

Case Study: **Government**

Client: **Douglas County, Wis.**



## **Energy and Telecom Savings Help County Address Budget Shortfalls**

Budgets are tight in Douglas County, Wisconsin. Having to provide an increasing share of local funding for state mandated services and restricted by local levy and tax rate freezes, officials look for every opportunity to lower costs and redirect resources. The Evergreen Energy Group (TEEG) has been a strong ally in helping the county save money on energy, telecom, and other utilities.

Douglas County is a complex organization with buildings that include a historic courthouse, new government services center (which it shares with the City of Superior), a forestry operations office, and several maintenance facilities. It operates sites in Superior, Hawthorne, and Solon Springs, linked by hundreds of telephone lines and served by multiple utility providers. Douglas County and the City of Superior governments share an information-services department and utilize the same telephone system. Managing telecom and utility services and ensuring the best rates are increasingly difficult.

“As budgets get tighter, we are trying to do more with less money and fewer people,” said Ann Doucette, finance director, Douglas County. “Telecom and utility auditing and oversight are so specialized, our local governments can’t afford to have that kind of expertise on staff.”

Over the past few years, TEEG has provided those services to Douglas County. From February 2006 to February 2009, it helped the county secure nearly \$100,000 in credits, refunds, and cost savings by auditing bills, verifying lines and meters, recovering overcharges, and negotiating improved rates. The county and its taxpayers benefit through ongoing cost savings, thanks to a reduced natural gas rate, lower local and long distance service charges, eliminated lines, and corrected tax and fee charges.

“We had nothing to lose by hiring TEEG,” Doucette said, noting that TEEG only gets paid based on actual savings it finds for clients. “We continue to be surprised by the overcharges, billing errors, and savings they discover.”

Call TEEG at 800.608.5341 or visit us online at [www.teeg.net](http://www.teeg.net).



## Utility Cost Management

### STRATEGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT

- Energy and utility audits, including review of billing, rates, and tariffs; taxes, fees, and surcharges; and demand charges and power factors
- Onsite electric, gas, and water meter inspection and verification
- Recovery of past overcharges and correction of billing errors
- Comprehensive utility service inventories
- Rate negotiation and procurement services

### STRATEGIC TELECOM MANAGEMENT

- Comprehensive telecom service inventory, itemizing all accounts, vendors, and charges
- Onsite verification of all telecom lines, trunks, circuits, and networks
- Telecom audit, including evaluation of tariffs, rates, taxes, fees, and surcharges
- Call record and traffic study assessment
- Network mapping and diagramming of wide area network (WAN) and site-specific connections
- Recovery of past overcharges and correction of billing errors

Customized, ongoing service packages also available.

Contact:  
**TEEG**

Office: 218.786.0540  
Toll Free: 800.608.5341  
E-Mail: [info@teeg.net](mailto:info@teeg.net)  
Web: [www.teeg.net](http://www.teeg.net)

## Douglas County, Wis.

### CHALLENGES

- Strategically manage energy, telecom, and other utility costs in multiple county facilities over a large geographic area—including shared County/City telecom system with hundreds of telephone lines and data communications connections
- Reduce utility-related expenses and free up county resources for reinvestment in new equipment, technology, and services

### SOLUTIONS

- Provided utility and telecom billing audits to analyze accounts, identify billing errors, recover overcharges, eliminate unnecessary services, and secure the best available contracts and rates from providers
- Assisted the County in organizing and managing its telecom and utility services with comprehensive inventories of buildings, vendors, meters, lines, trunks, and circuits

### RESULTS

- Reduced local and long distance service charges, PRI costs, and natural gas rates for three-year savings of more than \$68,000 and ongoing accrued savings
- Identified electric service and demand overcharges, gas tax billing errors, and local telephone service overcharges, leading to credits and refunds of more than \$25,000
- Recommended switching telecom service providers and helped negotiate a preferred rate; continued advocacy in helping recover overcharges from former telecom provider

---

***“Energy and telecom costs are increasing all the time. Finding savings in these areas with TEEG’s help has been a big plus.”***

**Ann Doucette,  
Finance Director, Douglas County**

---