

XHHW Wire Preferred by Many Electrical Contractors Verse THHN Wire



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XHHW, an electrical copper building wire, is proving to be a favorite over the more standard THHN building wire by many electrical contractors and installers.

[XHHW](#) stands for Cross-Linked High Heat Water Resistant Insulated Wire. Today's XHHW is manufactured to XHHW-2 standard meaning it is rated in wet and dry environments up to 90C. XHHW is found both in stranded and solid constructions and various jacket colors.

[THHN](#) stands for Thermoplastic High Heat-resistant Nylon-coated. THHN is also found in both stranded and solid copper conductors but uses a nylon coating for mechanical and protection for gas and oil.

The key difference between the two building wires is XHHW utilizes cross-linked polyethylene (XPLE) and THHN uses a poly-vinyl chloride (PVC) as the insulation over the conductor. XHHW performs better in the low temperature environments and has a higher K Value, or better electrical properties.

"We continue to see more and more customers request XHHW over THHN now that copper prices have dropped again. XHHW has better current carrying capacity giving it the ability to withstand meltdown better, and even with its marginal price increase, many customers

make it their choice over THHN," remarked Bryce Huett, President of Distributor Wire & Cable in Denver, Colorado.

XHHW typically cost 10-20% more than THHN but that gap is closing as cross-linked polyethylene becomes more and more available. It is worth noting that the nylon coating on THHN wire makes it stiffer than its building wire counter part. Installers always prefer a more pliable product when trying to pull their runs throughout a structure.

Distributor Wire & Cable is a nationwide electrical wholesaler for all types of [wire and cable](#) including XHHW and THHN building wire. For more information on their products and services, call 888-439-2947 or visit www.distributorwire.com.

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