



At a glance Montana

An economic development fact sheet // June 2015

NorthWestern
Energy

 **Community
Works**

Introduction

NorthWestern Energy is a major, regional provider of electricity, natural gas and related services to approximately 692,600 customers in Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska. Our electric system has more than 27,800 miles of transmission and distribution lines and associated facilities serving 297 communities and surrounding rural areas in Montana, eastern South Dakota and Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Our natural gas system includes approximately 9,605 miles of transmission and distribution pipelines and storage facilities serving 168 communities and surrounding rural areas in Montana, South Dakota and central Nebraska. NorthWestern Energy has approximately 1,604 full-time employees.

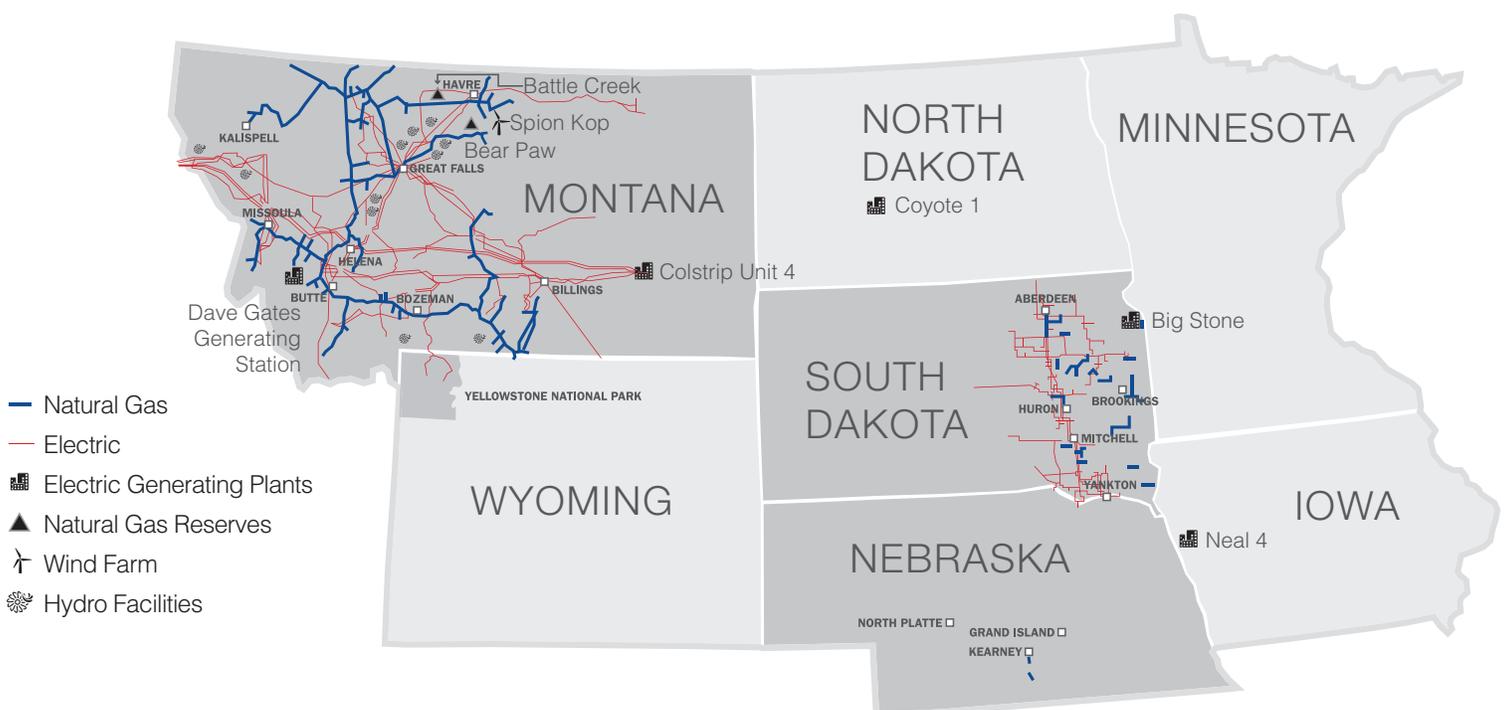
The Montana energy operations, which are based in Butte, provide regulated electric and natural gas transmission and distribution services to approximately 353,600 electric customers and 188,400 natural gas (and propane in limited areas) customers in the western two-thirds of Montana.

NorthWestern Energy is also an energy supplier in Montana, meaning that it provides electric and natural gas supply to customers in the state who do not select a competitive supplier. NorthWestern Energy is dedicated to providing safe, reliable and cost-effective energy and services to all of its residential, commercial and industrial customers.

Programs & Services

Listed below is a summary of NorthWestern's programs and services.

- Retail electric and natural gas distribution, transmission and supply services.
- Wholesale electric and natural gas transmission services.
- Energy efficiency programs, lighting rebates, commercial energy appraisals, low-income energy assistance and renewable activities through participation in the Universal System Benefits and E+ programs.
- Area lighting services.
- Extended customer services including online account access, pilot lighting and appliance inspection programs.
- Business retention, business expansion and creation through Economic Development resources.



System facts

MONTANA OPERATIONS¹

Montana Electric and Gas Operations Area	107,600 square miles (73% of Montana's land area) (2013 Census Population of 887,100)				
Number of Employees	1,273 NorthWestern Energy Employees in Montana				
Number of Customers and Types¹	Total	Residential	Commercial²	Industrial	Other³
Electric	353,779	285,218	65,217	76	4,268
Natural Gas	188,448	165,168	22,865	264	151
Propane (Townsend, MT)	579	509	70	----	----
Major Montana Cities Served:	Cities	Electric Service		Natural Gas Services	
NorthWestern Energy serves electricity to 187 communities in Montana, provides electricity to Yellowstone Park, and maintains a presence in numerous small towns. NorthWestern Energy serves natural gas to 105 communities. Please consult NorthWestern Energy to determine if we serve your location.	Billings	YES		NO ³	
	Bozeman	YES		YES	
	Butte	YES		YES	
	Great Falls	YES		NO ³	
	Havre	YES		YES	
	Helena	YES		YES	
	Kalispell	NO		YES	
	Lewistown	YES		YES	
	Missoula	YES		YES	
Electric and Natural Gas Retail Rates: Pricing for electric and natural gas retail services are established by tariffs filed with and approved by the Montana Public Service Commission. Because Montana has deregulated natural gas and electric services, customer rates are "unbundled" and electric or natural gas supply is shown separately from delivery and transmission charges. The supply portion of the bill for both natural gas and electric is subject to monthly tracker fuel cost adjustments. NorthWestern Energy's tariff rates for both electric and natural gas and a tool to compare NorthWestern Energy rates with those of other U.S. utilities is available at www.northwesternenergy.com .					

ELECTRIC OPERATIONS

Service Area Size	97,540 square miles (two-thirds of Montana)
Peak & Average Load	The total control area peak demand was approximately 1,740 megawatts (MWs) , with approximately 1,241 MWs per hour for the year on average, and delivered more than 10.9 million MW hours during year ended December 31, 2014.
Generation & Supply	<p>Annual retail electric supply load requirements average approximately 750 MWs, with a peak load of approximately 1,200 MWs, and are supplied by contracted and owned resources and market purchases with multiple counterparties.</p> <p>OWNED RESOURCES: In Montana, NorthWestern Energy owns 222 MWs of electric generation from a share in a coal-fired generator (Colstrip 4), 150 MWs of electric generation from a natural gas fired regulating reserve plant (The Dave Gates Generating Station), 40 MWs from Spion Kop Wind facility, and 633 MWs of generating capacity resulting from our 2014 purchase of hydroelectric generating facilities in Montana.</p> <p>PURCHASED RESOURCES: We also purchase power under QF contracts, which provide a total of 174 MWs of contracted capacity, including 87 MWs of capacity from waste petroleum coke and waste coal and 87 MWs of capacity from hydro and wind resources located in Montana. We have several other long and medium-term power purchase agreements including contracts for 135 MWs of renewable wind generation and 21 MWs of seasonal base-load hydro supply.</p>
Electric Distribution & Transmission	17,600 miles distribution and 6,700 miles transmission (transmission voltage from 50,000 to 500,000 volts) and 393 substations.
Transmission Interconnections	Transmission system has connections to five major transmission systems located in the Western Electricity Coordinating Council area, as well as one interconnection to a system that connects with the Mid-Continent Area Power Pool region.
Transmission Wholesale Reservations	Transmission reservations over the Montana system occur on NorthWestern Energy's Open Access Same-Time Information System online at www.nwoasis.org/OASIS/NWMT .
Transmission Wholesale Rates	Transmission services for retail access are provided under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Electric Open Access Transmission Tariff, available online at www.northwesternenergy.com .

NATURAL GAS OPERATIONS

Service Area Size	70,500 square miles (one-half of Montana)
Peak and Average Load	For year-end 2014, transported natural gas volumes of approximately 43 Bcf and the peak capacity was approximately 335,000 dekatherms per day.
Natural Gas Distribution, Transmission & Storage	5,000 miles underground distribution pipeline, 2,000 miles transmission pipelines, 130 city gate stations and 3 storage facilities
Natural Gas Production & Reserves	Since 2010, NWE has acquired gas production and gathering system assets in Montana, estimated to provide 29 percent of current annual natural gas load.
System Interconnections	Four major, non-affiliated transmission systems connect to NorthWestern Energy: Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline, NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd, Colorado Interstate Gas, and Spur Energy.
On-System Transportation	End-use customers with annual consumption of 5,000 dekatherms or greater can contract for on-system transportation services. On-system services include firm and interruptible transmission and distribution transportation and firm storage service. Regulated by the Montana Public Service Commission.
Off-System Transportation	Available to shippers to transport gas across the system for delivery to the interconnection pipelines. Services include off-peak transmission, interruptible transmission and interruptible storage. Regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.
Propane Centralized System	Centralized propane systems serve 579 customers in Townsend.

¹ Customer Counts are rounded numbers as of December 31, 2014. ²Customer counts for "Propane" commercial are regulated propane customers.

³ Electric 'Other' customer category includes electric lighting, irrigation and interdepartmental customers. Natural gas 'other' includes governmental and interdepartmental customers. ⁴ In Billings and Great Falls, there is some limited natural gas service in surrounding communities; check for availability.

Rates

RELIABLE SUPPLY

NorthWestern Energy relies on an electric supply portfolio to provide a reliable supply and reasonable prices for its electric supply customers. In 2014, NorthWestern Energy completed the purchase of 11 hydroelectric generating facilities for \$904 million in Montana. The addition of hydroelectric generation is intended to better position the utility to control the costs of electric supply to customers by providing long-term supply portfolio diversity, reduce risks associated with variable fuel prices/market volatility, and reduce reliance on third party power/spot market purchases. In 2015, 80 percent of the utility's retail supply will be met by utility-owned generation, and more than half of the supply sources are from clean resources – water and wind. For natural gas customers, the utility relies on a portfolio of utility owned natural gas assets and purchased gas from independent suppliers.

NorthWestern Energy provides reliable electric services that meet all of the power factor tolerances as defined by the Montana Public Service Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Electric services to customers generally involve only one point of delivery and power supply source. Customers with special needs for redundant power sources will typically be responsible for additional costs related to redundant power delivery. If a project has special needs for redundant power sources, the developers must contact and coordinate with the utility early in the project development process.

SUPPLY CHOICE

Montana initially passed laws enabling electric and gas supply choice in 1997 allowing consumers to purchase electric or natural gas supply from competitive markets. In 2007, Montana passed new laws curtailing the ability for consumers under 5 MW peak demand to purchase electricity from alternative suppliers. This law requires consumers under 5 MW peak demand to permanently remain with the utility for their electric supply, but consumers under the 5 MW threshold who already received electricity from alternate suppliers were allowed by law to continue to receive supply from a third party. New consumers greater than 5 MW should contact the NorthWestern Energy Economic Development contacts listed in this document for guidance on electric supply options and impacts of the 2007 laws. NorthWestern Energy transportation and delivery costs remain regulated by the Montana Public Service Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

NorthWestern Energy customers in Montana have long participated in energy efficiency, low-income energy assistance and renewable activities through participation in the Universal System Benefits and E+ programs. Program details are available online on our Web site.

E+ services include commercial energy appraisals, lighting rebates and funding for energy conservation and load management projects in new and retrofit applications for residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, agricultural and multi-family facilities.

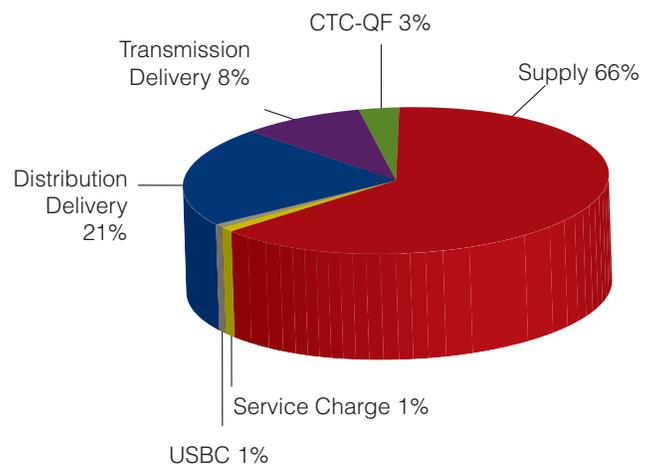
Rates

The rates for NorthWestern Energy's electric and natural gas retail services are established by tariffs filed with and approved by the Montana Public Service Commission. The tariffs establish a range of service classifications for both electric and natural gas customers based on customer size and other circumstances. For customers who are no longer under the bundled Montana Public Service Commission tariffs, rates for transmission services are provided under a tariff filed with and approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Because Montana has deregulated natural gas and electric services, customer rates are "unbundled" and electric or natural gas supply components are separate from delivery charges. Rates for both electric and natural gas are available online at northwesternenergy.com.

The chart below shows the various billing components for a NorthWestern Energy commercial customer with a monthly usage of 14,000 kWh and 40 kW demand.

January 2015 Monthly Electric Bill
Components Commercial Customer
Using 14,000 kWh & 40 kW



Go to www.northwesternenergy.com for current electric and natural gas rates for residential and commercial customers.

Rates

NORTHWESTERN ENERGY'S ELECTRIC COSTS BY SIZE AND CUSTOMER TYPE¹

	Residential	Commercial			Industrial
		GS1 Secondary Non Demand	GS1 Secondary Demand	GS1 Primary Demand	GS2 Substation Demand
Monthly kWh	750	1,500	14,000	180,000	650,000
Peak Monthly kW Demand	N/A	N/A	40	500	1,000
TOTAL ELECTRIC COSTS (supply, distribution, transmission & other charges)					
Annual Electric Cost	\$ 1,039	\$ 2,256	\$ 18,372	\$ 220,728	\$ 645,372
Average Cost per kWh for Supply & Delivery	\$ 0.1154	\$ 0.1253	\$ 0.1094	\$ 0.1022	\$ 0.0827
Annual Monthly Cost	\$ 87	\$ 188	\$ 1,531	\$ 18,394	\$ 53,781
NORTHWESTERN SUPPLY & SUPPLY RELATED COSTS²					
Supply Portion of Annual Bill	\$ 684	\$ 1,330	\$ 12,773	\$ 155,652	\$ 571,818
Supply Portion of Monthly Bill	\$ 57	\$ 111	\$ 1,064	\$ 12,971	\$ 47,652
Supply Cost as % of Total	66%	59%	70%	71%	89%
Supply Cost per kWh	\$ 0.0760	\$ 0.0739	\$ 0.0760	\$ 0.0721	\$ 0.0733

¹Rates effective January 1, 2015. ²Supply costs include supply, deferred supply and CTC-QF.

REGIONAL UTILITIES MONTHLY "BUNDLED" ELECTRIC BILLS - JANUARY 1, 2015¹

State	Utility Company	Residential	Commercial			Industrial
		750 kWh	1,500 kWh	14,000 kWh & 40 kW	180,000 kWh & 500 kW	650,000 kWh & 1,000 kW
ARIZONA	APS (Arizona Public Service Company)	\$94	\$249	\$1,689	\$16,596	\$43,601
	Tucson Electric Power Company	\$82	\$178	\$1,622	\$17,388	\$48,481
CALIFORNIA	Pacific Gas & Electric Company	\$165	\$255	\$2,078	\$24,011	\$71,207
	PacifiCorp	\$122	\$252	\$2,143	\$20,881	\$67,066
	San Diego Gas & Electric Company	\$203	\$325	\$2,653	\$31,814	\$89,453
	Southern California Edison	\$169	\$246	\$1,885	\$22,633	\$63,704
COLORADO	Black Hills (formerly Aquila and UtiliCorp)	\$120	\$377	\$1,709	\$23,987	\$61,924
	Xcel Energy	\$81	\$147	\$1,333	\$16,327	\$41,410
IDAHO	Avista Corp.	\$69	\$161	\$1,283	\$14,488	\$48,198
	Idaho Power Company	\$73	\$176	\$932	\$11,802	\$35,503
	PacifiCorp	\$69	\$100	\$1,099	\$13,516	\$38,334
MONTANA	Montana-Dakota Utilities Company	\$63	\$97	\$1,026	\$12,365	\$37,139
	NorthWestern Energy	\$87	\$188	\$1,531	\$18,394	\$53,781
NEVADA	NV Energy (formerly Nevada Power Company)	\$106	\$147	\$1,228	\$13,505	\$44,322
	NV Energy (formerly Sierra Pacific Power Company)	\$93	\$168	\$1,073	\$11,803	\$46,370
NEW MEXICO	El Paso Electric Company	\$84	\$109	\$1,477	\$17,466	\$45,623
	Public Service of New Mexico	\$97	\$210	\$1,811	\$18,202	\$53,764
	Southwestern Public Service Company	\$81	\$135	\$1,187	\$14,787	\$38,141
NORTH DAKOTA	Montana-Dakota Utilities Company	\$74	\$132	\$1,136	\$13,955	\$43,629
	Otter Tail Power Company	\$73	\$106	\$1,179	\$15,001	\$42,104
OREGON	Idaho Power Company	\$84	\$147	\$1,096	\$13,797	\$40,042
	PacifiCorp	\$86	\$177	\$1,326	\$15,382	\$42,535
	Portland General Electric Company	\$90	\$177	\$1,312	\$14,995	\$47,565
SOUTH DAKOTA	Black Hills Power	\$113	\$183	\$970	\$19,761	\$58,780
	Mid-American Energy	\$64	\$155	\$849	\$9,004	\$24,331
	Montana-Dakota Utilities Company	\$78	\$145	\$1,125	\$11,927	\$38,812
	NorthWestern Energy	\$78	\$167	\$1,350	\$13,152	\$37,538
	Otter Tail Power Company	\$75	\$112	\$1,161	\$14,773	\$38,123
UTAH	Rocky Mountain Power (PacifiCorp)	\$86	\$194	\$1,391	\$16,860	\$46,950
WASHINGTON	Avista Corp.	\$66	\$188	\$1,444	\$15,928	\$52,706
	PacifiCorp	\$59	\$154	\$1,148	\$13,188	\$39,851
	Puget Sound Energy	\$69	\$153	\$1,361	\$17,033	\$49,066
WYOMING	Black Hills Power	\$101	\$183	\$1,692	\$20,720	\$61,910
	Black Hills Power (Cheyenne Light, Fuel & Power)	\$115	\$227	\$1,924	\$21,071	\$58,278
	Montana-Dakota Utilities Company	\$77	\$104	\$1,113	\$12,191	\$34,992
NORTHWESTERN ENERGY RAKING FOR UTILITIES SHOWN		22 of 35	26 of 35	25 of 35	27 of 35	27 of 35

¹Source: Edison Electric Institute *Typical Bills and Average Rates Report* Winter 2015 (January) Monthly "bundled" costs for supply & delivery. NorthWestern Energy Rates are subject to a monthly supply change adjustment. ²Source: Nebraska Public Power District (state owned utility)

Rates

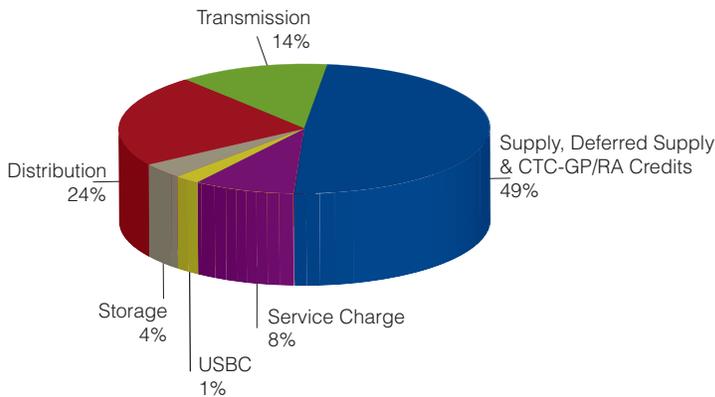
Natural Gas Rates

Customers are billed for supply, transmission, distribution, storage, Universal Systems Benefits (USB) charges, competitive transition charges and a distribution service charge. NorthWestern Energy natural gas rates are adjusted annually, but the supply portion of the bill is subject to monthly fuel cost adjustments. Current natural gas tariffs and natural gas service rules are available online at www.northwesternenergy.com.

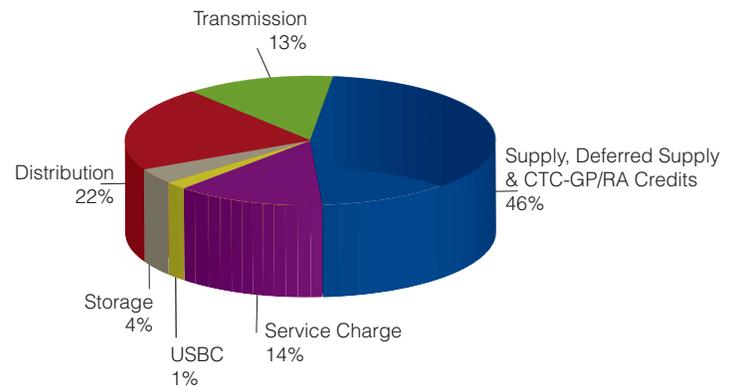
The charts below show the major pieces of an unbundled gas bill for a NorthWestern Energy small commercial natural gas customer using 200 therms a month and a residential customer using 100 therms a month.

Note: Usage varies between winter and summer months, depending upon the heating and water heating needs.

Residential Customer January 2015 Monthly Natural Gas Bill Components Using 100 Therms Per Month



Commercial Customer January 2015 Monthly Natural Gas Bill Components Using 200 Therms Per Month



JANUARY 2015 AVERAGE PRICE OF NATURAL GAS PER THERM SOLD BY UTILITIES¹

State	Residential	Commercial
Arizona	\$1.45	\$1.08
California	\$1.17	\$0.89
Colorado	\$0.79	\$0.77
Idaho	\$0.87	\$0.77
Montana	\$0.83	\$0.84
Montana - NorthWestern Energy	\$0.85	\$0.85
Nebraska	\$0.84	\$0.78
Nevada	\$1.04	\$0.86
New Mexico	\$0.80	\$0.67
North Dakota	\$0.79	\$0.74
Oregon	\$1.17	\$0.99
South Dakota	\$0.77	\$0.65
Utah	\$0.94	\$0.82
Washington	\$1.07	\$0.95
Wyoming	\$0.85	NA
AVERAGE FOR REGION	\$0.96	\$0.83
TOTAL AVERAGE U.S.	\$0.95	\$0.82
Montana - NorthWestern Energy Ranking (compared to states listed above)	7 of 15	9 of 14

¹Source: www.eia.doe.gov. - US Natural Gas Sector Report for average cost of gas sold in January 1, 2015. ²Average for State Region is average for the 14 states listed (excludes NorthWestern Energy)

New Construction

Guidelines

The following guidelines are a general overview of the requirements for a new electric or natural gas service. NorthWestern Energy's New Service Guide offers a complete guide to new construction requirements and can be downloaded at www.northwesternenergy.com.

Because each construction project is different, NorthWestern Energy should be contacted early in the project to determine construction requirements, costs and timeframes. To determine utility construction costs, a commercial customer will be asked to provide:

- **Load information, in writing, including the voltage requested, service amperage and expected load.**
- **Site plan that indicates service entrance location, existing easements and other utility locations.**

The Montana Public Service Commission rules for electric and natural gas line extensions, customer installation, utility installation and metering can be found online under the Electric and Natural Gas Service Rules section located at www.northwesternenergy.com.

Electric Service Construction Charges

Upon application for electric service, the Utility shall make an extension of the primary and/or secondary line free of charge to the applicant up to the level of the costs shown below, but no greater than the entire actual cost of such line extension as defined in Montana Public Service Commission Electric Tariff, Rule 6-1.

- **Residential Customer Service Allowance:** maximum line extension Allowance of \$500 (not to exceed 150 feet overhead or 100 feet underground), transformer and meter.
- **Non Demand General Service Commercial and Irrigation Metered Services Allowance:** \$0.04/kWh times the Utility's estimate of the annual kWh consumption of the customer plus the service drop (not to exceed 150 feet overhead or 100 feet underground), transformer and meter.
- **Demand General Service Commercial and Irrigation Metered Services less than 1 MW Allowance:** \$0.04/kWh times the Utility's estimate of the annual kWh consumption of the customer plus the service drop (not to exceed 150 feet overhead or 100 feet underground), transformer and meter.
- **Demand General Service Commercial and Irrigation Metered Services equal to or greater than 1 MW Allowance;** calculated based on a Revenue/Cost Ratio. This Ratio is the comparison between the expected annual revenue to be received from the customer and annual cost

of serving the customer. A Revenue/Cost Ratio greater than one (1) will result in some level of line extension cost allowance; a Ratio Less than or equal to (1) will result in no line extension cost allowance.

- **Industrial Customers or projects requiring transmission or substation facilities** are determined on an individual basis using a Revenue/Cost Ratio. Because these larger loads generally require extensive engineering analysis and electric line construction, it is critical that NorthWestern Energy be contacted early in the planning process for these types of projects
- **Industrial/Commercial Customers Over 1 MW or requiring substation/transmission level service may be required to apply for a *Load Interconnection Study*.** This study process requires an initial deposit and may take several months to complete the study, so please contact the utility early in your project development. Our statewide economic development contacts listed on Page 8 can assist you in applying for this process.
- When a line extension cost exceeds the line extension allowance specified for each customer type, the utility will require the customer to pay the difference between the cost of the project and the line extension allowance plus the applicable surcharge and this is collected as an advance. If requests for new line taps from this line extension are received, the original customer's advance maybe subject to a partial refund that is determined by the utility's construction department based on each specific project.

Natural Gas Service Construction Charges

Upon application for natural gas core service, the Utility shall make an extension of the distribution main pipeline free of charge to the applicant for service up to the level of the costs shown below, but no greater than the entire actual cost of such line extension:

- **Residential Customer - \$900 allowance toward construction costs.**
- **Core Commercial Customers - \$.326 times the utility's estimate of the annual therms consumption of the customer allowed toward construction costs.**
- **Non Core Transportation Customers - determined on individual basis.**

A customer receives a meter and regulator free of charge but will be responsible for the cost of the service pipeline connecting the meter to the distribution main pipeline. Payments for construction costs are generally paid as an advance and are nonrefundable.

Contact

Statewide Economic Development

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Economic Development

Economic vitality is crucial to Montana's future, and for more than 100 years, NorthWestern Energy has held a strong commitment to the communities it serves. Community Works encompasses NorthWestern Energy's tradition of funding community activities, charitable efforts and economic development within its service territory. In 2014, NorthWestern Energy's Community Works programs provided close to \$2.25 million in funds for community sponsorships, charitable contributions and economic development organizations in Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska.

NorthWestern Energy is committed to serving as a meaningful and dedicated contributor to the economic development process, and we see our role as "energizing Montana's economy." Our emphasis is on "Building Montana's Future," and the mission of our Economic Development team is to help retain existing jobs in Montana, promote business expansion and recruit new businesses to the state. Our economic development employees assist site selection consultants, economic development agencies, government agencies, existing businesses and potential new businesses. They are actively involved in economic development initiatives at the local, state, regional and national levels. They can answer questions about utility rates, availability of utility distribution and transmission services, utility operations, power reliability, customer supply and energy efficiency programs.

Contact us for more information on any topic in this publication or any other related subject or online at www.northwesternenergy.com.

Awards & Achievements

Public Utilities Fortnightly recognized NorthWestern Energy for the second year in a row as one of the **top 40 best energy companies** in the United States. The report compares shareholder value performance by looking at uniform data sets among the leading publicly traded electric and gas companies across a range of metrics.

NorthWestern Energy was among 53 companies nationwide to earn a top-tier brand honor from **Cogent Reports at Market Strategies International**, which surveyed utility customers to develop brand-trust scores. NorthWestern earned the top regional score for combined electric and natural gas utilities.

NorthWestern Energy earned an A rating from the **New York Stock Exchange's Corpedia** for its Code of Conduct and Ethics, putting NorthWestern in the top two percent of all energy and utility companies reviewed.

NorthWestern Energy received a high honor when the **Corporate Secretary Corporate Governance Award** program recognized our annual proxy statement as the best among small and mid-cap companies. NorthWestern had been a finalist for the top award in 2012 and 2013.

The **South Dakota National Guard and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Pro-Patria Award** was given to NorthWestern Energy in 2014 for "exceptional support of national defense through leadership practices and personnel policies" in support of employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserves. The award is given to only one company annually.