtful questions, shared concerns and provided valuable feedback. This type of open dialogue helps guide how we support renewable energy adoption in our service area.

With demand for solar growing, events like this are key to helping members make informed decisions. We're grateful to everyone who joined us and contributed to the conversation.

Itasca-Mantrap is committed to being your resource for navigating energy options, including solar. We look forward to building on this event and offering more opportunities to engage in the future.



CEO UPDATE

BY STEVE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT & CEO

Keeping Our Rates Fair and Aligned with the Cost of Power

At Itasca-Mantrap, our top priority is to provide you with safe and reliable electricity at the most affordable cost possible. One of the ways we do that is by making sure our rates reflect the actual cost of delivering power to each and every member across our system. To do this, we must first look at our company through a Costs of Services Study, which allocates the costs of the distribution and related system infrastructure to bring the energy to your home or business. From there, we will dive deeper into rate development.

Over the past several years, our transmission and power company, Great River Energy, has moved toward a billing method that puts greater emphasis on when electricity is used, not just how much is used. This is known as Time-of-Use (TOU) and Demand-Based billing. Under this approach, electricity used during “peak” hours — when member demand (usage) on the system is highest — costs more to deliver than electricity used during “off-peak” hours, when demand is lower.

Why does this matter to us? Because our co-op is billed by GRE based on these patterns. If our members’ usage stays high during peak hours, our energy costs increase — and that affects everyone’s rates. To keep our costs fair and manageable, we may need to align our own pricing structure with the way we are billed by Great River Energy. This means shifting more of our rates to reflect the real costs of peak-hour power. By doing so, we send a clear price signal that

encourages members to move some of their usage to off-peak times — saving money for themselves and for the entire co-op. This is something we have not done historically at Itasca-Mantrap but we feel it is important to educate everyone upon. Not only do we believe this may be inevitable in the future, but also — and more importantly — it may be the best way to develop rates for our members.

Here’s the good news: with small changes in when and how we use electricity, we can make a big difference. For example:

- Running dishwashers, clothes dryers, or EV chargers during off-peak hours.
- Adjusting thermostats a few degrees higher/lower during peak times in the summer or winter months.
- Staggering the use of large appliances rather than running them all at once.
- Utilizing the rebate dollars associated with Itasca-Mantrap’s load management programs to make your home or business more efficient.

When we work together, we can control costs, reduce strain on the grid, and manage the increasing cost factors that affect our rates for the long term. This alignment between how we’re billed and how we bill our members is about fairness, transparency, and ensuring that our co-op remains financially strong while serving your needs.

As always, thank you for being an engaged and educated member of our cooperative family. Together, we can develop a stronger, smarter energy future.

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass’n. was held on Thursday, June 26, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at the Itasca-Mantrap office.

A quorum of directors was present.

Approved:

- Consent agenda
- May financials, subject to audit
- Draft minutes of the June 12, 2025 Annual Membership meeting
- Meeting date of June 11, 2026 for the 2026 Annual Meeting

Reports heard:

- Operations and Safety
- Financial
- Marketing and Member Services
- CEO
- GRE Update with David Saggau
- Summaries of director meetings attended

Reviewed:

- Changes to Itasca-Mantrap’s membership
- GRE Power Cost Adjustment detail for May 2025
- WAPA/GRE Bill comparison
- WAPA Power Supply
- Board Budget YTD
- Annual Meeting debrief
- Update on the Itasca-Mantrap solar array

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

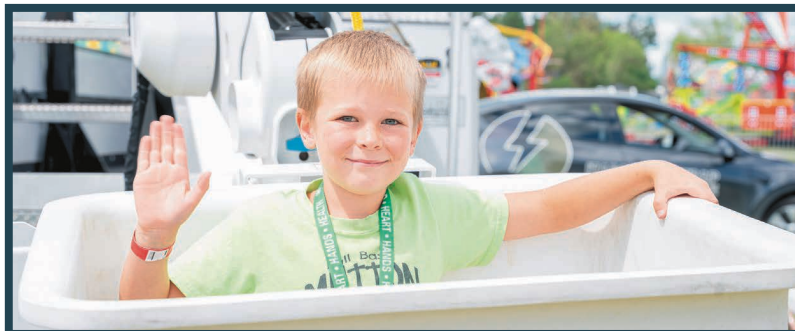
The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

A Bright Day at the Fair!

July 17 brought plenty of sunshine and just enough cloud cover to make for a perfect Kids Day at the Hubbard County Fair!

Our lineworkers did a fantastic job connecting with the community and sharing their experiences with both kids and adults. One of the highlights? Giving kids the chance to hop into the bucket truck and have them try on line gear to see what it is like to be a lineworker!

We're proud to represent Itasca-Mantrap in the community and spark interest in the work we do.



TIP OF THE MONTH: ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.



Coffee With Your Co-op: *Connecting with Our Community*

We enjoyed a wonderful morning connecting with members at the first edition of Coffee With Your Co-op on August 12 at 8:30 a.m. at the Emmaville Inn & Cafe. The coffee was hot, the conversations were lively and many questions were asked with information shared.

Members had the chance to sit down with our President & CEO, Steve Johnson, in a casual setting to ask questions, share feedback and hear updates about co-op projects and programs. We discussed topics from energy efficiency and member programs to future plans for enhancing reliability and service in our community.

As a member-owned cooperative, your voices guide the work we do every day. A big thank-you to everyone who joined us and to Emmaville Inn & Cafe for hosting. If you missed this event and would like to attend the next one, be on the lookout for future dates, as we will be planning more Coffee With Your Co-op events and meeting you around our community!



Keep Utility Poles Clear & Safe

Keeping utility poles and electrical equipment clear of signs, ads, or foreign objects helps keep the power on and our crews safe.

It might seem like no big deal, but nails, staples or other fasteners can be dangerous for workers who climb poles to make repairs. Sharp objects can tear protective gear, such as rubber gloves, which are designed to keep workers safe from high voltage. Hanging things on poles can also put people in the community at risk of accidentally touching a live power line.

Safety is our number one priority. Please do your part and help us keep utility poles clear.





Go Above and Beyond for a Safe Harvest:

Protect Yourself, Your Crew and Your Equipment This Season

Modern farming often relies on data and GPS-guided equipment. Yet even with these technologies, farm workers must remain vigilant. Farming remains one of the most dangerous occupations.

Massive machinery is essential to farming, but its size, height, and extensions make it particularly vulnerable to contacting power lines. Staying alert and knowledgeable about potential hazards and safety procedures is critical. During a busy harvest, familiar surroundings can fade into the background, and workers may overlook overhead power lines—potentially leading to deadly accidents.

360° Awareness

Being aware of your surroundings—around, above, and below—and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce risks. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's vital for farm workers to keep a close eye on equipment location and be ready to act if needed.

Underground powerlines, faulty wiring in farm buildings, and extension cords are also hazardous. Grain bins can pose danger, too. The National Electrical Safety Code requires power lines to be at least 18 feet above any grain bin used with portable augers or filling equipment. If you're

installing new bins or concerned about existing ones, contact Itasca-Mantrap.

Smart Harvest Safety Tips

SafeElectricity.org recommends the following to avoid electrical accidents:

- Use caution near power lines. Be careful when raising augers or grain truck beds.
- Use spotters when moving large machinery near lines. Spotters must not touch the equipment while it's in motion.
- Lower extensions and portable augers before transport. Don't raise ladders, poles, or rods near lines. Even non-metallic materials can conduct electricity when damp or dusty.
- Never try to move or raise power lines.
- Avoid metal poles inside grain bins.
- Hire qualified electricians for drying equipment and other electrical systems.

If equipment contacts a power line, stay inside unless it's on fire. If escape is necessary, jump clear with your feet together and avoid touching the equipment and ground at the same time. Hop away with your feet together until you're safe.



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*Great River Energy Director Representative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

5 Reasons Why YOU Should Sign Up for SmartHub!



1. Make quick and easy payments.
2. Track your electricity usage daily!
3. Sign up for auto pay.
4. Eliminate late fees.
5. Go paperless!

Operation Round Up Application Deadline Monday, Sept. 15

To be considered at the October Trust Board Meeting, grant applications must be received in the Itasca-Mantrap office by September 15.

Download the latest application form at
www.itasca-mantrap.com or pick one up
at our office.



OUTAGE TEXTING

Text 'OUT' to 888-713-3377 to report an outage.

Text 'STATUS' to 888-713-3377 to check the status of an outage.

Not signed up for outage texting? Text 'ITASCA' to 888-713-3377 to be opted into the service. Ensure that your cell phone number is in our system and linked to your service location. Call our office for more information.

