



When Mary Gail S. graduated from the University of Montana School of Forestry with a degree in outdoor recreation, she dreamed of working for the National Park Service. But after a season at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, park service openings meant leaving Montana. To tide her over until positions came up in Yellowstone or Glacier, she took a job as a mail clerk at Montana Power Company in her hometown of Butte, Montana. After a week delivering mail, Mary Gail heard about a position in MPC's Environmental Department as a recreation specialist. She applied and got the job.

That was in 1980, and Mary Gail worked with Montana Power until 2000. She became the director of environmental permitting, then hydro licensing and eventually became director of environmental compliance and internal audit.

Mary Gail transitioned into the telecom industry, and in 2013, she was hired by NorthWestern Energy as the Manager of Environmental Permitting and Compliance. The position was very similar to her job with MPC.

"I've had an amazing full-circle career," Mary Gail said.

Mary Gail works with NorthWestern's environmental and lands teams. Her department does everything from fish population studies around our hydro facilities to emissions monitoring at our gas compressor plants to purchasing powerline easements.

Mary Gail recently helped guide the adoption of NorthWestern Energy's Sustainable Procurement and Practices Guidelines. These guidelines, which are outlined on the next page, help the entire company minimize waste.

"This environmental business is everybody's business," Mary Gail said. "It's not just those of us who work in the department who should be focused on environmental sustainability."



## Mary Gail's Avocado Toast

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 slices multi-grain bread
- 1 lemon slice
- ½ avocado
- salt (to taste)
- Everything But the Bagel Seasoning
- 2 eggs (optional)

### DIRECTIONS:

- 1 Poach the eggs, if desired.
- 2 Toast the bread.
- 3 Mash and salt the avocado and spread on the pieces of toast.
- 4 Squeeze the lemon over the toast and top with seasoning.
- 5 Top with poached eggs. Enjoy!

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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 Karenic.

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 karenic.

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**Energy Connections Editor**  
 11 E Park St, Butte, MT 59701  
[news2@northwestern.com](mailto:news2@northwestern.com)

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## LOOK INSIDE FOR INFORMATION ON:

- Our Net Zero vision
- Sustainable procurement and practices
- Osprey nests on power lines
- Baling twine and ospreys
- Call 811 before you dig
- Avocado toast recipe



## Our Net Zero Vision

Our commitment at NorthWestern Energy is to provide our customers and communities reliable, affordable and responsible critical energy infrastructure and essential service. Because of the special places we are privileged to serve, environmental stewardship is core to who we are and what we do. That's why we've made a commitment to achieve carbon neutrality in our electric and natural gas operations by 2050.

"NorthWestern Energy begins this transition to an even cleaner energy future building on the considerable progress we have already made," said Brian Bird, NorthWestern Energy President and Chief Operating Officer. "Our total portfolio of electric generation is 56% carbon free, which is higher than the electric utility average of about 40%. Our natural gas system has a leak-per-mile rate that is better than the industry average thanks to our investments in pipe infrastructure and leak detection capabilities. We have the tremendous honor to be the stewards of this critical energy infrastructure that delivers safe and reliable energy to our region. Now is the time to raise the bar and start the transition to Net Zero 2050."

Learn more about our commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/netzero](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/netzero).

## Report osprey nests built on power lines

NorthWestern Energy has installed hundreds of platforms where ospreys can safely build nests away from power lines.

However, this time of year when ospreys return to Montana, we often see nests being built on power lines. This can cause power outages and even fires, and the nests' proximity to energized equipment puts the birds at risk of electrocution.

If you see an osprey nest on a power pole, please report it by calling us at 888-467-2669 or filling out the online form at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/customer-service/safety](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/customer-service/safety).

When NorthWestern learns of an osprey nest on one of our poles, we implement the Avian Protection Plan, which includes removing the nest if it does not have osprey or osprey eggs in it and in some cases providing an alternative platform for the osprey.



## Secure baling twine to protect ospreys

Baling twine is often found in osprey nests, but it can be deadly to hatchlings and adults who become entangled in it. It's unclear why ospreys are so attracted to baling twine, but the best way to prevent it from ending up in nests is to pick up all baling twine and store it in buildings or containers with secure lids.

The Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society offers a twine collection and recycling site where you can drop off baling twine. For more information, visit [yvaudubon.org/baling-twine-recycling/](https://yvaudubon.org/baling-twine-recycling/)

## New guidelines focus on sustainability

In 2019, a group of NorthWestern Energy employees proposed the company take steps to make our offices and operating divisions more environmentally friendly and sustainable. Their efforts led to the formation of a cross-functional committee and ultimately the development of Sustainable Procurement and Practices Guidelines.

NorthWestern officially adopted these guidelines in January. The objective of the guidelines is to give preference to products and services that are environmentally preferred. The guidelines provide concrete points of focus for our sustainability efforts. Our new guidelines call for purchasing products that contain recycled content and avoiding items that cannot be reused. They encourage eco-friendly cleaning products, reusing and recycling technology equipment and striving to reduce unnecessary energy use in our offices and work locations.

## Call before you dig

April 29 is National Arbor Day. Planting a tree is a great way to celebrate, but before you begin any digging project be sure to call 811 or visit [call811.com](https://call811.com).

Call at least two full business days before you start any digging project to allow time for all underground utilities to be marked.

Even on your property and in your yard, damages caused by hitting an underground utility can be expensive and even deadly. Once utilities are marked, be sure to hand excavate within 18 inches on each side of markings.

If you ever hit a gas line, call 911 and NorthWestern Energy immediately. Even minor damage to a pipeline can result in future leaks.



## Plan before you plant

A healthy tree might live for a century or more, so be sure you're planting the right tree in the right place.

- Before you plant a tree, know where overhead power lines are located and plant at least 20 feet away. Trees that grow taller than 40 feet should be planted more than 35 feet away.
- Be sure trees are also planted at least 20 feet away from buried gas lines. Roots can become tangled around pipelines causing damage, and if the tree should blow over, it can damage the pipeline if the roots become entwined and pull up the pipeline.
- If your yard has a ground-level transformer (a large, green, metal box), be sure to leave room for our crews to access the transformer. Plant your shrubs at least 10 feet away from the front, and 2 feet away from the sides and back.