

NORTHWESTERN ENERGY'S ATTACK ON SOLAR

The future of residential solar is on the chopping block at the hands of Montana's largest power company!



For years, NorthWestern Energy has sought to discourage its customers from going solar and generating their own power. Northern Plains Resource Council believes you should have the right to install rooftop solar, and NorthWestern shouldn't be throwing obstacles in your way. But in a rate case now before the Public Service Commission, that's exactly what NorthWestern is doing.

The job of the Public Service Commission should be to uphold policies that help you and other Montanans achieve a cleaner, more affordable, and just energy future. Our energy economy will be transitioning to greater use of wind and solar – we all know that. It's a transition that's not only necessary in addressing the climate crisis, it's also good for our economy.

NorthWestern Energy's current attempt to crush rooftop solar would move Montana further away from the clean energy future we know is possible and necessary. We won't stand for it and neither should you.

What is a rate case?

The Public Service Commission opens a **rate case** when a utility requests to change the way it bills its customers.

NorthWestern Energy has filed a rate case before the Montana Public Service Commission in which the company is proposing **new fees on residential solar in Montana** that would ensure it is no longer cost-effective to install solar on our homes, and would be devastating for the many small solar businesses across the state.



NORTHWESTERN'S PROPOSAL IMPACTS FUTURE SOLAR CUSTOMERS

By attempting to penalize Montanans who produce their own power, NorthWestern Energy has made it clear that the company wants to control your energy choices .

NorthWestern Energy is proposing a separate rate class for residential solar customers. Under this proposal, residential solar customers will be subject to a new **electric demand charge** of \$8.64 for every kilowatt used during the **single highest hour of usage** in the customer's monthly billing cycle. That's \$50-\$70 extra per month!

Currently, there is no proposed charge for customers who don't generate their own power through rooftop solar, nor on people who conserve energy in other ways.

This arbitrary demand charge is a targeted attack on rooftop solar and could make it **impossible for solar customers to save money on their utility bills**. That's NorthWestern's intention – to make the cost of rooftop solar uneconomical for most homeowners.

By law, customers who already have a solar system and are net-metering with NorthWestern Energy are "grandfathered" in and will continue to be subject to the existing net metering policies. However, NorthWestern's interconnection procedures state that an expansion of a homeowner's system would constitute a new classification of service.

NorthWestern wants to maintain control over your energy choices!

What can you do?

Tell your **Public Service Commissioner** to reject NorthWestern Energy's proposal to penalize residential solar customers in Montana!

1. Visit psc.mt.gov. Select **Documents and Proceedings > Comment on a Proceeding**.
2. Continue as a guest and fill out your contact information.
3. In the **Tracking #** field, enter **2018.02.012** and hit "tab." The other fields will auto populate.
4. Use this fact sheet to write a brief, personal message in the **Comment** field. When finished, click **Submit**.

You can also **email your comments** to PSCutilitycomment@mt.gov or visit

Thank you for defending solar in Montana!

To join Northern Plains or learn more about this topic, visit our website or contact us!

www.northernplains.org • (406) 248-1154 • info@northernplains.org

