



Stay safe while recreating near hydro facilities

Be Dam Safe



Stop: Take time to read the safety signs around dams and waterways.



Look: Watch for increased water velocity or water rising over previously exposed rocks or brush.



Listen: Listen for warning sirens that signal when the dam spill gates open.

Boating in a reservoir

Water levels can fluctuate rapidly near dams. Never take your boat past restrictive cables or warning signs. Depending on maintenance schedules and periods of high river flow, boat restraining systems upriver of a dam may not be in place. Never boat alone.

Fishing below a dam

If you fish from a boat below a dam, always wear your life jacket and leave your engine running. The water below a dam can boil up and trap or capsize a boat. Anchoring below dams is dangerous and should never be done. Never fish alone.

Wading

While wading, always wear your life jacket and use a walking stick in river channels. Never wade or swim alone.

If caught in the water or swept off your feet:

- Stay calm, lie on your back and don't try to stand up.
- Drop any items that weigh you down.
- Keep feet up and pointed downstream to avoid hitting rocks and entrapments.
- Go with the current and move diagonally across the current until you reach the shore.
- Roll onto dry land to drain boots or waders. Don't stand until the water is out of waders.
- If trapped on an island, signal for help. Don't risk crossing the river.



Scan this QR code to learn more about our hydro operations.

Pipeline safety

Pipeline markers

Markers, placed at all public road and railroad crossings, show the approximate location of pipelines and identify the companies that operate them. These markers indicate the pipeline content, the name of the pipeline operator and the operator's emergency phone number.

Even if the pipeline is marked, you must call 811 to have utility lines marked before digging. The pipeline may not follow a straight course between markers. Call 811 at least two business days before beginning any digging project.

Pipeline monitoring

As a pipeline operator, we monitor the status of our pipelines seven days a week, 24 hours a day to ensure they are safe and secure. We use computers, alarms, meters and satellite technology to control and check our pipelines. The monitoring systems detect changes in pressure and flow and can activate warnings and safeguards if a leak is detected.

HCA and IMPs

Federal pipeline safety regulations use the concept of High Consequence Areas, or HCAs, to identify specific locations and areas where an accidental release of natural gas could have the most significant adverse consequences. Once an HCA has been identified, operators devote additional focus to ensure the integrity of pipelines in that area. We have in place an Integrity Management Program, or IMP, that defines the steps and timelines for identifying HCAs, assessing the integrity of the pipelines and taking aggressive steps to mitigate the risks to people and property near HCAs.

Pipeline purpose and reliability

Pipelines are the safest way to transport energy products, including natural gas, crude oil and other fuels. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) regulates pipelines with the help of state partners. According to government and industry statistics, the most common cause of pipeline incidents is improper or unauthorized digging near a pipeline, which is why it's important to call 811 at least two business days before any digging project. Pipeline operators carefully build, maintain and monitor the integrity and security of their lines.

Stay away from algae

While most algae is not toxic, Montana does see toxic algae blooms on occasion. Blue-green algae blooms can occur anytime from May through October, but are most common during hottest summer months, according to the Montana Department of Health and Human Services.

Toxic blue-green algae can occur throughout Montana in any standing body of water that is exposed to the sun, including lakes, reservoirs and stock ponds. Certain conditions can lead to an algae bloom, including high levels of nutrients and warm water temperatures. If you see blue-green algae, which can look like pea soup or green latex paint, stay out of the water. Don't allow pets to drink the water or children to play in it. If you do enter the water, rinse off as soon as possible with fresh water.

If you encounter an algae bloom, report it online at hab.mt.gov or call (888) 849-2938.

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The People issue of Bright magazine is now available. Our ability to fulfill our mission and serve our customers depends on employing the best workers. Behind every one of our employees and retirees is a story, and our latest issue of Bright tells those stories.

In the magazine, you'll read about a Butte employee who carries on a family tradition by dressing up as our mascot, Louie the Lightning Bug. You'll also find a story about a Lewistown ground worker who plays in a band and earned a gold record when one of his songs became a TikTok hit. The stories in this magazine are just a few examples of the incredible people who work at NorthWestern.

Read the magazine or subscribe for free at NorthWesternEnergy.com/Bright.