



Stay warm while you cut your energy use

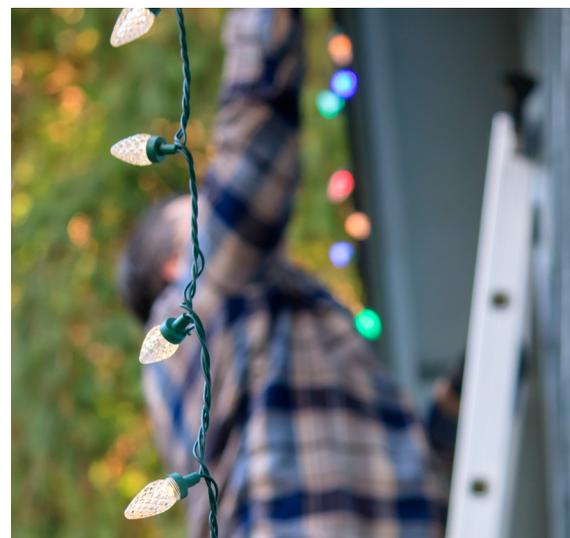
Three factors affect your utility bill – rates, weather and how you use energy. Due to natural gas supply and demand, NorthWestern Energy’s natural gas rates will be higher than last winter. While it’s unclear what this year’s winter weather will be like, here are some energy efficiency tips you can put to use during the heating season:

- Seal up air leaks: If you can see daylight peeking through around your door or window frame, then you have air leaks. Seal the leaks by using insulating foam, adding outlet gaskets under light switches and outlets on exterior walls, and installing weather stripping or door sweeps to eliminate drafts around exterior doors.
- Use your window treatments: Closing your curtains in the winter can reduce heat loss. Be sure to close curtains at night, but open the curtains on south-facing windows during the day, so the sun’s warmth can help heat your house.
- Replace your furnace filter: Replacing your furnace filter helps your furnace run as efficiently as possible. Depending on the type of filter you use, some need to be replaced monthly, while others can last three months or more.
- Utilize a programmable or smart thermostat: Install a programmable thermostat that automatically turns down the heat at night and when no one is home. Change your thermostat setting during the heating season to the lowest comfortable setting, which is 68°F for most people during the day and 55°F at night or when no one is home.
- Use your slow cooker: A slow cooker or electric pressure cooker can be more efficient than your stove or oven.
- Keep your damper closed: Unless you have a fire burning in your fireplace, keep your damper closed. An open damper allows heat to escape up your chimney.

Energy-saving gifts that keep on giving

Give the gift of energy savings with these products that can help your friends and family cut energy costs:

- Programmable or Smart thermostats: A great way to automatically adjust heating temperature to lower temperatures when no one is home or when people are sleeping and to higher temperatures by the time you wake up in the morning or get home in the evening is to install a programmable or smart thermostat. You can save energy and money if you don’t already diligently adjust the temperature. Smart thermostats connect to your Wi-Fi and allow you to control them remotely. Some even learn your patterns and adjust your heat accordingly.
- LED Lighting and Timers: Use LED holiday string lights and outdoor timers to efficiently display your festiveness! ENERGY STAR® LED lightbulbs also come in a variety of shapes/styles, brightness (lumens), and color temperature.
- ENERGY STAR Appliances and Electronics: Choose ENERGY STAR-certified products when shopping for clothes washers, dishwashers, air purifiers, and computers.
- Smart power strips: These power strips shut down power to appliances when they go into standby mode.
- Blankets and sweaters: These traditional gifts are great energy savers. A warm blanket or sweater allows loved ones to turn down their heat.
- A slow cooker or Instant Pot: These appliances can be more efficient than cooking with a stove or oven.



Be cautious around overhead power lines

Coming into contact with a power line can be deadly. That’s why it’s important to assume that all power lines, whether in the air or on the ground, are energized.

Strong winds, ice and heavy snow can lead to downed power lines. If you see a downed or damaged power line, keep your distance and call 911 immediately. Never touch a power line or any object, including trees, that is in contact with a line. Keep people, equipment and objects at least 30 feet away from down or low-hanging power lines.

When putting up outdoor holiday decorations, watch for overhead power lines. Contact with power lines can result in serious injury or even death. Keep yourself, your ladder and any other equipment more than 10 feet from overhead power lines.

Give the Gift of Energy



NorthWestern Energy Gift of Energy gift certificates are a great way to help a family member, friend, or colleague who may be struggling to pay their energy bill. For more information, visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/giftofenergy.



Check your natural gas meter and vents

Your natural gas meter’s regulator vent must always be clear so the flow of natural gas into the home can be regulated properly. If this vent becomes plugged, the pressure of gas being pumped into the home could either increase or decrease to a dangerous level, resulting in a fire or explosion. Any airflow blockage can lead to big problems and even carbon monoxide poisoning.

Also be sure all appliance exhaust vents are clear from blowing and drifting snow – especially after a winter storm. Blocked appliance vents could result in a loss of heat or buildup of deadly carbon monoxide in the structure.

After major snow storms, take a walk around your property and ensure all vents are clear of snow or ice and that there is a path to your gas and electric meter.



Plow with caution

Be careful while plowing to steer clear of utility equipment. Be sure to avoid meters and transformers (the large green boxes often located near walkways). Even minor contact with the transformer’s metal enclosure could cause damage to the conductors inside. If you hit the equipment, please report it right away.