

The NorthWestern Energy bill used an example is from a 1,100 square foot home that uses baseboard electric heat and a small natural gas furnace in the lower level. The bill accounts for usage between December 10 and January 10. The total monthly usage at **1417 kWh** is significantly higher than average residential usage, which is 750 kWh. The average, however, is based on an average of 12-months. Weather often dictates month-to-month use.

Calculating your NorthWestern electric bill, requires a review of two different bills. The billed usage is spread over 31 days, 10 in January 2014 and 21 in December 2013. On the bill provided, the rates displayed are only for January 2014. NorthWestern is required to display the current rates in effect. But rates can change from month-to-month for a variety of reasons. Rates from December 2013 and January 2014 are necessary to determine your actual costs.

To calculate the charges on a bill, a customer also must recognize that about 32 percent of the kWh was prorated on a per-day basis under the January 2014 rates and 68 percent of the kWh was prorated on a per-day basis under December 2013 rates. A phone call to the company showed that 960 kWh were prorated to December and 457 kWh were prorated to January. The bill, however, does not show the breakdown by each month.