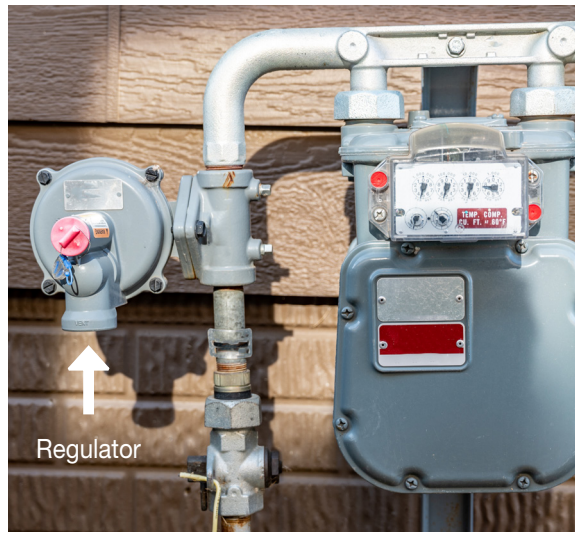


Energy efficiency tips

Cold weather can make a major impact on your energy bill. You can save money on our monthly bill with these energy efficiency tips:

1. **Get an energy assessment:** If you haven't already, get an energy assessment on your home. Montana customers may be eligible for an E+ Home EnergyCheck. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/EnergyCheck or call 800-823-5995.
2. **Evaluate your insulation levels:** Adding insulation will help keep your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Note: In the winter, cold floors and walls are signs of a poorly insulated home.
3. **Find and seal air leaks:** Do you see daylight peeking around your door or window frame or feel drafts around plumbing, ducting, recessed lighting, outlets and light switches? If so, you have air leaks. Seal the air leak by using insulating foam, caulk, weather strips, door sweeps or foam gaskets.
4. **Utilize a programmable or smart thermostat:** Install a programmable thermostat that automatically adjusts your heat. Change your thermostat setting during the heating season to the lowest comfortable setting, which is 68°F for most people during the day and 55°F at night or when no one is home.
5. **Heating system maintenance:** Schedule an annual heating system check-up to ensure that your system is clean and running efficiently. Also, replacing your furnace filter helps your furnace run efficiently.
6. **Install an outdoor-rated timer for your engine block heater:** Almost all engines need to be warmed for only about an hour.
7. **Use your window treatments:** Close your curtains at night to reduce heat loss, but open the curtains on south-facing windows during the day, so the sun's warmth can help heat your house.
8. **Look for rebates:** NorthWestern Energy offers a variety of electric and natural gas energy efficiency rebates to Montana residential and commercial customers. For a complete list of rebates offers and program qualifications, call 800-823-5995 or visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/Eplus.



Keep your gas meter clear of snow and ice

Just like scraping off your car or shoveling your sidewalks, it's important to take care of your gas meter after it snows. Gas meters have a vent that regulates pressure. If snow piles up and covers the vent, it won't work properly. This could lead to a service interruption or even a gas leak, which could cause a fire or explosion.

After every snow, be sure to clear off your gas meter gently using your hands or a broom. Never use a shovel. Also be sure all appliance exhaust vents are clear from blowing and drifting snow. Blocked appliance vents could result in a buildup of deadly carbon monoxide.

Squeaky gas meter? No need to worry

You may have noticed your gas meter squeaking when it gets cold out. This happens because the lubrication inside the meter becomes more solid in the cold, so the internal mechanisms tend to get squeaky. Don't be alarmed by a squeaking gas meter.

If you hear leaking or blowing gas or smell natural gas, leave the area and call us immediately from another location.

Stay safe during a power outage

Winter storms, ice and wind can cause unexpected outages. Here are some important tips to help you and your family during an outage:

- Check fuses or circuit breakers to rule out problems with electricity inside your home. If a fuse is blown, replace it with the appropriate fuse. If a breaker has tripped, reset it from off to on. If you are unsure about fixing a fuse or circuit breaker, call an electrician.
- Check social media and our online outage map. If an outage is widespread, NorthWestern Energy will post updates on our Facebook page. You can also get up-to-date outage information from our online outage map at NorthWesternEnergy.com/outages.
- Do not open freezers or refrigerators more than necessary. A refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will keep the temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is half full) if the door remains closed.
- Unplug computers, chargers, TVs, VCRs and other sensitive appliances to avoid possible damage when electricity is restored.
- Turn off all but one light, so you will notice when we have restored your electricity.
- When power resumes, reset clocks and check automatic alarms and timers. Plug in only essential items. Wait 10 minutes before connecting the remainder of your items to allow the electrical system to stabilize.
- Use a flashlight. Avoid candles because of the fire risk.

For more information about safety during outages, please visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/outagesafety.

Read our new issue of Bright magazine

The Environment issue of NorthWestern Energy's Bright magazine is now available. Visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/Bright to read the magazine online or subscribe to have a copy mailed to you.



Plow with caution

Be careful while plowing to steer clear of utility equipment. Be sure to avoid meters and transformers (the large green boxes often located near walkways). Even minor contact with the transformer's metal enclosure could cause damage to the conductors inside. If you hit the equipment, please report it to NorthWestern Energy right away.

Guard against CO

Be sure you have carbon monoxide (CO) detectors inside your home, in a central location outside separate sleeping areas and on every level of your home, to provide early warning of CO. If your detector goes off, get out of your house quickly and call 911. Remember to replace the batteries in you CO and smoke detectors at least once a year. (The beginning of the year is a great time to do this.)

Sign up for E-Bill

Our paperless E-bill is convenient and clutter-free. You'll receive an email every month letting you know your NorthWestern Energy bill is available online. You can also sign up for text alerts to let you know your bill is ready.

Signing up is easy. Register for paperless billing in My Energy Account. If you don't have an account, you can easily set one up on our website. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/ebill.