



## NATURAL GAS PRICE OUTLOOK

WINTER 2024-25

Natural Gas prices for the upcoming winter heating season (November-March) are expected to be higher than last year. Montana-Dakota residential customers can expect their bills to **increase by an average of 11%, or \$51 over** last heating season if we experience average temperatures. Typically, the most influential factor affecting customer bills is if the weather varies significantly from average temperatures.

**Natural gas prices are a direct pass-through and do not increase Montana-Dakota's profits.** We continue to be committed to providing our customers safe and reliable service. Detailed information regarding the winter natural gas price outlook is at [www.montana-dakota.com](http://www.montana-dakota.com).

Natural gas continues to be the most economical fuel source for space and water heating. Weather continues to be the main contributing factor in the amount of natural gas used in the home.

The price outlook for this year's heating season assumes no serious supply disruptions or extreme weather impacts on supply and demand. Natural gas prices are subject to monthly changes based on fluctuations in the wholesale market.

Montana-Dakota encourages customers to use energy wisely and continue individual conservation efforts. Included in this insert are energy-saving tips for the winter heating season, as well as information about the Balanced Billing program.

### FOR CUSTOMERS ANTICIPATING PAYMENT DIFFICULTIES:

- ▶ call **800-638-3278** to make payment arrangements or to be directed to available energy assistance programs.
- ▶ or visit our Assistance Programs webpage at [www.montana-dakota.com/help](http://www.montana-dakota.com/help).

### ENERGY-SAVING TIPS

- Install a programmable setback thermostat. This can be an effective way to control heating costs, allowing the thermostat to be set for a cooler temperature while you are away from home and at night while you are sleeping.
- Check the furnace filter frequently and replace or clean it as needed.
- A humidifier can help control heating costs because the moist air will feel warmer, allowing the thermostat to be set at a lower temperature.
- Adjust register openings in the home. Remember that heat rises, so registers should be partially closed upstairs.
- Use draperies, blinds, curtains, or shutters on all windows to slow the loss of heat through the glass. Keep window coverings open on sunny days to let in the sun's warmth.
- Rearrange furniture, placing it next to inside walls and away from windows. Avoid blocking registers with furniture, draperies, or carpet.
- Use kitchen, bath, and other ventilating fans sparingly. In just one hour, these fans can exhaust a houseful of warm air.
- Make sure the mountings on ceiling fans are snug and tight. Use clear caulking to seal any leaks or minor cracks around them.
- Purchase inexpensive, pre-cut insulation gaskets and seal out cold air entering the home through electrical switches and outlet plates.
- Closets and cabinets on outside walls can leak a great deal of cold air, so make sure the doors fit snugly and keep them tightly closed.

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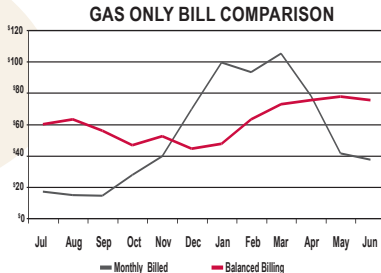
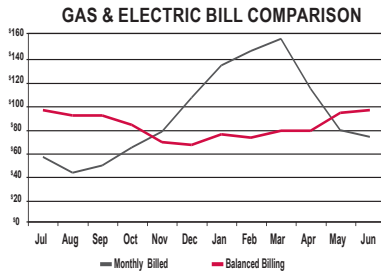


**TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF BUDGETING** Balanced Billing provides customers a way to avoid the highs and lows associated with normal monthly billing. This plan helps take the guesswork out of budgeting for utility bills.

**HOW BALANCED BILLING WORKS** A customer's monthly bill is computed by taking an average of their natural gas usage during the previous 11 months and the current month's usage. Current energy rates are then applied to this average monthly usage to calculate the current payment due. Averaging a customer's usage over the year can reduce large cost fluctuations from extreme weather conditions.

**UTILITY BILL COMPARISON EXAMPLES:**

The graphs illustrate the fluctuation of a customer's normal monthly bill compared to a Balanced Billing average.



## THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS—IT'S OK TO ASK FOR HELP

If your household is challenged to make ends meet, assistance is available.

For information about energy assistance in your area

- ▶ please call **800-638-3278**.
- ▶ or visit our Assistance Programs webpage at **www.montana-dakota.com/help**.

## TO SIGN UP FOR BALANCED BILLING

Call **800-638-3278** or visit **www.montana-dakota.com/balanced-billing**.



Scan the QR code with your mobile device to visit our Balance Billing webpage.

