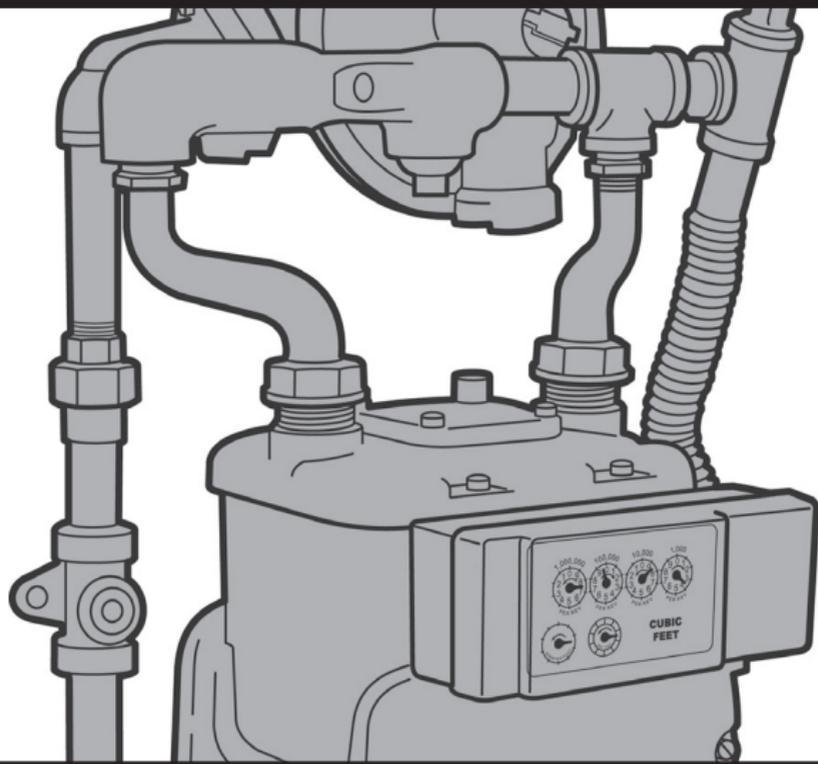


# IMPORTANT NATURAL GAS RATE INFORMATION NOTICE



On September 28, 2012, we, at NorthWestern Energy, filed with the Montana Public Service Commission (MPSC) a request to increase natural gas rates. The back of this flyer provides further information about the requested rate increase. For more information, visit our website or call our customer contact center at (888) 467-2669.

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### Q. Why did you seek a rate increase?

A. The increase allows us to continue to maintain and enhance our natural gas distribution system to ensure safe and reliable service, to recover increased operating expenses, and to earn a return on new investments to the system.

### Q. How much will residential customer bills increase?

A. If approved by the MPSC, this request would result in a monthly increase of \$5.69 or 7.17% for a residential customer using 100 therms of natural gas; however, the actual amount varies for individual customers depending on the amount of natural gas used.

### Q. How do NorthWestern's rates compare?

A. If approved, this would be the first increase in regulated natural gas transmission and distribution rates since 2008. This rate filing is separate from gas supply costs, which are part of separate regulatory process in Montana and can change as often as monthly. The typical residential natural-gas monthly bill would be \$85.10 if this rate request is approved. That's below the 10-year average of \$99.82.

### Q. When will the new rates go into effect?

A. The new rate will go into effect upon issuance of an MPSC order. The MPSC will hold a hearing on the request before any permanent increase.

Once scheduled, the time and location of any hearing will be made public by the MPSC. To find out more, contact the MPSC directly at (406) 444-6199. The Montana Consumer Counsel is available to represent consumer interests in this matter. You can contact the Counsel at (406) 444-2771.

While we understand that customers don't appreciate rate increases and we empathize with those customers who are struggling to make ends meet, everyone benefits from a safe, well maintained natural gas system. Our website provides tips on how to save energy with simple, low-cost/no-cost measures like air sealing. Visit [www.northwesternenergy.com](http://www.northwesternenergy.com) to learn more.

### Q. How will this increase affect my monthly bill?

Residential Customers				
THERMS	Current Bill	New Bill	Amount of Increase	Percentage Increase
10	\$14.09	\$16.11	\$2.02	14.34%
50	\$43.13	\$46.78	\$3.65	8.46%
100	\$79.41	\$85.10	\$5.69	7.17%
200	\$152.02	161.77	\$9.75	6.41%
300	\$224.60	\$238.43	\$13.83	6.16%
500	\$369.78	\$391.74	\$21.96	5.94%