Clean and clear after every snowstorm

Allowing snow and ice to build up on your natural gas meter, or fall from the roof above your meter, can lead to dangerous damages and interfere with the safe operation of your natural gas appliances.

Just like scraping off your car or shoveling your sidewalks, it's important to take care of your natural gas meter after it snows.

- Make sure your gas meter's regulator vent is clear of snow and ice so the flow of natural gas into the home can be regulated properly. If this vent becomes plugged, the pressure of gas flowing into the home could either increase to a dangerous level, resulting in a fire, explosion or the buildup of deadly carbon monoxide, or decrease, preventing natural gas from flowing to your gas appliances.
- Clear snow from the meter and associated piping. Allowing a winter's worth of snow to pile up on a meter or pipes can lead to pipes breaking, causing dangerous gas leaks.
- Clear off your gas meter gently using your hands or a broom.
- Never use a shovel or other sharp tools to cut or chop away snow and ice because they can damage the meter or lines close to the meter.
- Do not kick or hit your natural gas meter to break or clear ice.
- Snow should also be cleared from the roof above the meter to prevent falling snow or ice from damaging the meter or associated piping. Remove icicles from overhead eaves and gutters to ensure dripping water does not splash and freeze on the meter or vent pipe.
- Chimneys and vents for natural gas appliances must be cleared following a major snow or ice storm to enable proper venting and prevent carbon monoxide accumulation.
- Avoid using a snowblower or snowplow near your natural gas meter and any associated piping.
- Do not shovel snow up against the meter or vent pipe.
- Check your meter and pipes often throughout the winter.
- If you rely on a snow removal company to clear your property, be sure they are also clearing snow and ice from your meter, and a path to your meter. If you have a seasonal property or are away on vacation, ask someone to check your natural gas meter and vents, especially after a significant storm.

Carbon monoxide can be a silent killer

Carbon monoxide, also known as CO, is a silent killer. You can prevent carbon monoxide poisoning by ensuring that fuel-burning appliances are installed, maintained, and used correctly and safely. This includes having an annual inspection of heating and venting equipment by a qualified technician prior to the heating season, and proper installation and use of a CO alarm that meets current standards.

Do you know how to recognize the symptoms of CO poisoning? Symptoms can occur immediately or more gradually after long-term exposure.

Common symptoms include:

- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Fainting

If you have these symptoms after being in an enclosed area, get fresh air immediately and go to a hospital emergency department. Be sure to tell your doctor that you may have CO poisoning. Call a qualified technician to check your fuel-burning appliances

CONTACT US

MONTANA

Customer Contact Center	888-467-2669
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F	
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Call Before You Dig	811
Energy Efficiency	800-823-5995

NEBRASKA

Customer Contact Center	800-245-6977
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F	
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Call Before You Dig	811

SOUTH DAKOTA

Customer Contact Center	800-245-6977
7 a.m. - 6 p.m. M-F	
Emergency 24/7 Service	
Call Before You Dig	811

PAYMENT

Paymentus Automated
Phone Payment Option:
(via checking, savings, credit or debit card)

English:	833-970-2262
Spanish:	833-970-2263

CONSTRUCTION CENTER

1-83-FOR-BUILD (1-833-672-8453)

NorthWesternEnergy.com

We are proud of the diversity in the communities we serve. To better serve the needs of some of our customers, we translate important customer information into two languages: Spanish and Karenic.

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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Energy Connections

Customer Bill Insert
South Dakota/Nebraska English | November 2025

In this issue: Natural gas safety | Pipeline markers
Call Before You Dig | Carbon monoxide safety

Bright ideas to save

Decorate with LED lights

The electricity for a modest LED holiday light display is about $2 for the holiday season, compared to $10-$15 for traditional incandescent lights.

Pipeline safety

You may not realize it, but you likely live or work near a natural gas pipeline. Pipelines are the safest way to transport energy products, including natural gas, crude oil and other fuels. However, you still need to know how to keep you and your family safe around pipelines.

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 before you dig. Pipeline operators carefully build, maintain and monitor the integrity and security of their lines.

Excess Gas Flow Valve Notice

If you have an existing gas service installed to your home, you have the option to purchase an Excess Flow Valve (EFV) to be installed by NorthWestern Energy. An EFV is intended to reduce the flow of gas if the service line is severed. The valve is placed in the service line where it leaves the gas main. If your gas service was installed after April 2017, you likely already have an EFV.

An EFV will reduce the flow of gas only if the service line is severely damaged. It is important to note that an EFV will not protect you from a leak or broken line inside your home, or a small leak on the line in your yard. An example of when the valve provides protection is in the event the gas service is damaged from digging or extreme ground movement.

As required by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), we are notifying you that an EFV that meets the minimum prescribed DOT performance standards is available for installation on your natural gas service line.

The cost of installing the EFV will need to be evaluated by an engineer. If you are interested, please call our construction line at 1-83-FOR-BUILD (1-833-672-8453). Payment is required prior to installation of the EFV.

How you can spot a natural gas leak

A gas leak is often recognized by smell, sight, or sound:

- **Smell** — A distinctive sulfur-like or rotten-egg odor is added to natural gas, so you'll recognize it quickly. This odor may fade or be difficult to distinguish, and not all natural gas transmission lines are odorized. Do not rely on your sense of smell alone to detect a natural gas leak.
- **Look** — You may see dirt blowing into the air from a hole in the ground; continuous bubbling in water; dead or dying vegetation (in an otherwise moist area) over or near a pipeline; a damaged connection to a gas appliance; or an exposed pipeline after an earthquake, fire, flood, or other disaster.
- **Listen** — You may hear a hissing, whistling, or roaring sound as natural gas escapes from a pipe.

If you suspect a natural gas leak, warn others and immediately leave the area. From a safe location at least 300 feet from the suspected leak, call 911 and NorthWestern Energy, any time, day or night.

The hazards of a natural gas release

Natural gas is very safe. However, if a natural gas leak occurs, you need to be aware of the hazards. Natural gas is highly flammable and easily ignited by sparks and static electricity. NorthWestern Energy makes it easy to detect natural gas leaks by adding an unpleasant rotten egg or skunk-like smell to natural gas. If you smell this odor:

- Leave the area immediately.
- Do not use phones, matches, light switches or anything else that could trigger the ignition of the gas.
- When at a safe distance, at least 300 feet away, call 911 and NorthWestern Energy.

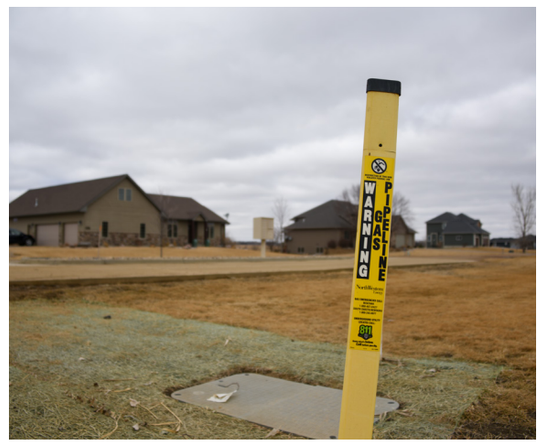
Natural gas is lighter than air and can migrate into enclosed spaces. If you smell natural gas, evacuate the area on foot and move upwind of the leak.

Notice: Responsibility of natural gas lines

All gas piping downstream of the gas meter to gas-fired appliances or other structures on the property is the responsibility of the home/property owner or current occupant.

NorthWestern Energy is required to inform customers with privately owned natural gas or propane service lines of their responsibility to inspect and maintain their piping (Code of Federal Regulations 49 CFR 192.16). Customers should have the pipes periodically inspected for leaks, and metallic pipes should also be inspected for corrosion by qualified professionals, such as your local plumber.

Any unsafe conditions should be repaired immediately, or the flow of gas should be shut off.



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 at least two business days before any digging project to have utility lines marked. The pipeline may not follow a straight course between markers.

Call 811 before you dig

Help prevent damage to buried natural gas pipelines by calling 811 or visiting Call811.com before digging, trenching, drilling, grading, excavating, or moving earth in any way.

This free service will locate and mark buried natural gas lines and other utilities so you can safely excavate in the area where these lines are buried.

Steps to dig safely:

1. Outline your excavation area so that locators can easily identify the excavation area and mark buried utility lines in the area.
2. Call 811 or visit Call811.com at least two business days before you plan to work.
3. Wait at least two business days for buried lines to be located and identified in your excavation area.
4. Keep location marks so you can see them throughout your project.
5. Dig carefully near buried lines. Hand-dig on either side of marked utilities when you are within two feet of any marked lines.

Contact NorthWestern Energy immediately if you strike, touch, scrape, or damage a natural gas pipeline. Even a small cut, dent, bend, or scrape can cause safety issues in the future. Never bury a damaged pipeline.

Call 811 before inspecting or clearing sewer lines

If you encounter a blockage in a sewer lateral, it could be caused by a natural gas line that was inadvertently drilled or bored through the sewer line in what is known as a "cross bore." Cutting into a cross-bored natural gas line can result in a fire or explosion. Before clearing any blocked sewer lateral, take precautions to determine whether a cross bore exists and use the least invasive equipment possible.