



UNDERSTANDING YOUR WINTER ENERGY BILLS

This winter, our Montana customers may be receiving higher bills. This is due to two main factors:

1. Higher natural gas prices – Natural gas prices are higher this winter than last winter. Gas prices in January 2022 were 69% higher than January 2021. For the last several years, we've enjoyed incredibly low natural gas prices. This year, prices are 73% higher than the 10-year average, due to lower supply and increased demand. To mitigate price impacts, NorthWestern Energy owns natural gas production facilities and purchases lower-priced natural gas in the summer and stores it for the winter season when prices are higher. However, prices are still higher than in recent years. Montana residential and commercial

natural gas customers see the cost of the natural gas supply reflected on their bill on the item "Natural Gas Supply." Generally, the "Natural Gas Supply" rate changes monthly. Natural gas delivery charges, which cover the cost of the pipes and other infrastructure required to deliver natural gas to homes and businesses, are unchanged.

2. Colder weather – According to the National Weather Service, December 2021 and January 2022 were colder than last winter. For example, the average temperature in Billings in December 2020 was 35 degrees, compared to 26 degrees in December 2021. The average temperature in Missoula in January 2021 was 30 degrees, compared to 22 degrees in January 2022. When

it's colder outside, it takes more natural gas to heat our homes, so your natural gas usage is likely higher than it was this time last year. Higher usage results in higher bills.

Learn more about resources and programs available as well as valuable energy efficiency tips at NorthWesternEnergy.com/heretohelp.

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HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you're concerned about your ability to pay your energy bill, reach out to us right away. There are programs that may be able to help:

- **The Montana Emergency Rental Assistance Program*** supports Montanans who have experienced financial hardships as a direct or indirect result of the COVID-19 pandemic and are at risk of housing instability. Renters can receive assistance for past-due rent, future rent, past-due utility bills and future utility bills. Learn more at housing.mt.gov.
- **The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program* (LIHEAP)** pays part of winter energy bills and may be able to assist with furnace emergencies for eligible people. Learn more at dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/energyassistance.

- If you qualify for LIHEAP, you automatically receive a **discount from NorthWestern Energy** which begins when you are approved through LIHEAP.
- **The Montana Weatherization Assistance Program*** helps participants to improve the heating efficiency of their homes and thus reduce their energy consumption. Learn more at dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/energyassistance.
- **Energy Share of Montana*** offers on-time assistance for those facing energy emergencies. Learn more at energysharemt.com.

Home EnergyCheck*

Our E+ Home EnergyCheck is a safe, convenient and fun way to have your home's energy efficiency checked – virtually! A Home EnergyCheck may help you save energy and money. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/EnergyCheck

My Energy Account

Sign up for a My Energy Account at NorthWesternEnergy.com/create-manage-account You can track your energy use, make payment arrangements to pay your outstanding balance in installments, and more.

Natural Gas Rebates*

We have rebates and incentives available to our natural gas customers in Montana. Learn more at NorthWesternEnergy.com/rebates.

**Program qualifications may apply.*