



Husband and wife Mike and Casey Butala have worked together at NorthWestern Energy for about seven years, but for the past several weeks, they've really been working together.

Like more than half of NorthWestern Energy's employees, Mike and Casey began working from home in mid-March when the coronavirus outbreak began to hit our region.

Working from home hasn't been too big of a change for the couple.

"Really, it hasn't been that much different," Mike said. "It's just like sitting in my office."

Mike, who started at NorthWestern in 2013, works as a data center technologist, meaning he builds and supports our servers, virtual infrastructure, and systems that deliver technology solutions to the business.

Casey started with NorthWestern in 2011 and works as a customer service representative in our Contact Center. She has a work station set up at home, where she can answer calls and emails and work on special projects, just like she would at the call center.

During the outbreak, customers have been especially appreciative, Casey said. One customer even made a joke about "coworkers" after hearing Casey's dogs barking in the background.

"People know we're working from home," Casey said. "Everybody is working from home right now, so it feels like we're all in this together."



Buffalo chicken stuffed sweet potatoes

Mike and Casey both do CrossFit, which is where their buffalo chicken stuffed sweet potatoes recipe originated. "We devote a ton of time to meal prepping and trying to eat healthy," Mike said. He created this recipe after combining a few dishes he found on Paleo websites and a little trial and error.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds of chicken thighs or breasts
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1/2 cup of Frank's Red Hot sauce
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 packet ranch dressing seasoning
- 1 4-ounce tub of blue cheese crumbles
- 4 large sweet potatoes
- 4 tablespoons white vinegar
- Green onions, diced

DIRECTIONS

- Place chicken, hot sauce and ranch dressing seasoning in a slow cooker. Cook on low for 8 hours.
- Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
- Prick sweet potatoes with a fork. Bake sweet potatoes in oven for about 45 to 50 minutes, or until fork inserts and comes out easily. (Note: sweet potatoes can also be cooked in a microwave).
- To make the sauce, mix yogurt, onion powder and blue cheese. Slowly add in the vinegar until sauce reaches desired consistency.
- When sweet potatoes are done, slice them down the middle.
- Shred the chicken with two forks.
- Top sweet potatoes with chicken and drizzle sauce on top. Garnish with green onions.

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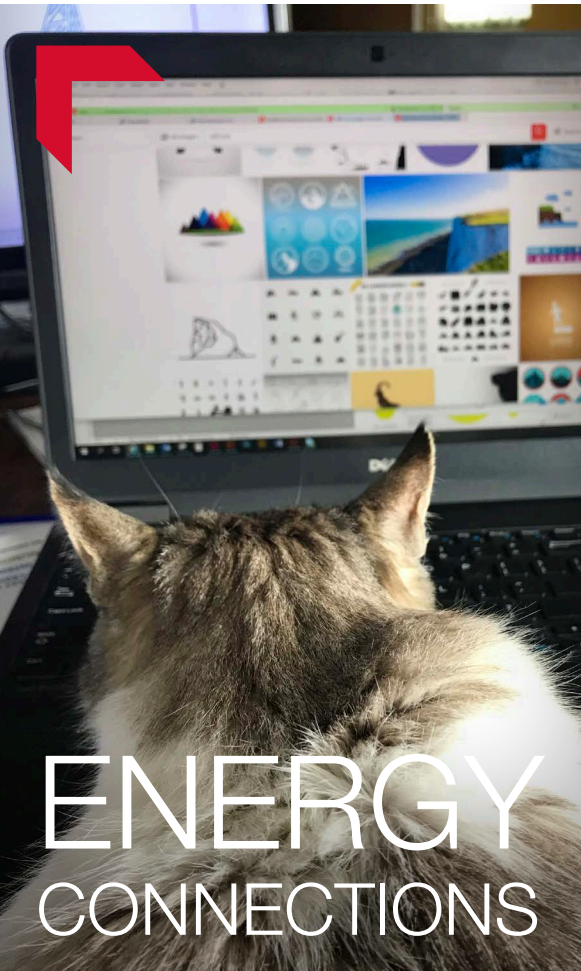


We are proud of the diversity in the communities we serve. To better serve the needs of some of our customers, we translate important customer information into two languages: Spanish and Karen.

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:

- Our COVID-19 response timeline
- Employee Features
- Buffalo chicken sweet potatoes recipe

Fill Out Your 2020 Census Today!
 The 2020 Census is available to fill out online at my2020census.gov or by phone at 1-844-330-2020.

NorthWestern Energy's COVID-19 response timeline



Employees who cannot work from home, including gas and electric workers, control room operators and some customer service representatives, were divided into pods. **Employees in separate pods never come into contact with one another.** That way if one employee becomes ill, they won't infect our entire workforce.

March 14

- NorthWestern voluntarily suspended service disconnections for non-payment.
- Customer walk-in lobbies closed.

March 12

- Employees asked to limit large, in-person gatherings.
- Montana Governor declares a state of emergency.

March 15

Montana Governor orders school closure through March 27.

March 16

Pods established to separate our workforce that cannot work from home.

March 17

- South Dakota Governor extends state school closure through March 27.
- CEO Bob Rowe makes official declaration of emergency.
- Significant part of our workforce starts to work from home.

March 13

- South Dakota Governor ordered school to be closed for one week.
- NorthWestern limits travel and group gatherings
- Facilities team increases cleaning efforts.

March 20

- All NorthWestern meetings moved to teleconference or videoconference.
- Montana Governor closes restaurants, bars, theaters, gyms, casinos, etc.

While nearly half of our workforce moved to working at home, our gas and electric crews continue to work in the field, as they are classified as essential workers. Proactive projects to "harden" NorthWestern Energy's systems and enhance our systems' resiliency continue during the pandemic. **Reliability is a responsibility NorthWestern Energy always pursues and it is especially critical during this pandemic.** Our crews are doing work such as tree trimming in advance of spring and summer storms, which will help prevent some weather-caused power outages later this year.



To protect our employees and our customers, crews no longer enter customers' premises, except under emergency circumstances. We also encourage the public to extend our crews the courtesy of social distancing. When you see our crews out working, feel free to give them a friendly wave from at least six feet away.

March 23

South Dakota Governor closes schools until May 1.

March 24

Montana School closure extended to April 10.

March 26

- Montana reports its first hospitalization due to the virus.
- Crews will no longer enter customers' premises, except under very limited circumstances.

March 31

- Nebraska Governor asks people returning to Nebraska from out-of-state travel to self-quarantine for 14 days.
- Montana Governor suspends evictions, foreclosures and utility shutoffs.

March 30

Montana Governor orders a 14-day post-travel quarantine for travelers arriving in the state.

March 25

NorthWestern Energy begins getting hand sanitizer from Wildrye Distilling in Bozeman.

March 27

- Montana reports first death due to COVID-19.
- Nebraska reports first death due to COVID-19.

March 28

Montana stay-at-home directive goes into effect.

April 7

Montana Governor extends stay-at-home directive to April 24.

April 9

Nebraska Governor urges residents to stay at home.

April 15

Energy Connections goes to print.

April 10

South Dakota issues health emergency for Minnehaha County.

April 6

- South Dakota Governor recommends people with underlying medical conditions and those who are over 65 remain home if possible.
- Nebraska declares prohibition on gathering.

April 2

South Dakota Governor calls in National Guard to help set up 100 ICU units in Sioux Falls and Rapid City.

April 1

NorthWestern Energy announces \$300,000 donation to help communities and small businesses impacted by the pandemic.

April 12

- Smithfield Foods in Sioux Falls shuts down after an outbreak at the food processing plant.
- Sioux Falls mayor calls for a three-week shelter-in-place order for all of Minnehaha and Lincoln County.



We pledged \$300,000 in aid to assist communities struggling with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. We donated these funds to local COVID-19 relief efforts across our service territory and offered grants to small businesses that were impacted by the virus. In all, we gave grants to 644 small businesses.

By the time you receive your May edition of Energy Connections, some of this information will, no doubt, be out of date. However, this represents a summary of our COVID-19 response as of April 15.