



Energy emergency

In mid-February, we asked our South Dakota Customers to conserve energy to mitigate the risk of widespread and long-lasting outages during the extreme cold that gripped the entire Midwest from Canada to Texas. Energy reserves were constrained at the time and there was a risk that there would not be enough supply to meet demand. In the end, we did have some rolling blackouts in South Dakota, mandated by the Southwest Power Pool, which manages the energy grid in South Dakota and much of the Midwest. We greatly appreciate all of our customers who helped by reducing their energy use.

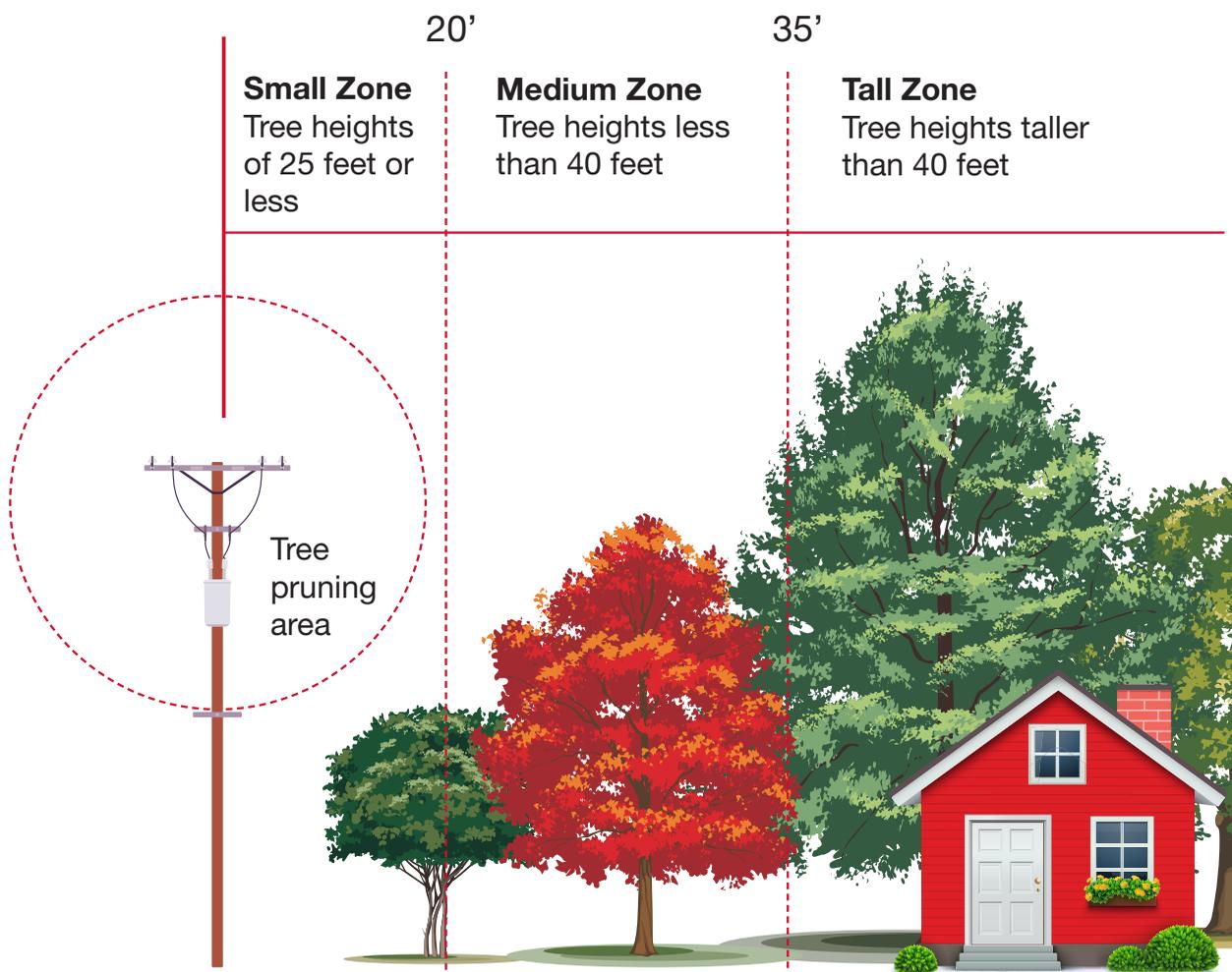
This winter storm severely impacted our country's oil and natural gas production and distribution. At the same time, extremely cold temperatures across the Midwest increased the demand for natural gas dramatically, forcing many utilities to buy additional supply to meet the needs of customers who rely on natural gas.

We know many of you are concerned about your energy bills. NorthWestern Energy has worked with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission on a plan to address the impact of higher natural gas prices on customers' bills. The increase in gas prices will be collected over the next 12 months. This increase will be reflected within the Purchase Gas Commodity (PGC) beginning with customers' March bills. The PGC is found on monthly statements under the Natural Gas Services portion of the bill. NorthWestern Energy's rate to deliver natural gas to customers is unchanged.

We are currently working with the Nebraska Public Service Commission to determine the bill impact for our Nebraska customers. We will share details as they become available in upcoming communications.

For more information, please visit NorthWesternEnergy.com/SupportSD. We encourage anyone concerned about their ability to pay a higher energy bill to contact NorthWestern Energy's customer service department.

Plan before you plant



Planting the right tree in the right place

Overhead power lines - Before you plant a tree, know where overhead power lines are located and plant at least 20 feet away. Trees that grow taller than 40 feet should be planted more than 35 feet away.

Transformers - If your yard has a ground-level transformer (a large, green, metal box), be sure to leave room for our crews to access the transformer. Plant your shrubs at least 10 feet away from the front, and 2 feet away from the sides and back.

Stay safe around power lines - You should always keep people, equipment and objects at least 10 feet away from power lines. If you're using a ladder to trim a tree, be sure you're keeping yourself and your ladder away from overhead lines. Never attempt to remove a fallen tree or branch from a power line. You could be seriously injured or killed. If a tree or branch does come in contact with a power line, keep yourself and others away from the tree and call 911.



Sign up for Budget Billing

Budget Billing takes the mystery out of what your monthly energy payment will be. With Budget Billing, your NorthWestern Energy bill is the same every month. The amount is calculated using your average annual bill amount based on your past 12 months of usage and current rates.

Use our online Budget Billing Payment Calculator to get an estimate of what your monthly budget bill would be – NorthWesternEnergy.com/BudgetBilling.

Sign up online or give us a call at 800-245-6977.

*We'll review your account at least twice a year and your payment amount may fluctuate based on your usage patterns and/or rates currently in effect.



Call before you dig

Before planting a tree, call 811 or visit call811.com to have underground utilities located. This service is free and calling before you dig is required by law. Call at least two full business days before you start any digging project. Even

on your property and in your yard, damages caused by hitting an underground utility can be expensive and even deadly. Once utilities are marked, be sure to hand excavate within 18 inches on each side of markings.

If you ever hit a gas line, call 911 immediately. Even minor damage to a pipeline can result in future leaks.



Know what's below.
Tap, Click, or Call
811 Before you dig.