

How to read your bill

When we get our energy bill every month, many of us only look at the amount due. However, your NorthWestern Energy bill contains much more information, and the more you know about your energy use, the better you'll be able to manage it.

Here are a few things to pay special attention to on your bill:

- The 13-month graph allows you to see how your energy use this billing cycle compares to recent months and to the same month one year ago.
- Look at the information under the graph to compare days of service, as this can fluctuate between cycles and can sometimes explain why a bill is higher or lower than normal.
- You can also compare average daily temperatures listed below the bar graph. These can also help explain fluctuations in your bill.
- Delivery charges vs. supply service:
 - Energy delivery charges can be thought of as the cost to use the highways (pipes and wires) that deliver the energy from the generation source to the user. These charges are subject to regulation by state utility commissions and, where appropriate, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.
 - Supply service is the charge for the amount of electricity or natural gas you use. The supply may come from a variety of sources, some owned by NorthWestern Energy and others owned by third-party suppliers. This is a pass through cost, meaning whatever we pay for the energy is what our customers pay.
- Read the information in the Message Board area of the bill. It includes important information about rates and updates.

We also have a page on our website dedicated to explaining every item on your bill, everything from where to find your account number to how we calculate therms. For more information, visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/ReadYourBill



Understanding pipeline markers

Markers, placed at all public road and railroad crossings, show the approximate location of pipelines and identify the companies that operate them. These markers indicate the pipeline content, the name of the pipeline operator and the operator's emergency phone number.

Even if the pipeline is marked, you must call 811 to have utility lines located before digging. The pipeline may not follow a straight course between markers. Call 811 or visit Call811.com at least two business days before beginning any digging project, and be sure to follow state law guidance on how long utility markings remain valid.

How to recognize a gas pipeline leak

A skunky, rotten egg smell isn't the only way to recognize a natural gas leak. Call 911, if you notice any of these signs of a natural gas pipeline leak:

- An unusual blowing or hissing sound coming from the ground.
- Dirt or dust blowing from a hole in the ground.
- Bubbling ponds.
- Dead or discolored vegetation in an otherwise green area near a pipeline right of way.
- A fire close to a buried pipeline.

The hazards of a natural gas release

Natural gas is very safe. However, if a natural gas leak occurs, you need to be aware of the hazards. Natural gas is highly flammable and easily ignited by heat, sparks and static electricity. If you smell natural gas, do not operate any electrical devices (TVs, lights, garage doors, etc). If they're on, leave them on; if they're off, leave them off.

Natural gas is lighter than air and can migrate into enclosed spaces. If you smell natural gas, evacuate the area on foot and move upwind of the leak. When at a safe distance, call 911 and NorthWestern Energy.

Employee honored for life-saving actions



Last January, 82-year-old George Piper took a fall just as NorthWestern Energy Gas Technician Tim MacDonald came around a corner in Huron, South Dakota, in his NorthWestern Energy vehicle. Tim immediately knew something was wrong.

Tim turned on the flashers and yellow beacon on his truck and jumped out to find George incoherent. Tim called 911 and gave their location. While they waited for first responders, Tim slipped his sweatshirt under George's head, covered the man with his jacket and reminded him that help was on the way.

Later, Tim found out George's niece is Tricia Davis, fellow NorthWestern Energy employee and manager of customer interactions.

"If it wasn't for Tim seeing the fall happen, I'm not sure George would be here today," Tricia said.

In June, Tim received the MEA Energy Association Life Sustaining Award for his heroic actions.

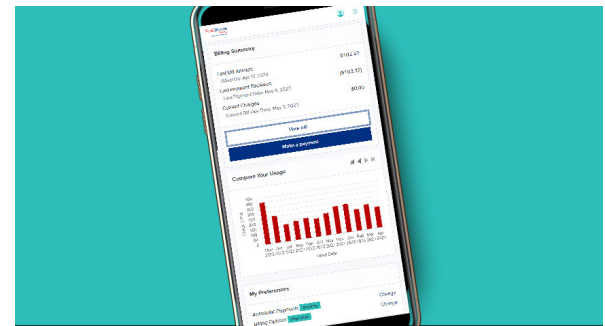


Hang with Louie and Sniffy this summer

If you're looking for some educational fun this summer, spend some time with Louie the Lightning Bug and Sniffy the Sniffasaurus to learn about electric and natural gas safety.

We have games, activities and videos for kids of all ages to help them learn the importance of playing it safe around electricity and using your senses around natural gas.

Visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/kids.



Cut clutter with E-bill

Sign up for paperless billing, and you'll receive an email every month letting you know your NorthWestern Energy bill is available online. It's fast, convenient and completely secure.

For more information, visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/ebill.