



CLEAR THE AREA AROUND YOUR FURNACE OR HEAT PUMP. This decreases the chance of fire and improves airflo

- [Home](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [History](#)
- [Staff](#)
- [Vision](#)
- [Bank Draft Form](#)
- [Commercial](#)
- [Community](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Employment Opportunities](#)
- [Frozen Water Lines](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Residential](#)
- [Services](#)

## History

### The Electrification Program of the 40's and 50's ...

#### ... incorporated in 1945 as Erwin Utilities.

On June 29, 1945, the Erwin Electric System began operating as a publicly owned distributor of electric power. The system was purchased from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) by the Town of Erwin, Tennessee on March 30, 1945. Prior to this date, the system was a part of the East Tennessee Light and Power Company whose holdings were acquired by TVA in 1944. Under the provisions of the Municipal Electric Plant Law of 1935, a Board of Public Utilities was created by the Town of Erwin on July 6, 1945, and the first Board meeting of the Erwin Electric System was held July 11, 1945, at the office located at 211 South Main Street. The Board was composed of W. B. Kincaid, Chairman; C. K. Lucas, Secretary-Treasurer; and W. M. Erwin, Member. One year later, with the purchase of the water system by the Town of Erwin, the name was changed to Erwin Utilities. In 1956 a new building was constructed at the present location on 244 Love Street. A wastewater treatment plant was constructed by the Town of Erwin and turned over to Erwin Utilities in November 1962, to operate. At that time, the Sewer Department was added to Erwin Utilities. In 1982, a new garage building was designed and built by Erwin Utilities' employees on Iona Street. In 2007, a new warehouse attached to the garage building was constructed and occupied and was the first step of a major renovation plan to the office building. The renovations and additions to the office building also began in 2007 and were completed in 2009.

Erwin Utilities started out with eight employees, and today there are 42 full time employees among the Electric, Water, and Wastewater Departments. The electric system has grown from 1,973 customers in 1945 with total assets just over \$441,000 to 9,009 customers in 2010 and total assets of \$26.8 million.

Henry L. Reeves, Sr. served as the first Manager of Erwin Utilities from 1945 until his retirement at the end of 1975, and Howard C. Brown served as the second General Manager of Erwin Utilities from 1976 until his retirement in 2006. Since October 1, 2006, Lee H. Brown has served as General Manager. The Board is currently composed of Richard L. Booth, Chairman; D. Scott Charles, Gary W. Edwards, Sr., B. Kevin Horton, and K. Darrell Woods, Members.

In July 1993, Erwin Utilities completed the purchase from TVA of the 69 to 13 kV, 50 MW, Erwin Substation, and in September 1996, the new 69 to 13 kV, 25 MW substation in Unicoi was put into service. The Erwin Substation was upgraded to receive 161 kV delivery voltage in 2001.

Water is currently supplied by one spring and three wells at an average demand of 1.7 million gallons per day. In December 1995, the Temple Hill Water Utility District was merged into the Erwin Utilities' Water Department. In 1996 and 1997, a new water treatment plant/booster station was built near the Elks Well about three miles north of Erwin, and new transmission lines were built from the new plant to Erwin and from the new plant to the Specialty Tires of America plant in Unicoi. In 2003, the NN Booster Station was completed to provide fire protection for NN, Inc. and high pressure for the Evergreen community. In 2007, the Luttrell Street water storage tank was constructed, and new water transmission lines were built from the tank to Chestoa Pike. The number of water customers has grown from 1,462 in 1946 to a total of 5,284 customers in 2010 and total assets of \$7 million.

The wastewater treatment plant, constructed in 1962 by the Town of Erwin, was designed for primary treatment of 1.3 million gallons of sewage per day. In 1988 the Erwin Wastewater Treatment Plant was upgraded, at a cost of almost \$2.7 million, to provide primary and secondary treatment and chlorine disinfection of the plant effluent for an average flow of 1.9 million gallons per day (MGD) with the ability to hydraulically accept peak flows up to 5.6 MGD. In April 1997, construction was completed on the new sewer line from the north end of the Town of Erwin to the Town of Unicoi to serve Specialty Tires of America and the Unicoi Elementary School, and in August 1997, Erwin Utilities completed the extension of a new sewer line to serve the Holiday Inn Express on the south side of Erwin. In the fall of 1998, a new sewer line was constructed to serve the Morrill Motors plant at Shallow Ford south of Erwin. A new centrifuge biosolids dewatering facility was installed at the Erwin Wastewater Treatment Plant in 2004. This facility was designed and constructed by Erwin Utilities' employees. In 2005, the Erwin Utilities' Board approved changing the name from Sewer Department to Wastewater Department to more appropriately reflect the operation of the department. In 2010, the system serves 3,380 wastewater customers and total assets of \$8.2 million.