



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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www.twinvalleyelectric.coop

TWIN VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS

Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Monday-Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Contact Us
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Guess the Seal

In January, Suzanne Herold guessed 67 seals (there were 66 seals in the meter). She won a \$25 electric credit.

FROM THE MANAGER

Controlling Costs Through Innovation

Last month, I visited with you regarding several positive events that had occurred in 2013 that would help control our expenses and help stabilize your cost of electricity in the future. I mentioned that our wholesale power supplier, KEPCo, had restructured some long term debt which should reduce our wholesale cost of power in future months.

As a result of those savings, KEPCo determined that their margins were going to be higher than needed for 2013 and decided to refund the excess margins back to its member cooperatives as a credit on the December power bill. Twin Valley's share of this refund was \$174,671.48.

The Twin Valley board voted to return all of this refund back to you on the electric bill you received in January for your December energy usage. This credit amounted to 5.82 cents for every kWh you used in

December. Yes, this is another good example of how cooperatives are different from other businesses you deal with. We're different because we're looking out for you. Now, more than ever, that's important because we need to work together to keep your electric bills affordable.

We all realize that the cost of electricity has been rising over the past few years. Most of these increases are the result of regulations being put in place by EPA to eliminate coal as a fuel source for generating electricity. Coal is the cheapest and most plentiful fuel to generate electricity with today's technology. The Obama Administration's goal is to eliminate coal as a fuel source completely regardless of the cost to you the consumer. If you agree that we need to continue looking for new and cleaner ways to generate electricity, but to do it in such a way that we can keep costs reasonable then go to www.nreca.coop and click on the "Political Action Tab" to select the "Cooperative Action Network." You can send your message to the EPA by clicking on the "Take Action" tab.

We're working together to keep your electric bills affordable. We're controlling costs through innovation. And we're continuing to put you, our members, first.

We're working together to keep your electric bills affordable and continue to put members first.



Ron Holsteen

NOTES FROM OPERATIONS

On your Side of the Meter



William Worthy

I'd like to take the space allotted to me this month to talk about a change in the way Twin Valley will handle work on your side of the meter.

In the past, we have had a licensed electrician on staff and have gladly handled work that falls more under that of an electrician than the duties of a journeyman lineman. Our licensed electrician is now enjoying retirement and we have opted not to fill that position.

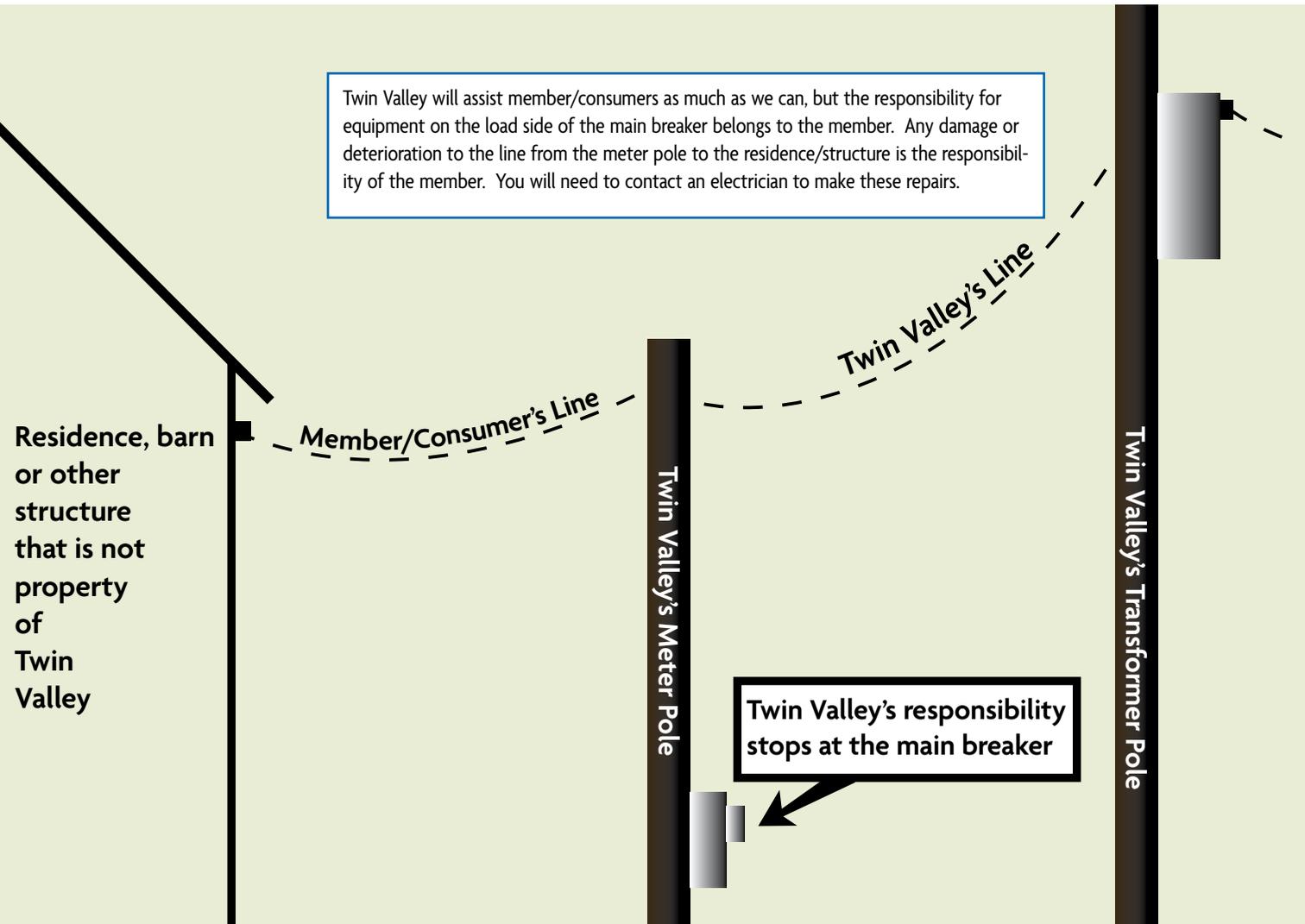
Twin Valley's responsibility to the mem-

bership stops at the main breaker below the meter. You are responsible for the service from that point on.

There are several electricians in the area that should be able to assist you. We have a partial list of electricians in our office and will gladly share this list as requested. Keep in mind, Twin Valley does not recommend or endorse any of the electricians listed. In addition, if you are an electrician and want to be added to our list, please contact the office and we will gladly do so.

If you have any questions or concerns about this change, please give me a call or an email to wworthy@twinvalleyelectric.coop.

Twin Valley will assist member/consumers as much as we can, but the responsibility for equipment on the load side of the main breaker belongs to the member. Any damage or deterioration to the line from the meter pole to the residence/structure is the responsibility of the member. You will need to contact an electrician to make these repairs.



Need Help with Home Energy Costs?

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time per year benefit.

The 2014 application period will be open through March 31, 2014. Applications can be submitted online or by mail. Online applications are available at www.ks-energy-assistance.com.

Paper applications are now available also. LIEAP applicants from 2013 and December recipients of food, cash, and medical assistance will automatically receive a paper application in the mail at their home address.

The following summary describes basic LIEAP eligibility provisions. Additional information may be obtained by calling 1-800-432-0043.

In order to qualify, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- ▶ An adult living at the address must be personally responsible for paying the heating costs at the current residence, payable either to the landlord or the fuel vendor.
- ▶ Applicants must demonstrate a recent history of payments toward purchase of the primary heating energy.
- ▶ The combined gross income (before deductions) of all persons may not exceed 130% of the federal poverty level,



Number of Persons living in Household	2014 Maximum Monthly Income
1	\$ 1,210
2	\$ 1,639
3	\$ 2,068
4	\$ 2,497
5	\$ 2,926
6	\$ 3,355
7	\$ 3,784
8	\$ 4,213
9	\$ 4,642
10	\$ 5,071
11	\$ 5,500
12*	\$ 5,926

* Add \$429 for each individual person

Benefits levels vary according to the following factors:

- ▶ Household income
- ▶ Number of persons living at the address
- ▶ Type of dwelling

Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. is implementing a geographical information system (GIS) to better serve our members. GIS is a digital mapping system that will give us detailed information about our electrical network. Among other benefits, GIS will help us restore your power more efficiently during outages.

To create our GIS system, we must do a field inventory. This calls for physically visiting

and recording information about every pole and meter on our network.

For more information about our GIS project, visit www.twinvalleyelectric.coop or call us at 866-784-5500. We are happy to answer questions you may have about this project.



A Division of The Davey Tree Expert Company

Support Food-4-Kids & Fight Child Hunger



Check YES to donate to the Food-4-Kids program on your monthly bill in the bottom-left corner.

Twin Valley Electric's Food-4-Kids program raised \$1,318.08 in 2013 for the Kansas Food Bank.

Several elementary schools in Twin Valley's service area send backpacks filled with food provided by the Kansas Food Bank home with students on Friday afternoons.

For most of these children, the food is the difference between having enough to eat on Saturdays and Sundays—or not. The backpack provides some kids their only source of food all weekend. Teachers and students benefit from the program when all students return on Monday morning ready to learn.

A stronger, more secure backpack program in the Twin Valley service area means a lower dropout rate and a higher graduation rate among our most vulnerable and disadvantaged school children. Over time, it also enhances our economic development efforts. In other words, the program benefits all of us.

The Twin Valley Electric Board endorses the Food-4-Kids program to support the work of the Kansas Food Bank.

Twin Valley members are encouraged to round up their bill to the next dollar amount, or more, to be added to their monthly electric service bill.

Check "Yes!" to support Backpack programs and the children who use them.

All Insulation is Not Equal

BY DOUG RYE



Doug Rye

“Infrared thermal imaging cameras... are revealing some types of insulation perform differently in a real-world environment than in a controlled climate within a testing facility.”

Most discussions about residential energy efficiency include the topic of insulation. Attic, wall and floor insulation normally become major points of discussion. Builders, homeowners, architects and salesmen use R-value language for comparing various types and thicknesses of insulation.

It has been that way for as long as I can remember. However, energy efficiency experts are continuing to learn more and more about the actual performance of properly installed insulation. Infrared thermal imaging cameras, used in conjunction with home diagnostic equipment, are revealing that some types of insulation perform differently in a real-world environment than in a controlled climate within a testing facility.

For instance, the actual performance of a fiberglass-insulated wall on a cold, windy, 30-degree day is far different than the exact same fiberglass insulated testing wall within a cozy, 70-degree testing laboratory.

While I was in college studying architecture, we were taught that about all you needed to know about insulation was the R-value. Back then, we only knew of one type of insulation and that was fiberglass. So, when we were challenged in the early 1970s to make homes more energy efficient, just about all of us started installing insulation with higher R-values. Many went from 2 x 4 walls with R-11 insulation to 2 x 6 walls with R-19 insulation. We perceived that adding more insulation did help some, but we learned it was not as much as expected.

The “R” in R-value stands for the resistance to heat flow. In theory, and in some cases, the larger the R-value, the better the resistance to heat flow and, therefore, the better for energy efficiency. So, for several years, that’s all we knew about insulation. Then we learned about another type of product called cellulose. We learned that it worked extremely well when used as a sound barrier and were told that it was a very good insulation for walls and ceilings. We used it and quickly learned that it performed better than fiberglass even though

cellulose insulation has nearly the same R-value as fiberglass. When installed properly, we saw a dramatic reduction in air infiltration. The similar R-value rating was perplexing to many of us.

But, about this same time, we were learning that by using a blower door diagnostic testing device, air infiltration could have a significant impact on the energy efficiency of a house and on the performance of the insulation. The more we tested homes and the more we looked at utility bills, the more that we were convinced that there was a major difference in the actual performance between fiberglass and cellulose insulation. Because of that, many of us started recommending cellulose whenever possible.

Practical experience, proven building science and much improved diagnostic processes have proven that properly installed cellulose insulation is a wise investment. Then came foam insulation and we were impressed. Now, we had two insulation products that actually performed like we desired.

But wait. Not so fast. Some of the early foam products were thought to contain chemicals that were unhealthy, and some experts said foam insulation could also shrink after installation. So, the use of foam in residential dwelling was almost non-existent until the late 1990s. Today, open-and closed cell foam insulations are safe, reliable and, when installed properly, become exceptional thermal, air and moisture barriers—all three energy efficiency bonuses in one package. Also, expanding-foam insulation is being installed in many new and remodeled homes across America.

Despite the fact that all three types have similar R-values, practical experience and modern diagnostics have revealed that properly installed foam insulation outperforms its counterparts because of its ability to stop unwanted air-infiltration and for its moisture barrier attributes.

DOUG RYE is a licensed architect and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show. You can contact Doug at 501-653-7931. Source: Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Corporation.