

When NorthWestern Energy Meteorologist Matthew Sargent says he “watches the weather,” he’s not talking about checking an app on his phone. As a part of our Wildfire Situational Awareness team, Matt is always on the lookout for what he calls the “wildfire triple threat:” hot, dry, and windy conditions.

By predicting these patterns up to a week in advance, he gives field crews valuable time to get equipment ready and safeguard communities. He’s also leading an effort to grow NorthWestern’s network of weather stations to 100 sites by next year.

Before joining NorthWestern Energy, Matt spent 10 years in the U.S. Air Force, jumping out of airplanes, releasing weather balloons, and gathering critical environmental data in deployed locations around the world as a combat meteorologist.

“That was such an interesting and fulfilling job,” Matt said.

Originally from Butte, Matt developed a love for the natural sciences early on, which led him to the University of Alaska. There, he earned degrees in both meteorology and political science. At first, Matt envisioned running for office, which inspired him to pursue the military. But over time, he decided politics weren’t for him and focused fully on meteorology.

After a medical discharge from the military, caused by shrapnel injuries, Matt got a job in the tech industry. Then he traveled to Mexico to learn the art of making tequila before moving back to Butte where he put his new skills to use at a local distillery.

Eight years ago, Matt made his way to NorthWestern Energy, initially working in gas transmission until he was able to put his meteorology skills to work in his current position.

“I finally felt a sense of purpose,” Matt said of joining NorthWestern. “It was the first time since the military that I felt truly fulfilled.”

# Street Cart Chicken & Yellow Rice (AKA Halal Chicken)

Matt spent six months living in New York City, and Halal Chicken became his favorite meal. This is Matt’s simplified at home version that tastes just like the real thing.

## INGREDIENTS

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>CHICKEN</b>                           |                             |
| 4 pound chicken thighs, boneless         | 2 tablespoons dried oregano |
| 5 whole cloves                           | 3 cloves garlic             |
| 1 tablespoon cumin seeds                 | ¼ lemon, juiced             |
| 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper | 3 tablespoons mayonnaise    |
|  | 1 teaspoon salt             |

|                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>YELLOW RICE</b>             |                              |
| 1 cup basmati rice             | 1 tablespoon turmeric powder |
| 1 cup chicken broth (or water) | 1 tablespoon smoked paprika  |
| 2 tablespoons butter           | 2 bay leaves                 |
| ¼ cup onions, finely diced     | 1 teaspoon salt              |
| 1 tablespoon cumin seeds       |                              |

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>WHITE SAUCE</b>          |                           |
| 2 cups mayonnaise           | 1 teaspoon dried oregano  |
| 1 cup greek yogurt          | 1 teaspoon smoked paprika |
| 2 tablespoons white vinegar | salt to taste             |
| ¼ lemon, juiced             |                           |

## DIRECTIONS

1 Salt chicken thighs and set them aside. Crush the cloves and cumin in a mortar and pestle. Add black pepper, oregano, and garlic cloves into the mortar with the spices and crush into a rough paste. In a large mixing bowl, combine the lemon juice, mayo, and spice mixture. Add the chicken thighs and mix to thoroughly coat. Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours or cook right away.

2 Melt butter in a pot over medium heat. Add onion, cumin, turmeric, smoked paprika, and bay leaf. Bloom the aromatics until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the rice to the pan with the aromatics and mix. Lightly toast the rice and stir for about 2 minutes.

3 Add chicken broth, turn up the heat, and cover the pan to bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to the lowest setting. Let the rice gently simmer while covered for about 20 minutes. Uncover and taste the rice. Add salt as needed.

4 In a bowl, mix the mayo, yogurt, vinegar, lemon juice, black pepper, oregano, smoked paprika, and salt. Adjust seasoning as you see fit.

5 Place a pan over medium-high heat. Sear the chicken thighs on both sides until the internal temp reaches at least 165 F. Slice the chicken.

6 Serve a portion of chicken & rice on a plate. Add pita bread, thinly sliced lettuce, diced tomatoes or other fresh vegetables/herbs for garnish. Drizzle with white sauce.

## CONTACT US

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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

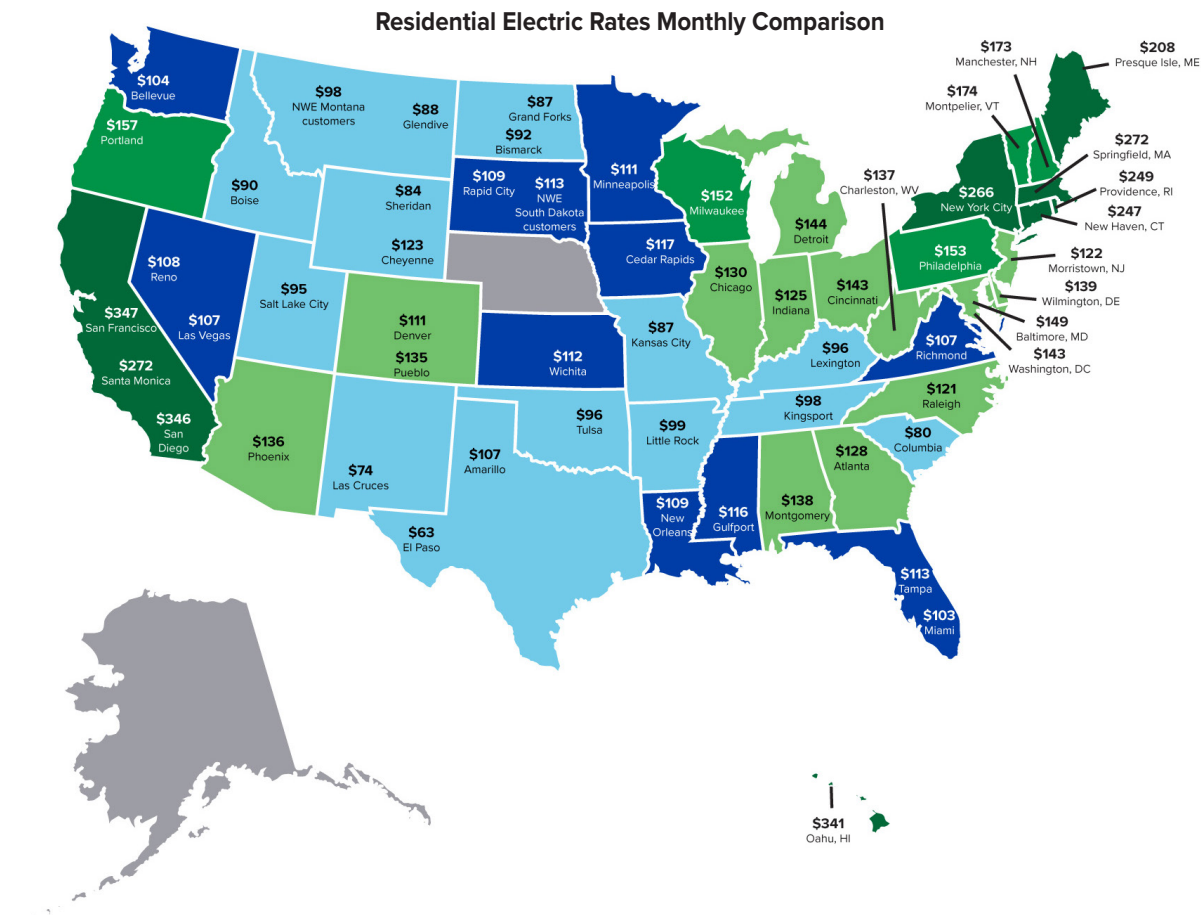
Customer Bill Insert  
South Dakota/Nebraska | September 2025

In this issue: Northwestern Energy Rate Comparison | Bill Payment Assistance Programs



Bright ideas to save  
Replace furnace filters

Dirty air filters make your furnace work harder. Replacing or cleaning your air filter once a month, or as recommended, can lower your furnace’s energy consumption by 15%.



**Source:** Edison Electric Institute Typical Bills and Average Rates Report, Jan. 1, 2025

## How do NorthWestern Energy's rates stack up?

NorthWestern Energy historically has had rates that are among the lowest in the nation. We work to keep costs as low as possible while meeting our commitment to ensure that your lights and heat come on when you need them.

Learn more about how to read your bill at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/ReadYourBill](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/ReadYourBill)

### Residential Electric Monthly Costs

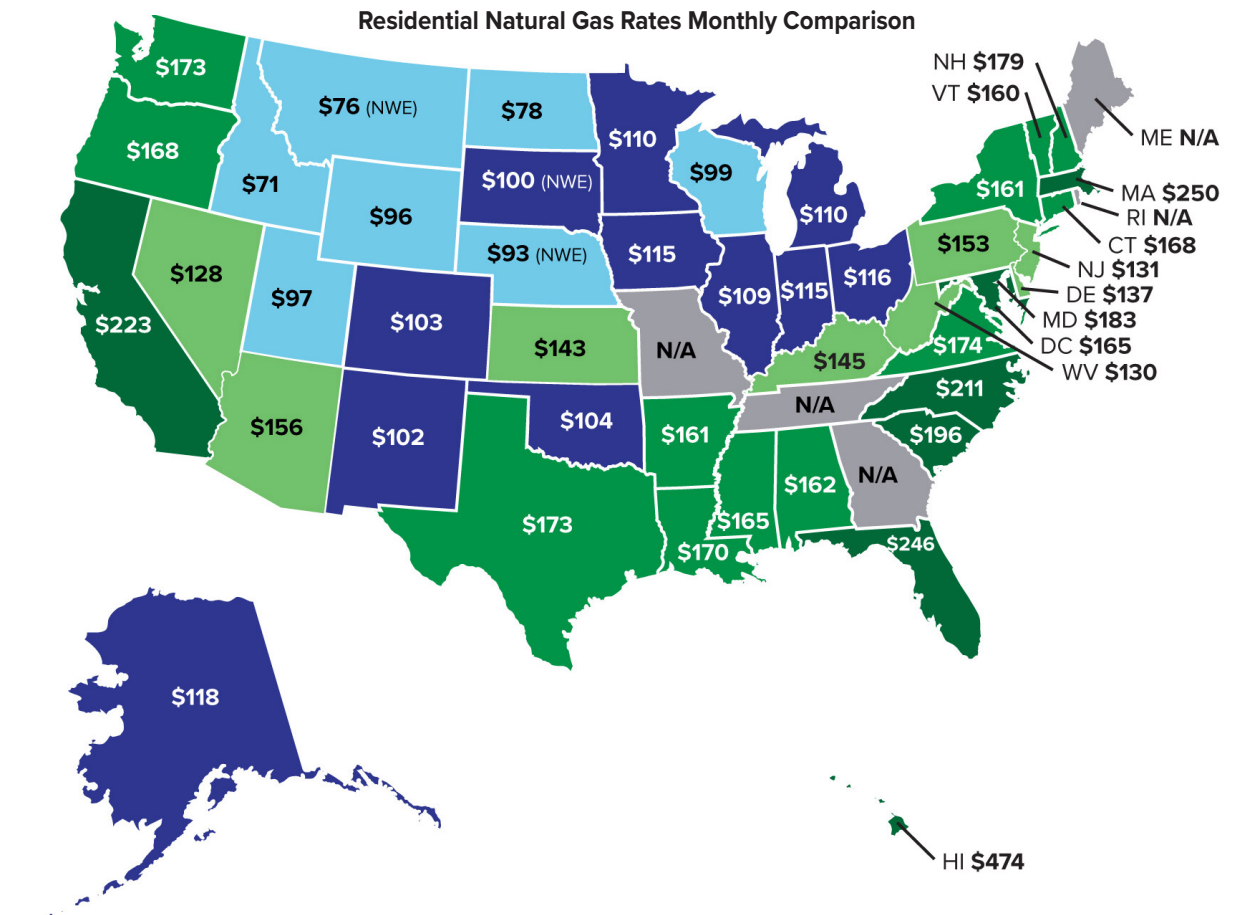
Our electric rates are well below the national average of **\$134** per month for a residential customer using 750 kWh per month.

- **\$113** per month for a NorthWestern Energy customer in South Dakota

### Residential Natural Gas Average Monthly State Costs

Our natural gas rates are well below the national average of **\$146** per month for a residential customer using 100 therms per month.

- **\$100** per month for a NorthWestern Energy customer in South Dakota
- **\$93** per month for a NorthWestern Energy customer in Nebraska



**Source:** [www.eia.doe.gov](https://www.eia.doe.gov). US Natural Gas Sector Report for average cost of gas sold in March 2025

## Help is available

Don't delay. Prepare now for the winter heating season. The sooner you sign up for assistance, the sooner you will receive bill assistance. NorthWestern Energy customers have access to many programs and resources to get help paying your bill.

- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP/ LIHEAP): LIEAP provides financial assistance to low-income customers.
  - South Dakota: To apply, contact the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Office of Energy Assistance at 800-233-8503 or visit [dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/energyassistance/](https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/energyassistance/).
  - Nebraska: To learn more, call 800-383-4278 or visit <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Energy-Assistance.aspx>

- Weatherization Assistance Program: Helps low-income households by making their homes more energy efficient.
  - South Dakota: To apply, visit [dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/energyassistance/](https://dss.sd.gov/economicassistance/energyassistance/) or contact the local community action program in your area.
  - Nebraska: To learn more, call 877-253-2603 or visit [dee.nebraska.gov/aid/nebraska-weatherization-assistance-program](https://dee.nebraska.gov/aid/nebraska-weatherization-assistance-program)
- The South Dakota Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) – Assistance for income-eligible households in a crisis. To learn more, contact the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Office of Energy Assistance at 800-233-8503.