

Safely Clearing the Way

Maintaining Rights-of-Way

The root of the problem



When trees and power lines intersect, everyone loses. Lights go out, live wires may fall, and electricity to vital services can be cut. That's why Allegheny Power works with homeowners to keep trees and limbs away from power lines.

In our area, where trees are an important part of our environment, keeping lines clear is a responsibility that Allegheny Power shares with homeowners. This information has been prepared to explain our efforts and to let property owners know about their own responsibilities. By working together and planning wisely, we can safeguard two precious resources: our trees and our electric service. **For more information call 1-800-Allegheny (1-800-255-3443).**



Preventive maintenance

Trees are one of the main causes of power outages in Allegheny Power's service territory, which includes 29,000 square miles in Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. When limbs fall onto power lines, the damage is not just inconvenient – it can also be dangerous. Sometimes, live electrical lines fall to the ground or power is cut to traffic signals, fire-alarm systems, and health-care facilities.

To address this problem, Allegheny Power engages in a full-scale tree-trimming program. For most distribution lines (those that serve your neighborhood), this means we must provide at least three growing seasons of clearance, but sometimes more is needed. The full width of the rights-of-way needs to be cleared of threatening

vegetation. Trees along the edge of a right-of-way receive side trimming to keep limbs from growing laterally into power lines.

A tree-trimming and rights-of-way maintenance program is a tall order, with crews scheduled to revisit each area periodically (every three to six years) to perform vegetation management. Our service area contains millions of trees. With that many trees and 55,000 miles of energized power lines, it's always tree-trimming season at Allegheny Power.



Caring for our service territory

An individual homeowner may view the problem as a tree here, a tree there. Allegheny Power's vegetation managers, on the other hand, must consider the entire service area. What they see is called a rights-of-way ecosystem – or, in towns, an urban forest – and maintaining and caring for this ecosystem is their specialty.

Trees near power lines are scheduled to be trimmed on a periodic basis to maintain required clearances. In addition to our cyclic maintenance program, we may trim or remove some trees if they are a hindrance to emergency or construction work. However, other work outside the established cycle is costly and may be avoided until the next scheduled trimming.

Trimming is conducted by trained professionals using techniques that emphasize a tree's health and aesthetic value. Property owners are generally notified when tree trimming occurs and an arrangement is made for tree removal.

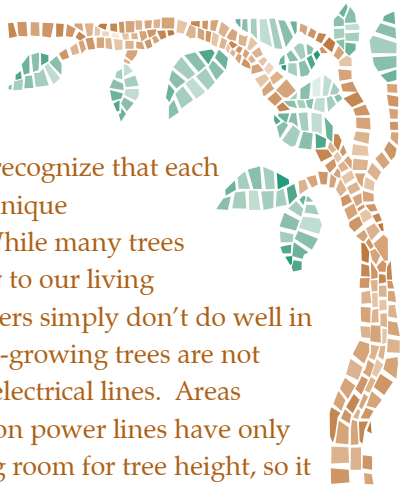
Allegheny Power conducts minimal trimming near individual service lines – those lines heading from poles to homes and businesses. The property owner must arrange for major trimming or removal around these lines from a private tree-trimming

service. However, we will disconnect electrical service lines during normal working hours so that trimming may be done.

Trees under and near high-voltage transmission lines are maintained on an as-needed basis. The Allegheny Power transmission system is crucial to the delivery of electricity to our own customers as well as to customers of neighboring utilities. Avoiding vegetation-related outages on this system is critical for all of us.

Allegheny Power's vegetation managers are constantly evaluating new economically and environmentally sound technologies. Our goal is to continue to provide the same reliable, low-cost service you have come to know with Allegheny Power.

Proper tree placement



Our foresters recognize that each tree has its own unique characteristics. While many trees contribute greatly to our living environment, others simply don't do well in certain areas. Tall-growing trees are not compatible with electrical lines. Areas around distribution power lines have only 25 feet of growing room for tree height, so it does not make good sense to plant trees that will grow 80 feet tall in such a space.

To help you choose the right trees for your particular property and to suggest the best possible placement of trees to avoid trimming and removal, Allegheny Power has prepared a book titled, "Trees for Streets and Lawns." For a free copy, call 1-800-Allegheny (1-800-255-3443).

Removal or trimming?



Occasionally, trees are planted in unsuitable areas. Some trees belong in the forest, not in an urban environment. Trees like silver maples, willows, and sycamores can grow from 7 to 10 feet a year after they've been trimmed. When these types of trees are placed directly under or near power lines, removal of these trees is often the best solution.

Before removal is recommended, certain factors are considered. Does a tree pose safety hazards when there are high winds? Is the tree diseased? For some fast-growing trees, the repeated trimmings required to keep limbs clear of power lines increase tree decay and make trees more susceptible to disease. Low-growing species more suited to an urban environment are best in these locations.

When a tree threatens electrical lines, Allegheny Power will attempt to notify the property owner to remove it free of charge. However, in an emergency, we are not always able to contact the property owner in advance of removing a tree. Property owners must make their own arrangements for removal of trees which may threaten individual service lines.



Don't go out on a limb with safety

Homeowners need to exercise extreme caution when cutting or trimming trees near electrical lines. Trimming your own trees can be dangerous. If a particular tree is near power lines and you're unsure about trimming it, call Allegheny Power. We can determine whether trimming or cutting

down a tree could pose a threat to you or to our facilities. Professionals qualified for line-clearance work can do the trimming or removal safely.

Child safety



Tree houses and electrical lines are the most dangerous combination of all. Children love to climb trees and play in tree houses. But when limbs extend near power lines, the results can be tragic. Evergreens, such as pines and spruces, are the easiest to climb because of their branches. That's why Allegheny Power removes many of these trees under and adjacent to electrical lines.

Each year, our crews find tree houses which must be removed because they are dangerously close to power lines. Living in our urban forest carries with it a responsibility to teach children that electricity has dangers as well as benefits.

By working together, we can all enjoy healthy, attractive trees, along with safe, reliable electricity.



Allegheny Power
1-800-Allegheny (1-800-255-3443)
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