

## TWIN VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



# NEWS

### FROM THE MANAGER

## Cooperative Structure Proves There's 'Power in Numbers'

You've probably heard the saying, "There's power in numbers." I have to agree. Cooperation is a key word for electric cooperatives and a concept vital to our form of business.

Consumer-owned co-ops like Twin Valley Electric Cooperative operate under seven key guidelines, including the Sixth Cooperative Principle, "Cooperation Among Cooperatives." In short, electric cooperatives serve their members best while strengthening the overall co-op movement by working together.

At the most basic level, electric cooperatives support one another in times of crisis. If a storm or other disaster hits one of our sister cooperatives, we offer whatever help we can to ensure that service gets restored as quickly as possible. If we need help, our electric co-op "family" will be there for us.

When it comes to local and statewide issues, electric co-ops in Kansas combine forces through Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC), our statewide association. The results show that when small organizations such as electric co-ops use the power of aggregation, we grow in clout, efficiency, and economy. By working together, good things happen.

The power of numbers gives us a louder voice at the state capitol when legislators make decisions that affect us. We share training resources and expertise. We also save money through our KEC membership on repairing and servicing equipment. By working through KEC we lower printing and production costs of this publication through economies of scale.

Nationally, we collaborate with other electric co-ops through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the Arlington, Va.-based national service or-



Ron Holsteen

ganization representing more than 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, public power districts, and public utility districts in the United States. NRECA presents a unified consumer voice, particularly through the Our Energy, Our Future campaign, a grassroots movement among electric co-ops and their members urging lawmakers to create legislation that's in the best interest of electric co-ops. Not only does the organization have the ears of Washington, D.C., decision-makers, it also represents cooperative interests before federal regulatory bodies. And through NRECA's Cooperative Research Network, we receive information about new technologies that can help us control costs, improve productivity, and deliver superior service to you.

We also belong to Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, a national marketing and trade group for electric cooperatives that provides us with communications and advertising support, programs like the Co-op Connections® membership card, and tools like an online energy calculator. Our participation in Touchstone Energy extends the benefits of cooperation even further and delivers greater value to you, our member.

Even if we were in this alone, Twin Valley would still provide you with the very best service at the lowest price possible. But when we pool our resources—work cooperatively—we offer you better value. In addition, by adding our voice to a grand chorus of fellow cooperatives, our message gets heard loud and clear by legislators. And that's the cooperative difference.

“Electric cooperatives support one another in times of crisis.”

**Twin Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

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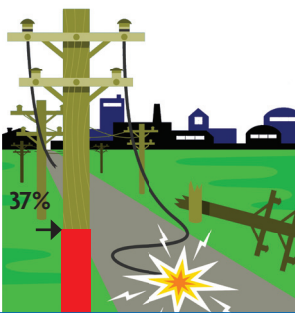
**Office Hours**

**Monday-Friday**

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**FEMA Rebuild Update**

As of August 13, we have completed 37% of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) rebuild work.



**Touchstone Energy®**

We belong to Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, a national marketing and trade group for electric cooperatives that provides us with communications and advertising support.

**NOTES FROM OPERATIONS**

**Electricity - Think of All it Does**

In the midst of summertime heat, electricity usage is a concern for every household. Do you have a fear of opening your bill and seeing it double or even triple what it was the prior months? We understand.

Imagine everything that is being served by your electric meter. Now imagine what it would be like not to have those items. No lights, no A/C, no computer, no T.V., no refrigeration, etc. Can you imagine the look on your teenager's face if they could not charge their mobile phone? Oh, the horror of not being able to text the person sitting beside you. All of these things add up.

Take a look around your house and take note of things that are plugged in, but not actually on. Let's look at a lamp versus a television. A lamp with an incandescent bulb completes a circuit when it is turned on. The closed circuit draws amperage and the light is on. When the lamp is turned off, the circuit is open. No amperage draw, no light.

The T.V. is another story. Even though the set is not on, a computer brain is in there remembering your preset channels, volume settings, etc. The same happens with your computer and other electronics. Anything that has a digital clock (coffee maker, stove, microwave, stereo, etc.) is also a constant draw. Your mobile phone charger is basically a tiny transformer that converts the 120v in your house to the usable voltage needed by your mobile phone. This device, as long as it is plugged into the wall socket, will perform this task whether it is plugged into the phone or not. Electronic devices such as these can make up 5-10 percent of your monthly electric bill.

Now, let's talk air conditioning. With temperatures consistently at,

or near, triple digits, people are concerned about their usage. In hopes of keeping costs down, most people end up doing things that hurt, not help to produce savings or lower costs.

For example, closing off vents to unused areas of your house; if you have a properly sized central air conditioning unit, your unit should be roughly one (1) ton per 500 square feet of living space. This calculation and installation provides for the adequate exchange of air to cool your house the most efficiently. If you start closing off vents to parts of your house, you are decreasing the square footage the unit is designed to cool. This leads to an inadequate exchange of air. The air being brought in is not dried out; therefore moist air is being pushed back into the house. The moist air does not provide the comfort of dry air and people tend to keep pushing the thermostat down in attempt to make the house comfortable. This actually will cost you more in the long run. Also, check your windows, doors, and especially your attic hatch for air leaks. If these are not properly insulated, you could be wasting a lot of money on a problem that is an inexpensive fix.

At Twin Valley, our average monthly bill hovers around the \$200 mark. Think about that. For less than \$7 per day, your entire house is cooled, food refrigerated, lights are on, you are connected to the World Wide Web, and your teenagers can **txt ll of d 411 of the nws n haps 2 ll of their BFFs ll of d tym.** And yes, I had to look this up.



**William Worthy**

## STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO

# Jennifer Nelson Attends Leadership Camp

Jennifer Nelson joined youth from across Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 17-23, 2010, in Steamboat Springs, CO.

Nelson was selected from a group of high school applicants by Twin Valley to attend the camp.

"Twin Valley is proud to support the Youth Tour program and send our youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills," said Ron Holsteen, Twin Valley's Manager. "Our hope is that local students gained awareness of how our electric cooperatives work and how important it



Jennifer Nelson

is for the youth to be involved in our community."

During their weeklong stay in Colorado, the students created a complete cooperative based on the product of candy. They established a board of trustees and a general manager that held daily membership meetings.

"The best experience I had in camp was going to the coal mine," Nelson said. "I liked seeing all of the big equipment and how it was run. I also loved meeting new people, who now have become very close friends. This was a great experience and I

enjoyed every minute of it."

The campers also took part in legislative presentations, a light and high voltage display and a competition to build a transmission line. They explored the Steamboat Village, Old Town Steamboat Springs, went white water rafting and toured the Craig Power Plant and Trapper Mine.

"The students this year exhibited amazing leadership potential," Shana Holsteen, Kansas Electric Cooperatives Director of Communications said. "Throughout the week, campers developed their leadership skills and learned about electric cooperatives through camp activities. It is amazing to see how much the students' skills grow in just one week."

For more information about the trip, call Twin Valley's office at 866-784-5500.

## Thanks for Supporting Local Youth

It's time for the new school term to begin in Twin Valley's service area.

We would like to thank all of our members who make a monthly donation to their electric bill. The Food 4 Kids Program has been very successful and benefits many school children within our service area.

To our new members, the Food 4 Kids Program asks each Twin Valley member to voluntarily authorize the addition of a tax-deductible amount, chosen by you the member, to their monthly bill. The donations are then sent to the Kansas Food Bank for the purpose of buying non perishable food to fill backpacks for children in our service area to take home with them on Fridays. These children in our service area are at serious risk of present and future problems stemming from childhood hunger.

If you are interested in contributing to the Food 4 Kids Program, please indicate your contribution in the space provided on your billing statement. If you have any questions, please call 866-784-5500.

## Linemen Complete 'Hurt Man Rescue' Exercise



Twin Valley Special Projects Manager Kenny Cole successfully completes "Hurt Man Rescue" at last month's Safety Meeting. "Hurt Man Rescue" is required annually for all linemen. The linemen must lower a lifelike mannequin to the ground, safely and within set time limits.

# It's Time to Examine the Real Meaning of 'Green'

BY DOUG RYE



Doug Rye

“Some products, like cellulose insulation, score a lot of 'green' points.”

Green, green and more green. What does it mean? Folks, have you noticed that the word “green” shows up in more magazines, newspapers and television programs than ever before? It is almost like a new color has been developed.

My first recollection of the color green was that it was one of my six Crayola crayon colors. I soon learned that you used the green crayon to color grass and trees green. I still like green grass and green trees.

My next recollection of the word “green” was when adults would use it to describe a person.

It usually meant that the person was young and inexperienced or, as they also said, “still wet behind the ears.”

As I grew up, there were other things green that evoke fond memories. My first automobile was an emerald green Chevrolet. My next car was dark green Oldsmobile with fender skirts. Wow, what memories.

I also have some bad green memories – like turnip greens, green beans and broccoli.

Anyway, now that I am dry behind the ears, I like all of those green veggies.

At about 18 years of age, I learned that I wouldn't have anything to eat, green or otherwise, if I didn't get a job and bring home the green.

Through time, words often take on additional meanings. Since this column is always about energy efficiency, let's talk about what it means to be green in 2008.

Well, first of all, focusing on energy efficiency is being green. I am happy to say that every Doug Rye house built in the last 20 years would be considered green. Let's take a moment to talk about green construction and what that means.

To qualify as green construction, I think the construction should be both environmentally friendly and save folks money on their energy bills.

The first draft of this column took several

pages because I got carried away by listing every item that is used in the construction of a house and giving it a green score. So instead of doing that, let's just score a couple of items and we'll use a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best. Technically speaking, I should give every product at least one green point because everything is made from the earth.

Some products, however, will score a lot of green points. A great example would be cellulose insulation, which is made from paper that was made from trees, a renewable resource, and then recycled into insulation.

Cellulose insulation saves folks money every day for the entire life of a house. I can't give it a perfect score of 10, however, because some energy was required to harvest the trees, make the paper and manufacture the insulation.

A geothermal heat pump also scores a lot of green points as it uses the earth's Btus for heating, cooling and water heating. These Btus were supplied by the sun, the ultimate renewable energy resource. In fact, I have started calling geothermal, solar thermal. Because most of the energy in houses nationwide is used for heating, cooling and heating water, geothermal systems score a 9, higher than other heating and cooling systems.

Well, instead of taking three more pages, I thought I'd give you a turn. Take a minute to review your house, its construction and your heating and cooling system.

What type of green score does your house get? I hope it is a good one, but if it isn't, just keep reading this column where we'll keep giving you tips on how you can improve it.

P.S. My granddaughter informed me that these days, you must have at least 24 color crayons.

**DOUG RYE** is a licensed architect and the popular host of the “Home Remedies” radio show. You can contact Doug at 888-Doug-Rye. Source: Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Corporation.