

Shannon H.'s sugar cookie recipe came from her Great Grandma Edie, who was a guintessential lowa farm wife.

"She was a very intimidating woman," said Shannon, who is the Director of Regulatory Counsel at

NorthWestern Energy. "Gram was a tiny woman with a big personality. She was wicked smart, but she had very little tolerance for anything she thought was baloney."

"She could cook and bake for her family or for 25 neighbors on the fly without batting an eye," Shannon said.

Edie was a great cook, but never used recipes.

Shannon watched her great grandmother make her cookies countless times, and at 15 years old did her best to write down the recipe based on what she observed. She's been baking sugar cookies for her family, friends and coworkers ever since.

Shannon learned her work ethic from her great grandmother and it shows in her current position where she leads the team of attorneys who tirelessly represent NorthWestern Energy at the Montana Public Service Commission. Her team also works with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Shannon is known at the Montana Commission for her excellent baked goods. She loves to share her baking, and often brings goodies to meetings.

She joined NorthWestern in June 2020, moving with her family cross country in the middle of a pandemic, but it's been an excellent change for Shannon, who worked in private legal practice the previous 22 years.

Last year, Shannon founded the Public Utilities Law Section of the Montana Bar, which facilitates education and networking opportunities for all Montana utility attorneys.

"I think it's important to be a lifelong learner," Shannon said. "If you're not evolving, you're falling behind."

Shannon appreciates that NorthWestern shares that philosophy - we work to evolve and fulfill our mission to serve our customers.



### Grandma Edie's Sugar Cookies **INGREDIENTS** 2 cups sugar

- 1 cup softened butter 1 cup sour cream
- 2 eggs

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp salt

4 cups flour

### DIRECTIONS

Cream butter and sugar together in a large bowl. Beat in eqqs one at a time.

 $\mathbf{O}$ Fold sour cream into the sugar mixture with a rubber **C**spatula.

 $\mathbf{Q}$  Sift flour, soda and salt together and add gradually to Osugar mixture. Dough should be soft but not sticky. Add flour if necessary

Chill dough for approximately 2 hours, or overnight.

Roll out dough and cut into rounds. (These cookies are Usoft and fluffy, so they aren't great as shapes.) Bake 5-8 minutes at 350 degrees.

6 Cool and top with your favorite frosting and decoration.

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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 karen

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## LOOK INSIDE FOR **INFORMATION ON:**

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DECEMBER 2021



Stay warm while you cut your energy use

Three factors affect your utility bill – rates, weather and how you use energy. Due to natural gas supply and demand, NorthWestern Energy's natural gas rates will be higher than last winter. While it's unclear what this year's winter weather will be like, here are some energy efficiency tips you can put to use during the heating season:

- Seal up air leaks: If you can see daylight peeking through around your door or window frame, then you have air leaks. Seal the leaks by using insulating foam, adding outlet gaskets under light switches and outlets on exterior walls, and installing weather stripping or door sweeps to eliminate drafts around exterior doors.
- Use your window treatments: Closing your curtains in the winter can reduce heat loss. Be sure to close curtains at night, but open the curtains on south-facing windows during the day, so the sun's warmth can help heat your house.
- Replace your furnace filter: Replacing your furnace filter helps your furnace run as efficiently as possible. Depending on the type of filter you use, some need to be replaced monthly, while others can last three months or more.
- Utilize a programmable or smart thermostat: Install a programmable thermostat that automatically turns down the heat at night and when no one is home. Change your thermostat setting during the heating season to the lowest comfortable setting, which is 68°F for most people during the day and 55°F at night or when no one is home.
- Use your slow cooker: A slow cooker or electric pressure cooker can be more efficient than your stove or oven.
- Keep your damper closed: Unless you have a fire burning in your fireplace, keep your damper closed. An open damper allows heat to escape up your chimney.

# Energy-saving gifts that keep on giving

Give the gift of energy savings with these products that can help your friends and family cut energy costs:

- Programmable or Smart thermostats: A great way to automatically adjust heating temperature to lower temperatures when no one is home or when people are sleeping and to higher temperatures by the time you wake up in the morning or get home in the evening is to install a programmable or smart thermostat. You can save energy and money if you don't already diligently adjust the temperature. Smart thermostats connect to your Wi-Fi and allow you to control them remotely. Some even learn your patterns and adjust your heat accordingly.
- LED Lighting and Timers: Use LED holiday string lights and outdoor timers to efficiently display your festiveness! ENERGY STAR® LED lightbulbs also come in a variety of shapes/styles, brightness (lumens), and color temperature.
- ENERGY STAR Appliances and Electronics: Choose ENERGY STAR-certified products when shopping for clothes washers, dishwashers, air purifiers, and computers.
- Smart power strips: These power strips shut down power to appliances when they go into standby mode.
- Blankets and sweaters: These traditional gifts are great energy savers. A warm blanket or sweater allows loved ones to turn down their heat.
- A slow cooker or Instant Pot: These appliances can be more efficient than cooking with a stove or oven.





# Be cautious around overhead power lines

Coming into contact with a power line can be deadly. That's why it's important to assume that all power lines, whether in the air or on the ground, are energized.

Strong winds, ice and heavy snow can lead to downed power lines. If you see a downed or damaged power line, keep your distance and call 911 immediately. Never touch a power line or any object, including trees, that is in contact with a line. Keep people, equipment and objects at least 30 feet away from down or low-hanging power lines.

When putting up outdoor holiday decorations, watch for overhead power lines. Contact with power lines can result in serious injury or even death. Keep yourself, your ladder and any other equipment more than 10 feet from overhead power lines.

## Give the Gift of Energy



NorthWestern Energy Gift of Energy gift certificates are a great way to help a family member, friend, or colleague who may be struggling to pay their energy bill. For more information, visit

NorthWesternEnergy.com/giftofenergy.



## Check your natural gas meter and vents

Your natural gas meter's regulator vent must always be clear so the flow of natural gas into the home can be regulated properly. If this vent becomes plugged, the pressure of gas being pumped into the home could either increase or decrease to a dangerous level, resulting in a fire or explosion. Any airflow blockage can lead to big problems and even carbon monoxide poisoning.

Also be sure all appliance exhaust vents are clear from blowing and drifting snow – especially after a winter storm. Blocked appliance vents could result in a loss of heat or buildup of deadly carbon monoxide in the structure.

After major snow storms, take a walk around your property and ensure all vents are clear of snow or ice and that there is a path to your gas and electric meter.



## Plow with caution

Be careful while plowing to steer clear of utility equipment. Be sure to avoid meters and transformers (the large green boxes often located near walkways). Even minor contact with the transformer's metal enclosure could cause damage to the conductors inside. If you hit the equipment, please report it right away.