





## Space heater tips

As the heating season continues, you may see ads suggesting space heaters can reduce your heating costs. However, those claims deserve a closer look.

Small space heaters can be less expensive to use if you want to heat only one portion of your residence while keeping the rest of the home at a cooler temperature. However, if you're attempting to heat a larger area with an electric space heater rather than using your normal heating unit, consider the following: on average, it usually costs twice as much to heat the same space to the same temperature using electricity compared to natural gas, so using electric space heaters to reduce heating costs may not be the best approach.

Space heaters are a good way to supplement heating in one room, if it doesn't have adequate heat or where someone needs more heat than other family members.

When choosing a space heater, look for units where hot surfaces are out of reach. Choose units with thermostats and auto tip-over switches that shut off automatically.

For safety, follow these tips when using a space heater:

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the safe and efficient use of your heater.
- Keep the heater away from curtains, bedspreads or anything that could catch fire.
- Keep electric space heaters away from bathtubs, showers and sinks.
- Fix or replace frayed or exposed wiring on electric heaters.
- Use only heavy-duty extension cords rated for the heater's amperage.

## A real-life reminder to check furnace vents

Over the past couple years, many towns in our service area have experienced record-breaking winters. During one particularly harsh one, when more than 90 inches of snow fell in Havre, a customer shared with us an important safety reminder that is still relevant today.

After a night of particularly heavy snow, Havre customer Josh M. checked all of his outdoor vents. The drifts outside his house were more than 4 feet high, and his furnace exhaust vent was buried under the snow. Beneath that snow, he found a chunk of ice blocking more than half of the air flow.

"The picture I've included is of the ice I removed from my furnace exhaust," Josh wrote. "If I had not inspected the area, I'm certain CO would have become a problem, and one that is completely preventable."

"It's important that we make home our safe place to be, and, as customers, we need to ensure that we are proactive for the safety of our families," he continued. "Inspecting vents, meters, and clearing them takes just a few minutes to ensure the safe operation of heating appliances. Don't wait until something happens to take action. Natural gas and electrical safety is something we all should be proactive about, not reactive. Waiting for a problem to occur can cost people their health, or even life, therefore being reactive should never be an option."



## Plow with caution

Utility equipment may be located close to the areas where snow removal is happening. We encourage you to stay diligent and be sure to keep this equipment visible and clear of snow pile up. In addition, be sure to avoid meters and control panels (the large green electric boxes often located near walkways) while plowing. If you hit the equipment, be sure to report it right away. Even a minor nick could lead to damage, and we will send our crews to assess. Being diligent during snow removal can avoid unnecessary and costly repairs.



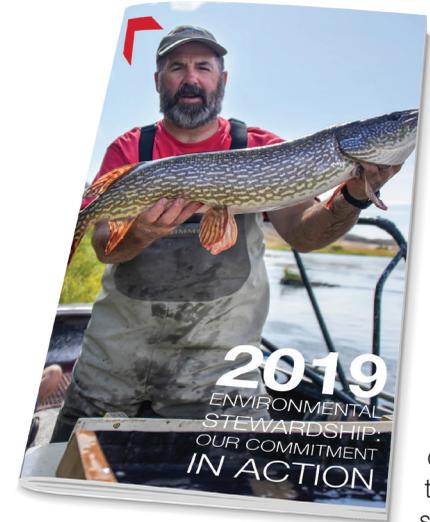
## Get help to become tobacco free in 2020

*We are partnering with the Montana Department of Health and Human Services and Public Health in the 406 to bring you important health information throughout the year.*

Quitting tobacco is hard, but you can do it! Need extra help for a successful quit? Call the Montana Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-784-8669 for free coaching and 8 weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy. Coaches can help you quit all forms of tobacco, including e-cigarettes. Make 2020 the start of your tobacco-free life.



## Check out our 2019 Environmental Report



At NorthWestern Energy, we understand that almost everything we do to produce and deliver energy to our customers impacts the environment. Our 2019 Environmental Stewardship Report outlines our commitment to being good stewards of the environment.

Read the complete report at:  
[northwesternenergy.com/environment](http://northwesternenergy.com/environment)

Some highlights from the 2019 Environmental Stewardship Report include:

- NorthWestern Energy has made a commitment to reduce the carbon intensity of our electric energy portfolio for Montana by 90% by 2045.
- In 2019, NorthWestern Energy provided \$1.06 million to support 33 fisheries, wildlife and habitat improvement projects along the 550-mile Madison-Missouri River corridor.
- NorthWestern Energy biologists are working to help pallid sturgeon recovery in the Upper Missouri, Marias and Teton rivers.
- A 24-inch female bull trout climbed the Thompson Falls Fish Ladder in June 2019. This was the first bull trout to use the ladder since 2017.
- As NorthWestern rebuilds aging powerlines, the Environmental Team works with engineers to minimize impacts to the environment.