

energy

CONNECTIONS

July 2009

NorthWestern
Energy
Delivering a Bright Future

in this issue...

KEEP SAFE DURING SUMMER STORMS

NORTHWESTERN UNVEILS THE FIRST
HYBRID TRUCK OF ITS FLEET

EDITOR'S NOTE

DID YOU KNOW?

Keep Safe During Summer Storms

Severe storms can and do occur throughout our service territory every year. After a storm, inspect your property for damage to the utilities.

If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise – leave immediately and call us from a neighbor's home. Downed power lines are a real threat after a storm since lines may remain energized even if they're lying on the ground. Think someone else has already called? Call anyway – we want to hear from you. Don't take chances with your safety! Working together, we can save lives and prevent accidents. ■



Summer Safety Tips

Summer is here and as everyone is out enjoying the great weather, NorthWestern Energy would like to remind you of some important safety tips to keep the carefree days of summer accident-free.

For a safe summer, remember, look up and look out. Make sure everyone in your family is aware of the dangers of overhead power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind while you are at work, at home, or at play.

- ◆ **Look up.** Be aware of overhead power lines on your property. Always be aware of the location of power lines when carrying or setting a ladder or using a long-handled tool.
- ◆ **Gardens.** When preparing your garden, be aware that some utility lines are just below the sod. Rototillers can easily damage these lines eliminating service to you or your neighbors. Always call before you dig by dialing 811 prior to beginning your garden.
- ◆ **Roof safety.** Have help when venturing on the roof for any reason such as a roofing repair, cleaning gutters, etc. Never get yourself, tools, materials and/or equipment closer than 10 feet from any overhead power lines.
- ◆ **Kites and airplane fun.** Always fly kites and model airplanes in open areas well away from trees and power lines. Never use any metallic material in your kite or kite string. Avoid releasing Mylar balloons into the air as these can become entangled.
- ◆ **Tree maintenance.** Use caution when trimming trees. Before attempting any tree pruning, look for overhead power lines that may be near and/or hidden by the tree foliage. Please be sure to call 811 prior to any stump removal or stump grinding.
- ◆ **Lawn care.** Inspect electric lawn mowers and outside extension cords for fraying, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings. If the product is damaged, stop using it and have it repaired immediately. All tools should be unplugged when not in use and stored in dry areas. Never use an electric-powered mower on wet grass.
- ◆ **Electricity and water don't mix.** Never use electrical equipment or power tools near a pool or other wet areas.
- ◆ **Protect power poles.** Never nail or tie signs, hang banners or tie ribbons or balloons onto utility poles or other electrical equipment.
- ◆ **Do not go into an electric substation for any reason.** Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment, which can be very dangerous. Also, never attempt to rescue a pet that goes inside. Instead, call your utility.

NorthWestern Energy wishes you an enjoyable summer and hopes these tips will help keep you and your family safe during the warmer months. ■

NorthWestern Unveils the First Hybrid Truck of Its Fleet



NorthWestern Energy's commitment to environmentally responsible practices extends to its vehicle fleet. The company has added hybrid vehicles to its fleet in recent years and recently has unveiled its first hybrid bucket truck, which began working the streets of Missoula, Montana, and surrounding communities in June.

The hybrid technology saves fuel and also allows the truck's diesel engine to be shut down while crews perform line repair and maintenance work relying on the vehicle's batteries to operate the aerial lift. Drawing on the battery power eliminates both noise and diesel exhaust.

"This new hybrid bucket truck costs about \$45,000 more than a standard truck but will go about twice the distance before needing to refuel depending on driving and work conditions," said Ron Anderson, NorthWestern Energy's manager of fleet and equipment. "It also produces about half the emissions of a conventional vehicle, which is – quite literally – a breath of fresh air for a work truck."

The 40-foot, 26,000-pound hybrid bucket truck has an aerial lift of 42 feet and replaces an older vehicle that NorthWestern will retire from its company-wide fleet of 947 vehicles. The company began adding hybrid service vehicles to its fleet three years ago. It plans to continue replacing service vehicles with hybrids as appropriate and plans to add another hybrid bucket truck to the fleet later this year.

"While this is the first hybrid bucket truck in the fleet," Anderson said, "we continue to operate our other conventional trucks with safety and environmental responsibility in mind. The crews are mindful of idling trucks only to the extent necessary to do their work safely, and we've implemented various operational changes over the years to reduce fuel consumption. We are always looking for new approaches to sustainable and cost-effective fleet management practices." ■

did you know?

Get the most from your compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) by following these tips:

- ◆ **Do the twist.** Screw in your CFL by holding the ballast (the white plastic part), NOT the glass tubing.
- ◆ **Don't dim a non-dimmable.** Only use bulbs labeled as dimmable on dimmer switches.
- ◆ **Check your controls.** Most photocells, motion sensors and electric timers are not designed to work with CFLs. Always check with the manufacturer of the control for compatibility.
- ◆ **Choose your light color.** Light color is measured on the Kelvin (K) scale. Lower numbers mean the light appears yellowish and higher numbers mean the light is more white or blue.
- ◆ **Choose the right bulb.** Make sure the CFL you buy is rated for the location where you plan to install it.

Source: energystar.gov.

contact

MONTANA

Customer Contact Center	
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F	(888) 467-2669
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Electric	(888) 467-2353
Natural Gas	(888) 467-2427
Call Before You Dig	811
Energy Efficiency	(800) 823-5995

NEBRASKA

Customer Contact Center	
6 a.m. - 10 p.m. M-F	(800) 245-6977
Emergency 24/7 Service	(800) 245-6977
Call Before You Dig	811

SOUTH DAKOTA

Customer Contact Center	
6 a.m. - 10 p.m. M-F	(800) 245-6977
Emergency 24/7 Service	(800) 245-6977
Call Before You Dig	811

PAYMENT

Automated Phone	
Payment Option:	(800) 218-4959
(via checking, savings, or money market account)	

SpeedPay Automated	
Phone Payment Option:	(877) 361-4927
(via credit card account)	

Editor's Note

The June issue of Energy Connections was dedicated to natural gas and pipeline safety. The natural gas scratch & sniff cards were inserted into NorthWestern natural gas customer bills only.

If you did not receive a scratch & sniff card, you can request one online by logging on to www.northwesternenergy.com. Complete the online form and receive either a natural gas or propane scratch & sniff card. We encourage you to make sure everyone in your household or business can identify the smell in case of a leak.

