



For many in Montana, hydroelectric dams mean reliable energy, fishing, and recreation. But behind the dams, a dedicated team ensures they remain safe and dependable— work that Boyd Burnett has proudly dedicated his career to.

As an engineering supervisor at NorthWestern Energy, Burnett primarily focuses on dam safety for the company’s hydroelectric facilities across Montana.

“Most people hear ‘dam safety’ and think OSHA safety,” Burnett laughs. “But our group focuses on the safety of the dam itself.”

Burnett joined NorthWestern in 2012 and has helped monitor and inspect all 11 of the company’s hydroelectric dams. His work includes inspecting structures, spillways, penstocks, and flow lines, as well as measuring dam movement and monitoring seepage to ensure the facilities operate safely.

Every August, Burnett and his team survey all 11 dams to accurately track structural movement over time.

“We monitor, inspect, evaluate, and assess any needed updates to ensure public safety,” he explained.

Burnett also works with emergency responders, local agencies, and community partners to ensure preparedness and public safety planning are up to date.

“Everything in dam safety is about keeping the general public safe,” Burnett said. “Our job is not only to make sure nothing happens to the dam, but also to have a plan in place if there ever were an unlikely incident.”

Originally from Idaho, Burnett earned BA & MA degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Idaho before pursuing his career in rivers and hydraulic structures.

“Our dams provide power, but they also create incredible recreational opportunities,” he said.



Homemade bread

Outside of work, Burnett enjoys baking homemade bread, a tradition passed down through growing up in a large family.

“When at work, if the coffee is out, you create a new pot,” he joked. “In my family of non-coffee drinkers, if the bread is out, you just make more bread.”

Below is Boyd’s famous homemade bread recipe:

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups warm water
- 1 tablespoon yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup of vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup of honey
- 5-6 cups flour (white, wheat, or combination)

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Add 1 tablespoon of yeast to the two cups of warm water in a mixing bowl and let the yeast start its work for a few minutes.
- 2 Then add oil, honey, salt and 3-4 cups of flour and start mixing on low. Slowly add the remaining flour until the dough is at a good consistency.
- 3 Let the dough rise until it reaches the top of the mixing bowl (about an hour). Knead, divide in two and place in two oiled regular-size loaf pans.
- 4 Let it rise again until it’s at or above top of the bread pan (about 30 minutes) and bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes.

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Estamos orgullosos de la diversidad en las comunidades a las que servimos. Para satisfacer mejor las necesidades de algunos de nuestros clientes, traducimos información importante del cliente a dos idiomas: español y karénico (Karen). Para solicitar información traducida del cliente, contáctenos a los números indicados arriba.

ပသးခုဒီးပပ်ကမာလာဘဉ်ပသးလာ ပမာစာဘဉ်ပုၤကဗျာ်ဖိအါကလုာ်အါဗွဲ လာအအိဉ်လာ လီၤကဝီၤဖဲအံၤန့ၣ်လီၤ. ဒ်သီးပမာစာဘဉ်သုကအါထီၣ်အဂီၢ်, ပကွဲးလီၤလဲၣ်ကတိၤကျိၣ်ထံ တၢ်ဖျါအရုၣ်တဖၣ်ဆူ (Spanish)စပဲနးအကျိၣ် ဒီး (Karen)ကညီကျိၣ် န့ၣ်လီၤ. သုမ့ၢ်လီၤဘဉ်လဲၣ်လံာ်လာ ပုၤကွဲးကျိၣ်ထံ အံၤဝဲဒီး, ဝံသးစုၤသုဆဲးကျိၣ်ပုၤသုဖဲ လီၤတဲဖိနီၣ်ဂံၢ် ဒ်အအိဉ်ပျါလာတၢ်ဖိခိဉ် အသီးန့ၣ်လီၤ.

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Customer Bill Insert
 South Dakota/Nebraska | June 2026

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Bright ideas to save

Keep your cool

Closing the blinds on your windows during the day can help keep sunlight from overheating your home.

How to recognize a natural gas leak

A gas leak is often recognized by smell, sight or sound:

Smell — A distinctive sulfur-like or rotten-egg odor is added to natural gas, so you'll recognize it quickly.

Look — You may see dirt blowing into the air from a hole in the ground, continuous bubbling in water or dead or dying vegetation (in an otherwise moist area) over or near a pipeline.

Listen — You may hear a hissing, whistling or roaring sound as natural gas escapes from a pipe.

If you suspect a natural gas leak, warn others and immediately leave the area. From a safe location at least 300 feet from the suspected leak, call 911 and NorthWestern Energy.



The hazards of a natural gas release

Natural gas is very safe. However, if a natural gas leak occurs, you need to be aware of the hazards. Natural gas is highly flammable and easily ignited by sparks and static electricity.

If you suspect a natural gas leak:

- Leave the area immediately.
- Do not use phones, matches, light switches or anything else that could trigger the ignition of the gas.
- When at a safe distance, at least 300 feet away, call 911 and NorthWestern Energy.

Natural gas is lighter than air and can migrate into enclosed spaces. If you smell natural gas, evacuate the area on foot and move upwind of the leak.



2026 Week of Service Recap

NorthWestern Energy hosted its third annual Week of Service in late April. This year, more than 350 employees participated in volunteer events across our service territory. In recognition of their volunteerism, NorthWestern Energy will donate more than \$35,000 to roughly 29 community organizations throughout our service territory. This annual event underscores our commitment to enhancing the lives of those in the communities we serve.

Here are some of the Week of Service events that took place across South Dakota:

Aberdeen: Helped clean up Aberdeen STEM Camp Park.

Clear Lake: Packed backpacks to support students through the Clear Lake SACH Program.

DeSmet: Cleared paths and completed spring landscaping along the HWY 14 Trail at the Laura Ingalls Wilder Homestead.

Hartford: Supported the Wall Lake Arbor Day event with tree planting and deadfall cleanup.

Huron: Cleaned up Highway 14 and the Ravine Lake area to improve community spaces.

Redfield: Helped spruce up the Spink County 4-H Grounds.

Sioux Falls: Participated in the Big Sioux River Greenway cleanup to support environmental stewardship.

Yankton: Assisted with the Keep Yankton Beautiful community cleanup event.

Stay in the know during summer outages

Summer thunderstorms can lead to outages. To ensure you are receiving outage notifications verify your email address, phone number, and notification settings by going to My Energy Account or by creating a My Energy Account. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/notifications.

Understanding utility easements

From time to time, you may notice NorthWestern Energy employees or other energy company employees accessing your property. Utility companies are allowed to access private property without first asking for permission.

Utility companies have a legal right to access any of their infrastructure located on customers' property due to easement rights. Easements play a key role in maintaining our electric and natural gas system and delivering safe, reliable energy.

Refusal to grant access to utility personnel can be grounds for termination of service.

If NorthWestern Energy or a contractor needs to access your property, they will be dressed in clothing with the NorthWestern Energy logo and be driving vehicles with the logo. They can also provide a company I.D. if requested.

