

energy

CONNECTIONS

April 2010

NorthWestern
Energy
Delivering a Bright Future

in this
issue...

CFL DISPOSAL REMINDER

TREE TIPS

DID YOU KNOW?

Easy Conservation Tips

- ◆ *Set the water temperature on your clothes washer to cold when appropriate, and only wash full loads of clothing.*
- ◆ *Run the dishwasher with full loads only as well.*
- ◆ *Close shades and blinds at night to reduce the amount of heat lost through windows. This also applies throughout the day during warm weather to reduce the amount of heat coming in through the windows.*
- ◆ *Use a ceiling fan to cool off your house when possible. It consumes much less energy than most central air conditioners.*
- ◆ *Set computers, monitors, printers, copiers and other business equipment to their energy-saving feature and turn them off completely at the end of the day.*
- ◆ *Repair leaky faucets promptly. A leaky faucet quickly wastes gallons of water.*
- ◆ *Lower the thermostat on your water heater. A setting of 120 degrees Fahrenheit provides comfortably hot water for almost all uses.*
- ◆ *Take shorter showers and use a water-saving showerhead.*

Celebrate the 40th Anniversary Of Earth Day with CFLs

April 22, 2010, is Earth Day's 40th anniversary. To celebrate this historic event, we're reminding all our customers to do at least one thing to help save energy – and it's as easy as replacing a light bulb with a compact fluorescent light (CFL). If every home in the United States replaced just one incandescent light bulb with a CFL, we would save enough energy to light more than 2.5 million homes for a year and prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions of nearly 800,000 cars. Switching to CFLs is good not only for the Earth but also for your pocketbook.



An average home has approximately 30 lights. By replacing the five, most-frequently used bulbs or fixtures in your home, you can save more than \$60 each year in electricity costs. To get maximum energy savings, replace most-used bulbs such as lights in your family and living room, kitchen, dining room and porch. CFLs use about a quarter as much electricity and last up to ten times longer than traditional lighting.

When shopping for CFLs, remember the 4L's:

1. **Label** – look for the ENERGY STAR® label that means the product meets high performance standards.
2. **Light** – buy a CFL that produces as much light (lumens) as the incandescent bulb you are replacing. Lumens are the universal way to measure light output and are listed on the lighting package. (See the related chart on the other side of this newsletter.)
3. **Location** – read the CFL packaging to make sure the bulb is rated for the locations where you plan to install it. Note that almost all CFLs will not work on dimmer switches.
4. **Less Energy** – install CFLs in high-use locations and cut the electricity usage and the associated costs by up to 75 percent. Don't wait. Install CFLs today and start saving electricity and money.

NorthWestern Energy offers rebates on energy efficient lighting to Montana residential and commercial electric customers. The rebates are funded through electric supply rates. Check out our Web site, www.northwesternenergy.com, and search on CFLs or lumens. You will find links to useful and interesting information and lighting calculators that will help you select the right CFLs for your needs. ■

Tree Tips

With spring here and the Earth Day milestone in late April, you might be thinking that it is a good time to plant some trees; and you're right! However, before you put a shovel or blade into the ground, remember these tips.



- ◆ Natural gas, electric and other utility lines are just about everywhere underground. So, for your own protection, state law requires that you call 811 at least two days before you start digging – whether you're planting a tree in your backyard or undertaking some serious excavation. Call the national Call Before You Dig 811 number before you dig or excavate. Technicians will come to your site and mark the location of all underground utilities – free of charge. It's for your safety, and it's the law!
- ◆ Avoid planting trees directly under power lines or too close to electrical equipment. Before you plant a tree, get the facts. Find out how the tree will look in five, 10 or even 50 years. Knowing what height a tree will reach at its maturity will help you make the right decisions today. Carefully planted trees stay out of power lines and retain their natural beauty while saving trimming costs. Trees, whose mature height does not exceed 20 feet, fit comfortably under power lines. Trees with mature heights of 30 to 40 feet need to be set at least 15 to 20 feet from the outside line of a power pole. Plant trees expected to grow more than 40 feet tall at least 35 feet from your structure and power lines.
- ◆ Deciduous, or leafy, trees can help save energy when selectively planted around a house. They provide excellent protection from the summer sun but permit winter sunlight to reach and warm your house.
- ◆ Inspect trees on your property for insects, disease or structural problems. If you notice any problems, call a competent arborist. He or she will know how to remove or trim trees around structures safely and without damaging property. They also will know when to call us to guide them with trees around power lines.
- ◆ Typically, trimming trees on your property is your responsibility. However, before you trim a tree near a power line, call us toll free at (888) 467-2669 in Montana or (800) 245-6977 in South Dakota and Nebraska. We'll stop by to make sure it's safe for you to proceed. Our primary concern is your safety.
- ◆ Finally, discourage anyone from climbing or playing in a tree located near a power line. Avoid building a tree house in or attaching items like steps, ladders or rope swings to such trees.

Trees are welcome additions to any community; we just want to make certain that you can enjoy the beauty and comfort of your trees safely for years to come. ■

did you know?

It's easy to replace an incandescent bulb with a CFL that provides the same amount of light:

Incandescent Bulb Rating (watts)	Necessary Light Output (lumens)	Typical CFL Replacement (watts)
40 watts	450	9 - 13 watts
60 watts	800	13 - 15 watts
75 watts	1100	18 - 25 watts
100 watts	1600	23 - 30 watts
150 watts	2600	30 - 52 watts

contact...

MONTANA

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

NEBRASKA

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

SOUTH DAKOTA

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

CFL Disposal Reminders

CFLs can do what they do with the help of a tiny amount of mercury. However, since mercury is potentially harmful, it is important to dispose of CFLs responsibly.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that consumers take advantage of available local recycling options for CFLs. Contact your local municipal solid waste agency directly, or go to www.epa.gov or www.earth911.org to identify local recycling options. Always avoid sending a fluorescent light or any other mercury-containing product to an incinerator.

For additional information of CFL disposal, visit our Web site at www.northwesternenergy.com and search on CFL disposal. You will see a variety of links to useful information. You also will find our CFL disposal fact sheet. ■