



Dear Customer,

I hope the latest issue of Energy Connections finds you well. We're excited to launch a new design and format for your bill insert. Our goal with Energy Connections is to provide you with updates on what's happening at NorthWestern Energy and how it impacts you, along with important safety messaging and tips for using energy wisely. A new item that we're excited to include in each issue is a recipe from one of our 1,200 employees, along with a featured story on that employee and the work they do at NorthWestern Energy.

I'm honored to kick off the recipe series with one of my favorite fall meals - Pumpkin Coconut Curry with Chicken and Butternut Squash – along with a little information about myself. I work as the content development specialist at NorthWestern Energy, which means that I have the privilege of capturing and sharing the amazing work that goes on behind the scenes at NorthWestern. That means I often tag along with our crews on some of their most exciting work days, whether that's restoring power after a storm or snowmobiling to a remote power line in the middle of winter. I gather information in the field and then pass it on to our customers through brochures, flyers, social media and Energy Connections.

When I started at NorthWestern almost a year ago, what struck me most about my new job was how friendly all of my colleagues are. I'm excited to introduce a few of them to you here. Please reach out if you have questions, comments or story ideas for Energy Connections. You can find me at news2@northwestern.com. And be sure to follow along on social media. NorthWestern Energy is on Facebook (@NorthWesternEnergy), Twitter (@NWEInfo) and Instagram (@NorthWesternEnergy).

Thanks for reading!
Evin Madison



Pumpkin Coconut Curry with Chicken and Butternut Squash

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 small butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-in. cubes | 2 cups chicken or vegetable broth, low-sodium |
| 3 Tablespoons olive oil, divided | 1 13-ounce can coconut milk, not sweetened |
| 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces | 2 teaspoons curry powder |
| 1/2 onion, sliced | 1 large pinch cayenne powder |
| 1 Tablespoon minced ginger | 1/2 lime, juiced |
| 2 large garlic cloves, minced | 1/2 cup chopped cilantro, plus extra for garnishing |
| 2 plum tomatoes, diced | cooked rice, for serving |
| 1 15-ounce can pumpkin puree | |

DIRECTIONS

- To roast butternut squash, place on a sheet pan, toss lightly with olive oil, salt and pepper, and roast at 450F until caramelized and fork-tender.
- Heat 2 Tablespoons olive oil in a large Dutch oven over high heat. Add chicken and cook on high heat until browned on all sides. Remove chicken and set aside.
- Reduce heat to medium-high and add remaining 1 Tablespoon olive oil to Dutch oven. Add onion and ginger.
- Cook for a few minutes until onion is soft. Add garlic and cook for about one minute more.
- Add tomatoes and pumpkin puree to pan. Cook for about 8-10 minutes, until puree is lightly browned.
- Add broth, coconut milk, curry and cayenne powders; bring to a boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Add chicken and butternut squash and simmer for 10 minutes longer.
- Stir in lime juice and cilantro. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve over rice.

CONTACT US

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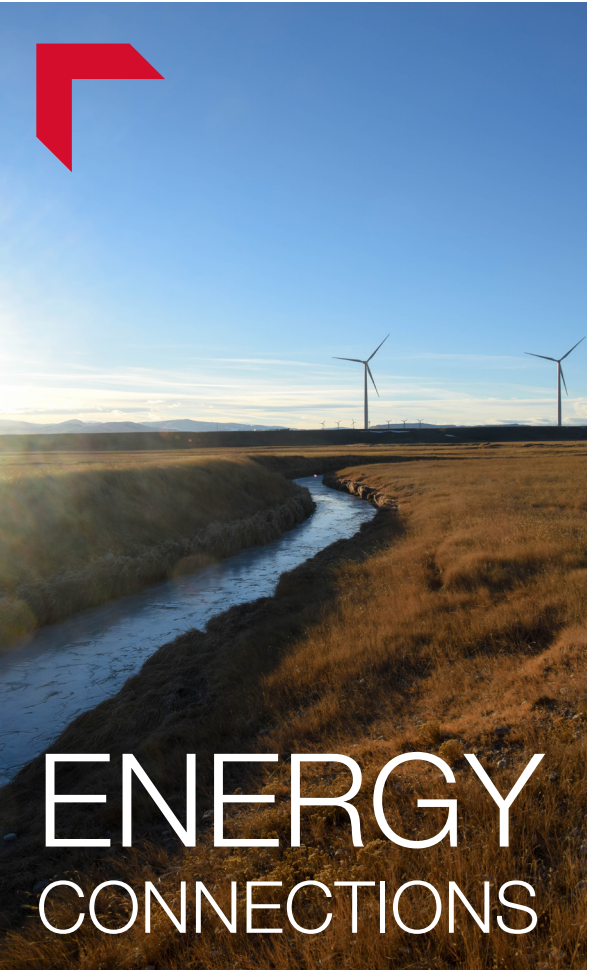
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We are proud of the diversity in the communities we serve. To better serve the needs of some of our customers, we translate important customer information into two languages: Spanish and Karen.

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.

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LOOK INSIDE FOR INFORMATION ON:

- Electric Supply Plan
- Employee Feature
- Pumpkin Coconut Curry with Chicken and Butternut Squash Recipe

Planning for a sustainable energy future



This is the team of NorthWestern Energy employees that models and studies energy supply to create our 2019 Montana Electric Supply Resource Procurement Plan.

Our business is about keeping the lights on, but we also understand that our customers want electricity at a reasonable cost.

Providing our customers reliable energy at the lowest long-term cost is the goal of the 2019 Montana Electric Supply Resource Procurement Plan, which was filed with the Montana Public Service Commission in August. This plan is the result of more than three years of work by our expert staff and independent technical consultants, modeling current and future Montana energy needs.

A little history:

In 1997, the Montana Legislature passed a bill to allow the deregulation of Montana's utility companies. Following deregulation, Montana Power sold its generation fleet, which meant power had to be purchased off the open market, rather than produced in state. This left customers entirely exposed to prices in the unregulated power markets beyond Montana's borders.

Since purchasing Montana Power in 2002, NorthWestern Energy has worked to address this vulnerability and has made great progress. Producing electricity in state is a priority for our company. This allows us to have greater control over energy prices and availability.

Today, our Montana electric portfolio is built on the carbon-free hydro system, along with wind, coal, gas and solar. NorthWestern's electricity portfolio has the capacity to be 70% carbon free. However, because wind and solar don't always produce to their full capacity, our actual generation is about 61% carbon free.

Our portfolio produces enough energy to meet customers' average energy demand. However, at times of high-energy demand – the coldest nights in winter and the hottest days of summer – our customers' needs exceed our generation and customers are at risk both of insufficient energy supply and of volatile prices on the regional energy market. We call this market price risk.

The future:

Market price risk will increase. Beginning this year and through 2032, the western region of the U.S. will experience the loss of almost 7,000 megawatts (MW) of baseload generation, as more coal plants are taken off line, including Colstrip Units 1 and 2 in Montana. That is a loss of generation equal to the energy needed to power several million homes. Meanwhile, energy demand is increasing and is forecasted to continue to increase.

When the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine:

This past winter highlights the risks of relying on the market when energy demand is high. Our expectation going into March 2019 was to purchase, for the entire month, 43,200 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity from the market at a cost of \$997,056, or \$23.08 per MWh. However, due to the cold weather and a shortage of energy in the region, on March 3 and 4 alone, we purchased 9,632 MWh of electricity at a cost of \$8,277,380. This was an average price of \$859.36 per MWh. At that same time, Colstrip was producing energy

at the cost of \$15 per MWh.

NorthWestern Energy has invested in wind and solar resources. However, wind and solar are variable energy resources, meaning they don't produce power if the wind isn't blowing or the sun isn't shining. Adding more wind or solar isn't the simple solution to meeting our reliability needs. Our customers also need resources that can be dispatched on-demand to ramp up or shut down quickly. Our portfolio needs to be ready to produce enough power for an extreme event – such as a frigid day in January or a sweltering day in August.

"We can't count on the wind to be producing at full capacity in those instances, so if we wanted to use only wind to meet our peak loads we would have to build a lot of extra wind," said Ben Fitch-Fleischmann, manager of energy supply planning. "We looked at what we would need to build to meet peak loads without adding any new fossil-fueled resources, and it would cost about \$500 million more than the least-cost alternative."

What does the plan show us?

The 2019 Montana Electric Supply Resource Procurement Plan identifies a real and immediate need for 24/7 on-demand power to meet peak demand. As discussed above, our current portfolio is adequate for average demand, but falls short on winter's coldest days and summer's hottest days. Future additions of wind and solar energy resources will require new flexible-capacity resources to balance the energy grid and assure reliability.

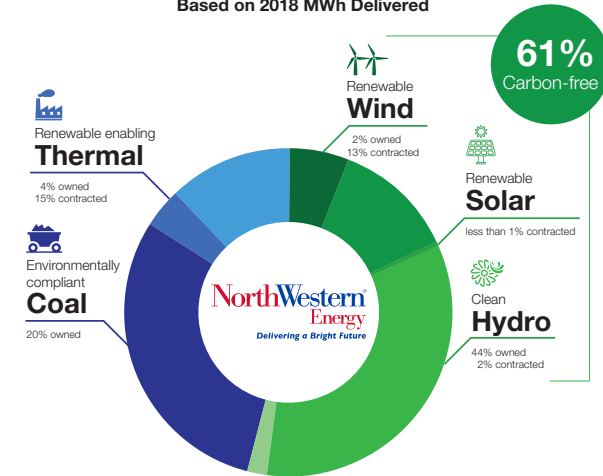
"To assume the market will always be able to provide customers with sufficient electricity at affordable prices is reckless and could have severe reliability and cost consequences," said Bob Rowe, CEO of NorthWestern Energy.

In addition, the market price for energy is becoming increasingly volatile as more renewables are added and thermal resources are retired. Market volatility is high when demand is high, which occurs during our peak load hours when we most need energy.

"There is less and less power available for the critical times of the year," said John Hines, vice president of Supply and Montana Government Affairs. "There's a lot of power that is available during non-critical times, but we are getting desperately short of being able to meet our customers' needs during those critical time periods."

NorthWestern Energy Electric Generation Portfolio

Based on 2018 MWh Delivered



We continue to be one of the leaders for carbon-free portfolios.

What's next?

The plan does not endorse a specific resource. Instead, it's a way for us to look at many different scenarios and options that could benefit our customers going forward. We will use competitive solicitations administered by an independent third party to select resources. Any proposal that meets our customers' needs will be welcome.

Our goal is to meet our obligation to our customers to provide adequate, reliable electricity at the lowest long-term total cost, as we are mandated to do by the State of Montana. Only a serious, substantive and detailed plan will allow us to meet our customers' needs.

"'Sustainability' involves meeting today's needs while being able to meet tomorrow's needs as well," Bob said. "Together we can work for a responsible evolution in Montana's energy future."

Learn more:

To download the complete 2019 Electricity Supply Resource Procurement Plan or the Executive Summary, visit www.northwesternenergy.com/2019-resource-plan.

Follow us on social media to stay in the loop on future plan updates.