

[Smiling Faces Greet Members in Front Office p. 3](#)

# Surge Suppression System Protects Entire Home

Experiencing severe weather is part of living in northeastern Oklahoma. So are taking precautions to protect families, homes and belongings.

One way to protect the electric appliances and sensitive equipment in your home is with the Sycom Surge Suppression system.

Whole house surge protectors, such as the Sycom system, are needed in areas such as Oklahoma where there are frequent cases of strong storms, high winds, and severe winters.

Electronics can be damaged when lightning, winds, and snow occur above safe levels. It takes less than a second for the electronics to be damaged, if there is nothing in place to prevent a sudden increase in voltage.

The Sycom system offers two-part protection beginning at the meter with a unit designed to prevent high-voltage spikes from entering the home. It is installed by VVEC personnel and redirects spikes and surges to the home's grounding system.

The second part of the protection involves special plug-in protectors for specific pieces of electronic equipment chosen by the home-owner.

VVEC Member Services Representative Chub Brewer explains, "In the United States, normal voltage is 120 volts. If voltage climbs higher than that, it may lead to serious damage to your appliances."

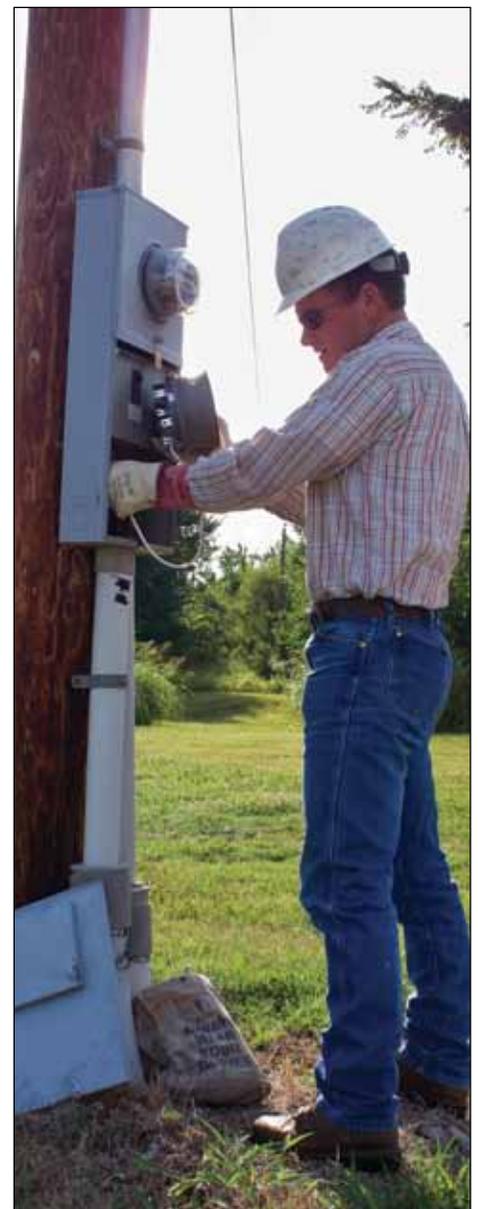
He goes on to say "One cause of a power surge is a lightning strike near a power line that can generate too much electricity and cause immediate harm to electronic devices. Protecting those devices and appliances from such things as lightning is why we offer the surge suppression system."

The Sycom meter-base unit is \$165, which covers the cost of the unit and the \$25 installation charge. In-house devices range from \$35.60 to \$60.40, including tax.

There is no charge for installing a meter unit on a new service, so the cost is \$140 for the unit.

"Nowadays, electronic devices like computers, home appliances and entertainment systems are made up of micro chips or smaller parts which are highly sensitive to sudden changes of the supply of electricity," says Brewer. "These electronic gadgets need to be supplied with stable power so they can work properly. The use of a surge protector is essential because surges and spikes could occur frequently and could sometimes go unnoticed."

To get more information about VVEC's surge suppression program, or to schedule an appointment to have one installed, contact the member services department at 918-371-2584, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. 



VVEC Member Services Representative Chub Brewer installs a Sycom meter-base unit.

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**VVEC Headquarters**  
8901 E. 146th Street N., Collinsville

**Mailing address**  
P.O. Box 219, Collinsville, OK 74021

**Phone number**  
(918) 371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948

**Office hours**  
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.,  
Monday through Friday

**Editor** - Kay Rabbitt-Brower

### Summer Residential Rates

April through September usage,  
May through October billing

Customer Charge                      \$20.00

Energy Charge

1st 2,000 kWh                      \$0.0801/kWh

Over 2,000 kWh                      \$0.0851/kWh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 55.993 mills per kWh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2% of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes if applicable.

# Co-op Making Courtesy Calls Reminding Members to Pay their Electric Bills

Beginning in September, VVEC will call members advising them their service could be interrupted within 24 hours if their electric bill is not paid.



“We realize sometimes people forget to pay a bill, but this is directed at members who are more than 30 days behind,” says VVEC Billing Coordinator Lori Prock, adding, “We don’t ever want to interrupt anyone’s electric service. That is why we feel placing these calls will help remind those members that their electric bill is due and their service could be disconnected.”

The calls are an automated recording and will be placed to the phone numbers we have associated with those accounts.

“We are asking members to call us and update their information,” says Prock. “We need to have current contact information for a variety of reasons.” 

### What to do if Your Power Goes Off

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
2. Call the Co-op at 371-2584, or 1-800-870-5948 if the call is long distance for you. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, please don’t hang up; leave your information. It will be retrieved and given to the correct department. Every message is answered.



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## Friendly Cashiers Greet Members at the Front Door

No matter what business you have at the co-op, the first face you are going to see is a smiling one.

Cashier Inez Wright greets members when they come in the front door, to take their payments or summon employees from the co-op's various departments to assist them. She has been the smiling face of VVEC for 14 years.

She says she enjoys her job and it shows.

"I love my job," she says. "I enjoy the members. You get to where you develop a relationship with them. I enjoy hearing about their grandchildren, and their dogs and cats. We complain about the weather, and talk about what's going on," she laughs as she waves her hand toward the front door and the world outside.

Inez and backup cashiers Stacey Breshears and Johnna Jones have to be knowledgeable about the co-op's policies, procedures, programs and services in order to answer members' questions, or know who to call to assist them.

In addition to taking bill payments, they call on customer service reps when someone needs to sign up for electric service, call engineering personnel when a member wants service built on their property, or member services when a member wants information on energy-efficient appliances or rebates, and balance the totals each day.

"A lot of what we do stays pretty constant," Inez says when talking about her duties and responsibilities. "But because members can pay using credit or debit cards now, we don't take as many payments by cash or check. And we don't have as many people coming in the office to pay their bills since we started offering online payments through E-bill or over the phone through Choice Pay."

She goes on to say cycle billing means members come in throughout the month to pay their bills now instead of all members having the same due date.

"Our cashiers are capable, efficient employees, and genuine, caring people at the same time," says VVEC General Manager Alice Houston. "It's their sincere interest in assisting the members, and developing relationships that makes them most effective. They remember members' names and are interested in their lives because they care." 

*Cashier Inez Wright laughs with a member about the extreme heat while the member pays her bill.*

*Stacey Breshears (below left) and Johnna Jones serve as backup cashiers.*



# Memories to Last a Lifetime

Lisbeth Haddox, South Coffeyville, and Juliana Shinn, Claremore, are back in Oklahoma after spending a week touring the nation's capital as winners of VVEC's annual Youth Tour competition.

Lisbeth is the daughter of Clemo and Berneta Haddox, and Juliana is the daughter of Greg and Margaret Shinn and Karin Shinn.

The adventure began June 10 with a 'Get Acquainted' banquet in Oklahoma City for the winners and their families. The 71 young winners, representing 25 of the state's rural electric systems, departed for the nation's capital the next morning.

"In my opinion, the most exciting part of the trip was going to Ford's Theater and watching the play 'One Destiny, and touring Mount Vernon,'" says Lisbeth. "It was an amazing feeling being in the same place both presidents were!"

The most exciting parts of the trip



Youth Tour delegates Lisbeth Haddox and Juliana Shinn in front of the White House.

for Juliana were taking "funny pictures at Madam Tussaud's Wax Museum, and making awesome friends from all over the state."

Other highlights the girls mentioned include visiting the monuments and memorials, the U.S. Capitol, Smithsonian Museums, the Holocaust Museum, meeting members of Oklahoma's Congressio-

nal delegation, dancing on the Potomac riverboat cruise, and shopping.

Lisbeth added "It was my first time on a plane and I loved it!"

The 48th Annual Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is sponsored in part by VVEC, and coordinated each year by the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives. 



## RECIPE

### Cool Cucumber Salsa

- 2 medium cucumbers - peeled, seeded, and chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. lime juice
- 1 tsp. minced fresh parsley
- 2 tsp. minced fresh cilantro
- 1/2 tsp. dried dill weed
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 (12-oz.) package tortilla chips

In a medium bowl, stir together cucumbers, tomatoes, green pepper, jalapeno pepper, onion, garlic, lime juice, parsley, cilantro, dill, and salt. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Serve with tortilla chips.