

Max Rebholz's fascination with wildfire started from a young age.

"When I was in grade school, I remember seeing the prairies outside our school burned as part of prescribed fires," Max said.

Fire was an important ecosystem restoration tool in Wisconsin, where Max grew up, and Max was interested in how fire could be used to increase the

resiliency of our landscapes.

That led him to pursue a degree in ecosystem restoration and fire management at the University of Montana.

Max recently joined NorthWestern Energy as the Wildfire Public Information Manager. In that role, he'll work to educate customers and communities about the work NorthWestern Energy is doing to prevent wildfires.

"I'm really interested in finding ways we can better coexist with wildland fire," Max said.

Prior to joining NorthWestern Energy, Max worked as the Wildfire Preparedness Coordinator for Missoula County's Office of Emergency Management. His mission there was to develop localized programs and community outreach events to inspire action by residents to mitigate their property for wildfire. He also served as a Public Information Officer for an Incident Management Team, where he and the team responded to incidents across Montana and the country, including hurricanes in Georgia and wildfires in Hawaii.

His past work experience also includes working as a wildland firefighter in West Yellowstone and working for an ecological restoration company in Wisconsin.

In his new role and his past roles, Max hopes he can help people understand that it takes "an all hands, all lands effort to reduce wildfire risk."

"There's not one silver bullet to prepare communities for wildfire," he said. "It takes the whole community to understand their risks and take action."

Max's Steak Diane

Max is a hunter and likes to cook game meat. This recipe calls for venison backstrap but also works well with beef ribeye or filet mignon.

INGREDIENTS

 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 pound piece venison backstrap

Salt

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 shallot or ¼ cup onion, minced

2 garlic cloves, minced

¼ cup brandy

1 tablespoon mustard

½ cup venison stock or beef broth

2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

1 tablespoon tomato paste

¼ cup heavy cream, or enough to turn the sauce the color of coffee with cream

Basil, parsley, chives or other herbs for garnish, minced

DIRECTIONS

1 Bring the venison loin out of the fridge, salt it well, and let it come to room temperature.

Heat the butter in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat for about 90 seconds. Pat the venison dry with a paper towel and sear it on all sides.

Turn heat to medium and continue to cook the venison for about 8 to 10 minutes to get a nice brown crust. Remove the meat and let it rest.

4Add the shallots to the sauté pan and cook for 1 minute, add garlic and cook for another 30 seconds. Don't let the garlic burn.

5 Deglace the pan with brandy, scraping off any stuck-on bits with a wooden spoon. Let the brandy cook down, almost to a glaze, then add the venison stock, tomato paste, mustard and Worcestershire sauce. Stir to combine.

6 Let this boil down for about 3 minutes on high heat, or until a wooden spoon dragged across the pan leaves a trail behind it that does not fill in for a second or so.

Turn off the heat and let the boiling subside. Stir in the cream until the sauce is as light as you like. Don't let the sauce boil again or it could break.

Slice the venison into thick medallions. If you find it's not cooked enough, let the meat swim in the sauce for a few moments to heat through.

Garnish with chopped herbs and serve with a bold red wine.

CONTACT US

MONTANA

Customer Contact Center	888-467-2669
7 a.m 6 p.m. M-F	
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Call Before You Dig	811
Energy Efficiency	800-823-5995

NEBRASKA

Customer Contact Center	800-245-6977
7 a.m 6 p.m. M-F	
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Call Before You Dig	811

SOUTH DAKOTA

SOUTH DAKOTA	
Customer Contact Center	800-245-6977
7 a.m 6 p.m. M-F	
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Call Before You Dig	811

PAYMENT

Paymentus Automated Phone Payment Option:

(via checking, savings, credit or debit card)

English: 833-970-2262 Spanish: 833-970-2263

CONSTRUCTION CENTER

1-83-FOR-BUILD (1-833-672-8453)

NorthWesternEnergy.com



We are proud of the diversity in the communities we serve. To better serve the needs of some of our customers, we translate important customer information into two languages: Spanish and Karenic.

Estamos orgullosos de la diversidad en las comunidades que servimos. Para satisfacer mejor las necesidades de algunos de nuestros clientes, traducimos información importante del cliente a dos idiomas: español y karen

ုပညေတေဆ့သနဆုသနတချူတျေကက်ৃကချေညေနတောငညနအေတအော်အောကကုတစူစပမေမ်ာ့က ါကည္ပပကကုပချငေ၌စစေနငညည့္ရေငညဆုံမေငည**်≮**သုံကေညြ|ပတေညအတေဆ့သနအမနေစသကအျငေ အစုပမဲ့သနအနအေ့သကေအျပနအပ်ပမေမဲ့သဲ့စပနေနအတအေစပက္စစ္သာနအမအေုသနအာအသနအ ဓေမပေပုပနနျတေ့စသကအျငျအေစငညညစေုပနအစေ့အေည့ငေဆုကဘုမျေမေစုစေမော်ပမေမျသနအာ ဘုမျေမေစပညျှသ

Energy Connections Editor
11 E Park St, Butte, MT 59701
news2@northwestern.com

Energy Connections

Customer Bill Insert

May 2025

In this issue: Wildfire Awareness | Update contact info Wildfire evacuation checklist | Steak Diane recipe



Unplug your old fridge

On average, an older refrigerator can use up to 35% more energy than an energy-efficient model. Replacing an old fridge or getting rid of an extra fridge could save up to \$80 a year.

May is Wildfire Awareness Month

The weather is getting warmer, and wildland vegetation is beginning to dry out, which is why May is a great time to plan for wildfire season. When it comes to wildfires, being prepared is the best way to protect your family, your home and your community. Here are some ways to prepare for wildfire season.

Update your contact information for alerts

Make sure your contact information is up to date with NorthWestern Energy. Do you have an old landline number or old email address on file? Now is a great time to double check.

Log in to My Energy Account and update your information. While you're there, set your notification preferences. You can select to be notified via text or email about outages, billing and more. This is one of the primary ways you'd be notified of a power outage or a Public Safety Power Shutoff.

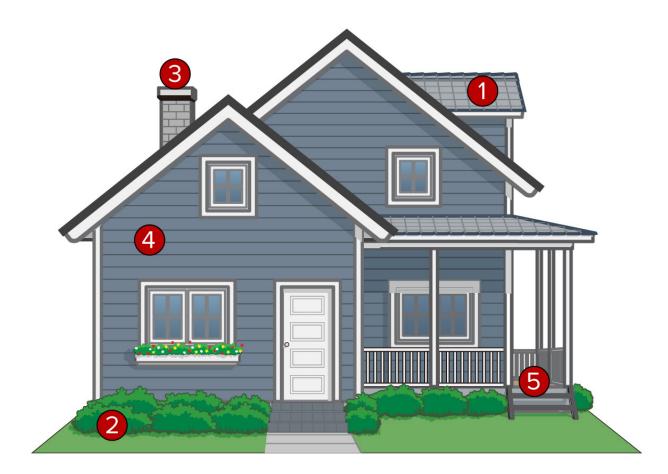
Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/notifications.

Know what to expect during a PSPS

As a measure of last resort, NorthWestern Energy may shutoff power during extreme situations to prevent sparking a wildfire. If extreme weather conditions threaten our ability to safely operate the electrical grid, we will turn off power to help protect public safety.

Public Safety Power Shutoffs can vary in length. We will not restore power until weather conditions improve to the point where we can safely operate the grid. After weather conditions improve, we patrol lines and make any necessary repairs. A PSPS can last several hours or even days.

Learn more about Public Safety Power Shutoffs at NorthWesternEnergy.com/PSPS.



Make your home more fire resilient

Research about community destruction from wildfire has shown that embers are the main source of home destruction from wildfires. Embers can ignite materials on and adjacent to your home to cause ignition.

Here are five things to protect your home from wildfires:

- 1. Install a Class A roof. Your roof has the most surface area, therefore, will catch the most embers. Class A roofs are designed to minimize fire impacts. Class A roof materials include metal, tile and asphalt composition shingles. Keep roof clear of pine needles, leaves, branches and other vegetative debris.
- 2. Remove all combustible materials within the first 5 feet around your home. Embers will collect in this zone. Remove woody plants, grasses, lumber, woodpiles, mulch and other combustible materials. Install gravel, rock or sand in this area instead.
- **3. Cover all structure vents with 1/8-inch metal screen.** Install 1/8-inch metal screen over all structure vents. 1/8-inch metal screen reduces the heat content of embers to reduce the likelihood of igniting combustible materials behind the vent.
- **4.** For wood or vinyl sided homes, consider replacing siding with fiber cement. Replace at least the lower foot of wood/vinyl siding with fiber cement, stone, brick or other non-combustible material.
- 5. Replace wood decks with less flammable materials such as concrete, stone or Trex decking.

Wildfire evacuation checklist

Remember that even small wildfires can cause evacuations. Sign up for emergency alerts through your county's emergency management agency to be notified of evacuations.

Go bag essentials:

- □ Important documents
- □ Medications
- ☐ Non-perishable food and water for 72 hours
- ☐ Inventory of home contents (consider making a video inventory now, prior to an emergency)
- ☐ Photographs of the exterior of the house and landscape
- ☐ Enough clothing for 3-5 days

Prepare your vehicle:

- ☐ Keep a full gas tank
- □ Place essential items in the car
- ☐ If you do not drive, make other arrangements for transportation in advance
- ☐ Close garage door when you leave

Inside the home:

- ☐ Close all interior doors if time allows
- ☐ Remove lightweight, non-fire-resistant curtains and other combustible materials from around windows
- ☐ Turn off all pilot lights
- □ Close fireplace damper
- ☐ Close or block off any doggie-doors
- □ Lock-up firearms or valuables

Prepare pets and animals:

- ☐ Have veterinary records and medications in one easy-to-find place
- ☐ Transport food, water and bowls in easy-to-carry, sealed containers
- ☐ Have a livestock trailer and reliable vehicle for towing the trailer
- □ Practice loading your livestock into the trailer and towing it before an emergency