



Why is my energy bill higher than normal?

We know many of you are concerned about your energy bills this winter. This winter, many customers are experiencing higher energy bills. Several factors can impact your monthly energy bill.

- **Higher natural gas prices** – Natural gas prices are higher this winter than last winter. For several years, we enjoyed incredibly low natural gas prices. This year, prices have increased to the highest levels in more than a decade due to lower supply and increased demand.
- **Colder weather** – We've seen extremely cold, record-breaking weather this winter. Cold temperatures can have a major impact on your bill. Even if you don't adjust your thermostat, your heater is working harder to maintain the same indoor temperature when it's cold outside.
- **Energy efficiency** – How efficient is your home? Adequate insulation can make a big difference in your energy bill. Learn more about how to save energy and

money through energy efficiency. Find energy-saving tips at NorthWesternEnergy.com/Tips.

- **Shorter days** – The short days of winter mean we spend more time with our lights on.

Some of the ways we use energy in the winter time can also lead to higher bills. Just a few examples are:

- Engine block heaters
- Space heaters
- Heat lamps for animals or heated water troughs
- Hot tubs
- Christmas lights, extra baking and holiday company
- Heated garages

We're here to help. If you are concerned about your ability to pay your bill, we have billing and payment options that may help. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com.

How to read your bill

Utility bills can be complicated, but the more you know about your energy use, the better you'll be able to manage it.

Here are a few quick tips to help you better understand your bill:

1. Review the 13-month graph to see how your energy use this billing cycle compares to recent months and to the same month one year ago.
2. Look at the information under the graph to compare days of service and average daily temperature. This can sometimes explain why a bill is higher or lower than normal.
3. Read the information in the Message Board area of the bill. It includes important information about rates and updates.
4. Sign up for My Energy Account. My Energy Account allows you to access your past bills, so you can easily compare usage history. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/MyEnergyAccount



Take care of your meter in the winter

Just like scraping off your car or shoveling your sidewalks, it's important to take care of your natural 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.

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 there is a clear path to your electric and natural gas meters in case we need to access them in an emergency.



Stay away from down power lines

Strong winds, ice and heavy snow can lead to down power lines. If you see a down or damaged power line, keep your distance and call 911 immediately.

Never touch a power line or any object, including trees, that is in contact with a line. Remember:

- Keep people, equipment and objects at least 30 feet away from power lines.
- Never attempt to remove a fallen tree or branch from a power line. You could be seriously injured or killed.
- If a tree or branch does come in contact with a power line, keep yourself and others away from the tree and contact NorthWestern Energy immediately.

Budget Billing makes budgeting easier

Budget Billing takes the guess work out of your energy bill. It levels out the seasonal highs and lows and provides you with a predictable monthly energy bill to make it easier to budget for your energy costs.

With Budget Billing, your NorthWestern Energy bill is the same every month. We calculate your Budget Billing amount by using the past 12 months usage history at the current rates. Your account will be reviewed periodically, not more than once per quarter. Your budget billing amount may be adjusted to reflect any changes in your actual use and/or rates.

Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/budgetbilling.