How to Read Your NorthWestern Energy Bill

Utility bills can be complicated – with all the abbreviations, industry jargon, regulatory requirements and tiny print – it’s no wonder that most customers only look at the amount that is due each month. But the more you know about your energy use, the better you’ll be able to help manage it.

If you have questions or concerns about your bill, give us a call or send us an email. We can put you in touch with a representative who can explain your charges line by line, or help you determine if a better billing or payment option is available for your account.

1. The utility account holder’s name, unique account number, account description (if known) and bill date.

2. The service address for this account.

3. The date payment is expected to be paid.

4. The amount you are expected to pay by the due date. If you are on automatic bill pay, the date when your amount due will be withdrawn is displayed.

5. Graphs demonstrating your energy usage (kWh or Therms) for a 13-month period.

6. Look here to compare your days of service, energy usage, costs and average daily temperatures with the same period last year and the prior month. Payments received after the Billing Date are not included.

7. A snapshot of your account since your last bill. It includes the balance from your previous bill, payments, current charges, miscellaneous services or adjustments processed on your account, as well as your total amount owed for the month.

8. A summary of current charges associated with your electric and/or gas service. (See reverse side for details.)

9. For customers not currently participating in the budget billing program, we will provide you with an approximate budget billing amount if you were to sign up for the program. For those customers on our budget billing program, a summary of your actual account information is provided.

10. Important information related to your account or service.

11. The message board provides important information about rates and how to contact NorthWestern Energy.

12. If paying by mail, return this portion of the bill along with your payment. Write the amount you are paying in the box provided below Amount Enclosed and make certain the NorthWestern Energy address shows.

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Our toll-free telephone number and hours of operation.

The start and end date of your current meter reading.

The total number of dates included in the current meter reading.

The current and prior month’s meter readings.

Whether the current meter reading is actual or estimated.

The number that, when multiplied with the meter readings, determines the actual energy (kWh, demand or therms) used.

The total amount of energy used during the period.

A measurement taken by a demand meter every 15 minutes to calculate the amount of energy a customer requires of a system. The demand read is reset by the meter reader each month.

The highest 15-minute measurement during the month is recorded and is the basis for billing.

The identification number of the meter located at this service address.

The code and description of your rate for billing purposes.

Summarizes your monthly usage (the number in the middle) multiplied by all of the rates associated with your electricity and/or natural gas service, with the exception of taxes, as listed on the left hand column of the page. These charges are subject to regulation by the Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) and, where appropriate, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The telephone numbers to call if you want to pay your bill by phone.

Contact information for the Montana PSC.

The formula is (Atmospheric pressure + metering pressure)/Base Atmospheric pressure. Factors used to convert the difference in your previous and current readings from CCFs to Therms. This factor multiplied by the Average BTU factor provides the Therms used and billed to the customer.

This factor is updated on a monthly basis. For the customer's area, the energy value of the gas going to the customer is measured. This value is one factor used to calculate the therms the customer is billed for.

This section summarizes your monthly usage (the number in the middle) multiplied by all of the rates associated with your electricity and/or natural gas supply, with the exception of taxes, as listed on the left hand column of the page under supply rates. These charges are subject to regulation or review by the Montana PSC.

Understanding Your Bill

Knowing some common terminology will help you understand how your bill adds up. Here are some explanations to commonly used terms:

- **Avg. daily temp (°F):** This is each day's average temperature for the billing cycle divided by the days of service. The lower the average temperature for a month, the more usage will be required to heat your home or business.

- **Days of Service:** The number of days in the billing period. Number of days may fluctuate between months. In winter months, a few days more or less in your billing period will affect your bill.