





## Update on our Montana Meter Upgrade Project

In 2021, we began to install approximately 590,000 new advanced electric meters and gas modules in Montana, part of a technology upgrade project that will enable two-way meter communication between NorthWestern Energy and the advanced meters on customers' homes and businesses.

As of the end of March, we had installed 132,675 new meters in the state, mainly in the Missoula and Butte areas. In June, we will begin installing meters in the Bozeman area, with work set to begin in and around Billings this fall.

Thanks to the two-way communication of our advanced meters, the new meters will alert us of problems long before we would otherwise be aware of them and allow us to fix problems before they cause outages.

We've already seen successes in our South Dakota service territory, where we completed an advanced meter upgrade project in 2021. There have been multiple examples of meters alerting us of issues, such as low or high voltages, allowing us to fix those problems before

they caused outages.

When there is an outage, the new meters will alert us, which means our crews can respond more quickly and restore service faster. Currently, we may not be aware of an outage until a customer reports it.

The advanced meters and modules communicate energy usage information three times daily. That information is securely sent remotely to NorthWestern Energy's data center for operations, billing and customer service. This means we can better assist our customers with their individual energy needs and respond to customer inquiries.

The energy grid is evolving, and this technology upgrade opens the door for innovations communities are asking for today. These new meters will be the backbone of future services, such as remote streetlight control, time-of-use pricing, prepaid metering and more. NorthWestern Energy can work with communities to offer services that are not possible with the current metering technology.

## When will meters be installed in my area?

Here is a list of approximate dates for the Montana meter upgrade project by division area:

- Missoula Area – in progress, ending August 2022
- Butte Area – in progress, ending May 2022
- Bozeman Area – June 2022 – December 2023
- Billings Area – October 2022 – October 2023
- Havre Area – March 2023 – September 2023
- Helena Area – June 2023 – May 2024
- Great Falls Area – Sept 2023 – June 2024
- Lewistown Area – January 2024 – June 2024

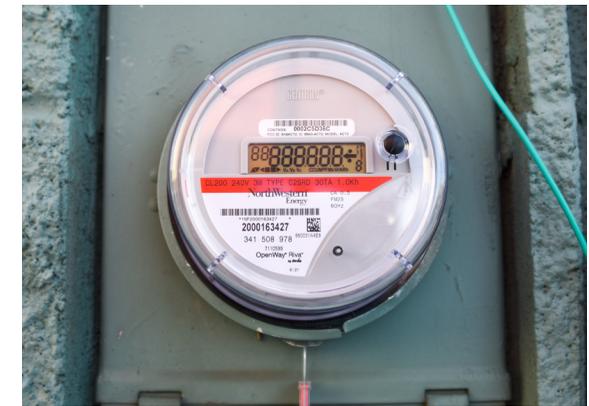


## What happens when my meter is changed?

Six to eight weeks before your meter is changed, you'll receive a communication in the mail from NorthWestern Energy explaining the meter change out process. You'll receive a follow-up postcard two or three weeks before crews are scheduled to be in your neighborhood.

You do not need to be home when your meter is changed. A technician will knock on your door to alert you they are changing your meter. There will be a short interruption of electric service during the installation of the new electric meter. There will be no interruption of gas service during the installation of the new gas module.

A door hanger will let you know the upgrade was successful. If the technician can't access the meter, a door hanger will be left with instructions to call to make an appointment.



## What if I don't want an advanced meter?

NorthWestern Energy is currently bypassing customers who do not want an advanced meter. NorthWestern Energy Montana customers have the right to opt-out of the use of advanced metering devices and may be required to pay a tariff charge, if a tariff is approved by the Montana Public Service Commission. However, at this time, an opt-out-tariff charge has not been considered by the Montana PSC.

For more information, call NorthWestern Energy at 1-800-486-4280.

Montana law allows customers to opt-out of the use of advanced metering devices according to terms and conditions set by the Montana Public Service Commission. No utility company can require the use of an advance metering device. If you have questions about your opt-out rights, please contact the Montana Public Service Commission at 1-800-646-6150.

### Learn more about our meter project

- Online: [NorthWesternEnergy.com/meters](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/meters)
- In Bright magazine: [NorthWesternEnergy.com/Bright](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/Bright)
- Watch a video: <https://youtu.be/NVHeVIDrDT8>



Scan this QR code with your phone's camera to watch a video about our meter upgrade project