

*In the Community to Serve®*



## PREPARE FOR COLD WEATHER

Don't wait until cold weather is here before making sure your home's heating system is working properly. Stay warm, cozy and safe this winter by preparing now. Follow these tips to make sure your home's heating system is ready for when the temperature drops:

- **Have a licensed heating contractor perform a pre-winter furnace tune-up.** A clean, well-maintained furnace can ensure that your heating system is running at maximum efficiency and ready to keep you warm when it's cold outside. Refer to a local directory or search online for licensed heating contractors.

- **Change the furnace filter monthly.** A dirty filter restricts the flow of heated air from the furnace, causing it to work harder and deliver less heat.
  - **Make sure vents in the house are not obstructed.** The air in your home needs to circulate easily through the vents and the furnace works less when heated air is not blocked and cooler air can circulate back freely.
- Keeping the furnace running efficiently will keep you warm all winter long.**

## ENERGY-SAVING TIPS FOR WINTER

- 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. 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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# BALANCED BILLING

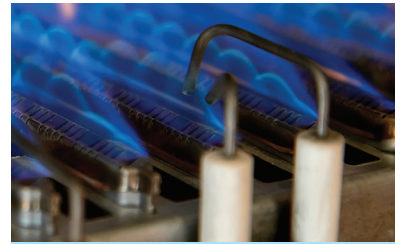
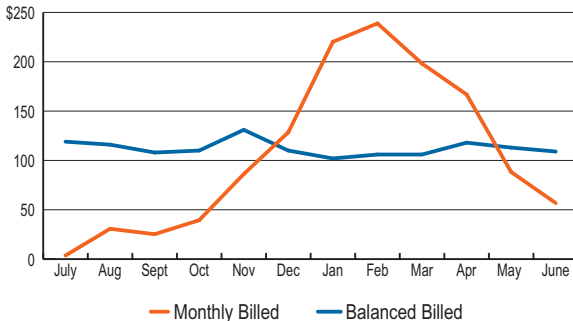
## Take the guesswork out of budgeting:

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.

**Natural Gas bill comparison Example:** The graph shows the fluctuation of a customer's normal monthly bill compared to a Balanced Billing average.



## IS YOUR PILOT LIGHT WORKING?

Cooler weather will be here before you know it, and you don't want to be caught off guard on a chilly night. If your pilot light needs to be lit, avoid the rush and the weather, contact a licensed heating vendor.

Average low temperatures for Great Plains customers are in the high 40's in September and 30's in October. It is hard to predict when the first cold snap will hit, but you can be ready for it.

For a list of licensed heating contractors refer to your local directory or search online.



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