



As NorthWestern Energy's Town Manager in Chester, Montana, a small town of about 800 just 40 miles south of the Canadian border, Jim Vinson shows his community dedication by helping to keep lights and heat on.

He also gives back in another major way. Jim coaches the Chester-Joplin-Inverness Hawks six-man high school football team. He recently led the team to a State Championship victory.

Jim has spent 30 years coaching football. In a small school such as CJJ, having a limited number of players presents its own challenges. Jim explained that his athletes are like "marathon runners," playing every snap of every game, which requires an incredible amount of endurance.

Beyond the field, Jim emphasizes the importance of community involvement, teaching his players to lend a hand wherever it's needed. He encourages the boys to be involved members of the community that raised them.

That sense of support goes both ways. "NorthWestern Energy has always been so supportive of my coaching, and it's been really helpful," said Jim, who has worked for NorthWestern for 40 years. "The town has also shown amazing support over the years."

That support was on full display after the championship win, when the team returned home to streets lined with cars around a mile long and glowing headlights, celebrating a moment the entire community shared.

"The players, the community, and the school are all one big family, and the victory belonged to all of us," Jim said.



## Jim's Campfire Dutch Oven Peach Cobbler

Jim loves to cook, and this is his favorite dessert recipe. "It is the easiest four-ingredient recipe, and it is a hit whenever it's made," Jim said. Best cooked in a Dutch oven on campfire coals, this cobbler can also be baked in the oven.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 29-oz can peaches in heavy syrup
- 1 box Betty Crocker yellow cake mix
- 1 stick of butter
- Cinnamon

### DIRECTIONS

- 1 Pour the peaches into the bottom of the Dutch oven.
- 2 Dump the cake mix on top of the peaches and level out the mix.
- 3 Cut the stick of butter into eight tablespoons and place them evenly on top of the cake mix.
- 4 Finish by sprinkling cinnamon to taste on top. Do not mix – leave the layers intact.
- 5 If cooking on a campfire, place the covered 10-inch Dutch oven directly on the coals and put some coals on the lid as well. Cook for about one hour.

- 6 Serve hot with a scoop of vanilla ice cream and enjoy!

Note: The cobbler can also be baked in a 350-degree oven for one hour or on a bed of barbecue briquettes (place some on top) for about an hour.

Jim has also made this with apple, cherry or blueberry pie filling. (Those cans are smaller, so use two cans.) "Honestly, peach is my favorite," Jim said.

## CONTACT US

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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. To request translated customer information, please contact us at the numbers listed above.

Estamos orgullosos de la diversidad en las comunidades a las que servimos. Para satisfacer mejor las necesidades de algunos de nuestros clientes, traducimos información importante del cliente a dos idiomas: español y karénico (Karen). Para solicitar información traducida del cliente, contáctenos a los números indicados arriba.

ပသးခုဒီးပင်ကမာလာဘဉ်ပသးလာ ပမာစာဘဉ်ပုၤကဗျာ်ဖိအါကလုာ်အါဉ် လာအအိဉ်လာ လီၤကဝီၤဖဲအံၤန့ၣ်လီၤ. ဒ်သီးပမာစာဘဉ်သုကအါထီၣ်အဂီၢ်, ပကွဲးလီၤလံာ်ကတိၤကျိၣ်ထံ တၢ်ဂ့ၢ်အရုၣ်ဒိၣ်တဖၣ်ဆူ (Spanish)စပဲနဲးအကျိၣ် ဒီး (Karen)ကညီၣ်ကျိၣ် န့ၣ်လီၤ. သုမ့ၢ်လီၤဘဉ်လံာ်လၢ ပုၤကွဲးကျိၣ်ထံ အံၤဝံၤဒီး, ဝံသးစုၤသုဆဲးကျိးပုၤသုဖဲ လီၤတဲခိၣ်ဂီၢ် ဒ်အအိဉ်ပျါလာတၢ်ဖိခိၣ် အသီးန့ၣ်လီၤ.

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# Energy Connections

Customer Bill Insert  
 South Dakota/Nebraska | March 2026

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Bright ideas to save

## Track your energy usage

You can now see your natural gas and electric usage by hour, day, week or month. Read more inside.

# Track energy usage

We are now offering new tools to help you understand and manage your energy use.

Our new detailed usage tool within My Energy Account allows you to:

- View natural gas and electric usage data.
- View energy usage by hour, day, week or month.
- Compare energy consumption to daily temperatures.
- Identify patterns and trends in your energy consumption.

Net metering customers will have additional tools that will allow them to see how much energy they export to the grid and how much they consume.

We also offer the option to download your data as a CSV or XML file.

To access your detailed usage information, log in to My Energy Account and select “Billing” and “View Detailed Usage.”

# Annual pipeline inspections underway

Every year, NorthWestern Energy does leak surveys on our natural gas system. This includes gas main lines, service lines and gas meters.

In coming months, you may see NorthWestern Energy crews working throughout neighborhoods using leak detection equipment. These handheld units can detect traces of natural gas, which allows us to find leaks and get them fixed right away.

The NorthWestern crews will need to access your property to inspect your natural gas meter. If they can't reach your meter due to a locked gate or an animal in your yard, they'll come to your door and ask for access. If they can't get a hold of someone in the house, they'll send someone back later, so we can be sure to get a full inspection of the natural gas system.



# Pipeline safety

In addition to being in your backyard, we are inspecting and monitoring the larger pipelines that deliver natural gas to your neighborhoods and communities.

## 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.

## Pipeline monitoring

As a pipeline operator, we monitor the status of our transmission pipelines seven days a week, 24 hours a day to ensure they are safe and secure. We use computers, alarms, meters, local employees and satellite technology to control and check our pipelines. The monitoring systems detect changes in pressure and flow and can activate warnings and safeguards if a leak is detected.

## HCA's and TIMP's

Federal pipeline safety regulations use the concept of High Consequence Areas, or HCAs, to identify specific locations and areas where an accidental release of natural gas could have the most significant adverse consequences. Once an HCA has been identified, we devote additional focus to ensure the integrity of pipelines in that area. We have in place a Transmission Integrity Management Program, or TIMP, that defines aggressive steps to mitigate the risks to people and property near HCAs.

## Pipeline purpose and reliability

Pipelines are the safest way to transport energy products, including natural gas. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) regulates pipelines, along with state partners. According to government and industry statistics, the most common cause of pipeline incidents is 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.

# Apply now for energy assistance

If you're struggling to stay on top of your energy bills, don't miss the deadline to apply for the energy assistance programs.

## South Dakota

For South Dakota customers, the deadline to apply for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is March 31. LIEAP provides financial assistance to low-income customers to help pay their eligible home heating bills.

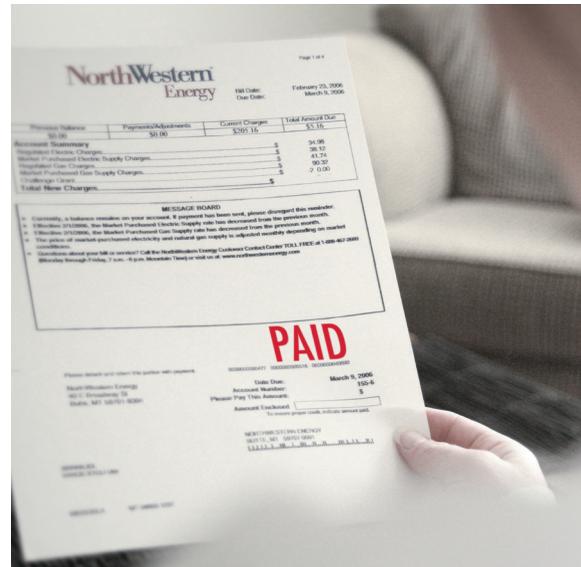
The Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) aids households with an energy crisis, such as a disconnection notice or an eviction notice for non-payment if heat is included in rent.

## Nebraska

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps low income households stay safe and healthy by providing financial assistance to offset the costs of heating and cooling. The deadline to apply is March 31.

Crisis Assistance is available year-round to help pay deposits and reconnect fees when a household has an unanticipated inability to pay home energy costs.

Learn more at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/help](http://NorthWesternEnergy.com/help).



# Excess gas flow valve

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.