

ENERGY

CONNECTIONS

NorthWestern
Energy

JUNE 2013

Delivering a Bright Future

Pipeline Integrity Management Program

As your local natural gas provider, we want you to know all that we are doing to ensure the safety of our pipeline system.

Pipelines are operated under extensive federal and state regulations and industry standards, to ensure the safety and health of the public and the environment. These regulations and standards cover pipeline location, design, construction, operation and maintenance, safety testing and ongoing procedures to ensure the integrity of the

pipelines. Pipelines are also inspected by both federal and state pipeline safety inspectors.

NorthWestern Energy has a "Pipeline Integrity Management Program" (IMP) in place, which is a comprehensive program of pipeline inspections, assessments and mitigation to ensure that all segments of our natural gas pipelines meet federal and state safety requirements and are operated safely.

How Can I Tell Where a Pipeline is Located?

Pipeline markers show the approximate location of pipelines and identify the companies that operate them. Pipeline markers, sometimes called right-of-way markers, are placed at frequent intervals along transmission and distribution pipeline right-of-ways, public road crossings, railroad crossings, and other prominent points along the route. These markers identify what type of material is transported, the name of the pipeline operator and the operator's emergency phone number.

Pipeline markers are generally yellow, black and orange in color. The primary function of these above ground markers is to identify the general

location of the pipeline as an alert to those who might be working along the pipeline corridor for another utility or during the construction of homes or businesses nearby. It is a federal crime for any person to deface, damage, remove or willfully destroy any pipeline sign or right-of-way marker.

America's infrastructure, including pipelines, are a matter of national security. If you see any suspicious activity along a pipeline right-of-way, please report it to NorthWestern Energy as quickly as possible by calling our emergency Customer Contact Center. Emergency line operators are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

June is National Safety Month!

Celebrate by encouraging safe behaviors. Keeping your family out of harm's way is your Number 1 priority! Here are a few of the top ways to prevent injuries:

- Stay off your cell phone when you are driving. Your safety practices directly influence the safety practices of your children.
- Get trained in first aid, CPR and AED online or in a classroom.

- Check and if necessary, change the batteries on your smoke and carbon monoxide detector.
- Properly dispose of unused and expired medications.

Share these strategies with family, friends and neighbors. You can play a large part in keeping those around you safe!



Things to Consider When You're Outdoors

The leading cause of serious pipeline incidents, including those causing deaths and injuries, is outside force damage to pipelines. In most cases, these incidents are entirely preventable.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) and other stakeholders invest a considerable amount of resources to ensure communities understand how to practice effective pipeline damage prevention techniques to minimize the possibility of associated injuries.

Calling before you dig is the first rule to remember when conducting underground related activities – no matter what the job is. The law requires you to phone the "One-Call" center at 8-1-1 at least two full business days (excluding holidays) prior to conducting any form of digging activity.

Planning a home improvement job? Planting a tree? Installing a fence or deck? Call 811 – it's free, it is the law and will ensure you can proceed with your digging project safely.

One other thing to consider when working outdoors – is the area around your gas meter. It is important that this area stays free of obstructions at all times. Do not build permanent structures over, near or around the meter set or other NorthWestern Energy equipment.

Notify NorthWestern if you will be completing work that may require relocation of facilities, such as building additions, decks, garages, landscaping, etc.

What You Can Do

We often think of heat, hot water and cooking when we consider the many benefits of natural gas. Natural gas is reliable and safe as long as it is used properly and the related equipment is properly maintained.

Preventing damage, recognizing a leak and knowing what to do in the event of a leak are important ways you can help ensure your safety and the safety of others.

Learn How To Recognize a Leak:

Natural gas is odorless and invisible so, as a safety precaution, a harmless additive gives gas a rotten egg or sulfur-like odor.

You can recognize a natural gas leak in several other ways, including an unusual hissing noise, blowing dirt for no apparent reason, an unusual dry spot in the ground or dead vegetation for no apparent reason, bubbling water, and frozen ground in warm weather.

Know How To Respond:

If you smell gas or suspect a gas leak, don't delay — get away! Get everyone away from the area

or out of the building immediately, then call 911 from a safe distance. NorthWestern Energy will work with emergency personal to assess the situation.

Do not do anything that might cause a spark, including turning on or off any electrical or



battery-operated devices or using garage door openers, radios, televisions, computers or telephones. Avoid open flames. Do not strike a match or flick a lighter. Do not smoke.

Finally, do not return to the area until you have been advised that it is safe.

Does Your Home Have CSST?

Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) is a continuous, flexible, stainless steel pipe and typically is covered with a yellow exterior plastic coating. CSST is used to supply gas in residential, commercial and industrial structures. It is usually routed beneath, through and alongside floor joists in your basement, inside interior wall cavities, and on top of ceiling joists in attic spaces.

All CSST must be bonded and grounded according to installation instructions by a qualified person. If CSST is not properly grounded, current from a lightning strike could travel through the structure's natural gas piping system and cause a leak or, in some cases, a fire.

CSST may have been installed in your home or business if it was built after 1990 or if work has been performed on the natural gas piping system since that time – such as having a furnace or stove installed. If CSST has been used in your home or business, contact a licensed electrician for confirmation that a bonding device was installed.

For more information on CSST, visit www.csstsafety.com.

NOTE: CSST should not be confused with flexible natural gas appliance connectors (products that connect the piping in the wall directly to an appliance). CSST is NOT approved to be used as a flexible natural gas appliance connector.

Contact...

MONTANA

Customer Contact Center (888) 467-2669
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F
Emergency 24/7 Service
Call Before You Dig 811
Energy Efficiency (800) 823-5995

NEBRASKA

Customer Contact Center (800) 245-6977
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F
Emergency 24/7 Service
Call Before You Dig 811

SOUTH DAKOTA

Customer Contact Center (800) 245-6977
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F
Emergency 24/7 Service
Call Before You Dig 811

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Payment Option: (800) 218-4959
(via checking, savings, or money market account)
SpeedPay Automated
Phone Payment Option: (877) 361-4927
(via credit card account)

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