

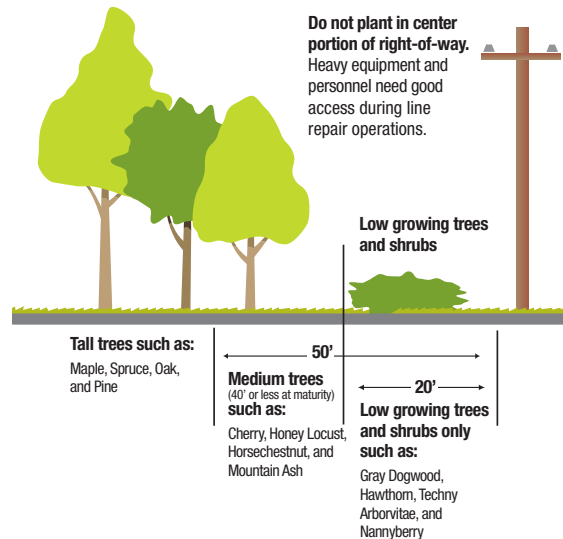
Why a clear corridor is important

A primary cause of power outages is trees contacting power lines. When tree limbs grow too close to power lines, they can cause damage or interrupt your service. They may also create a safety hazard to you or your neighbors. Especially during damp weather, electrical shock can occur when a person touches a tree that is in contact with a live wire. An unsuspecting child climbing a tree could come in contact with the wires, or branches touching the wires, resulting in severe injury or death. Trees in contact with wires have also caused wildfires. Finally, a clear corridor allows access for line personnel and equipment to restore power after a storm.

The largest power outage in U.S. history was caused in part by heavily loaded lines sagging into trees. East Central Energy makes every effort to provide you with safe electric service with minimal interruptions. An essential part of providing safe, reliable service at a reasonable cost is the establishment and maintenance of a power line corridor that is clear of trees.



Plan before you plant



Plan ahead when planting trees

- Before planting, consider mature size and crown spread of trees. Trees maturing to over 15 feet in height should be planted at least 25 feet from lines.
- See recommended planting diagram and call for a list of compatible species or check our Web site.
- Always call for a free locate of underground lines before you dig. Call Gopher State One-Call at 1-800-252-1166 two work days ahead (for Minnesota locations) or Digger's Hotline at 1-800-242-8511 (for Wisconsin locations) three work days before you plan to dig.
- Do not plant over or near underground lines or cabinets.

Trees and Power Lines



Standard practices

ECE schedules cost-effective vegetation maintenance to provide tree clearance for a period of six or more years. The cost of standard practice vegetation maintenance is shared equally by all ECE members through rates.

Yard Trees

- Slower growing trees within a home landscape are pruned.
- Fast growing trees near conductors are cut down. Stumps are not removed.
- Branches from work are chipped, and larger wood is left on site.

Beyond the Home Landscape

- A 40-50 foot wide corridor is cleared of all trees and brush.
- Herbicide treatments of re-growth brush are done periodically.
- Trees located outside of the cleared corridor that pose a danger to the lines are cut down.
- Debris from clearing is mulched on site or left on edge of corridor. The wood is the property of the landowner.

Contact us

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact ECE Forestry Services at 1-866-293-9068 or visit www.eastcentralenergy.com and click on Trees & Lines.



ECE offers alternatives

Reduced clearance

Members may request less severe pruning on yard trees. A reduced clearance fee is added to their electric bill to provide for more frequent work.

Self maintenance

A member can maintain brush at a specified height. A signed agreement is required.

Alternate maintenance

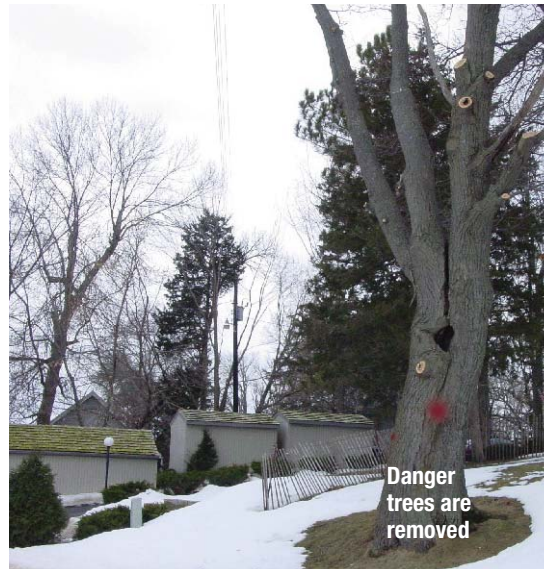
Members may choose an alternate method of brush management, however, the member must pay the difference in cost.

Transplanting

Clearing of small trees can be delayed to allow the member time to transplant.

Line relocation

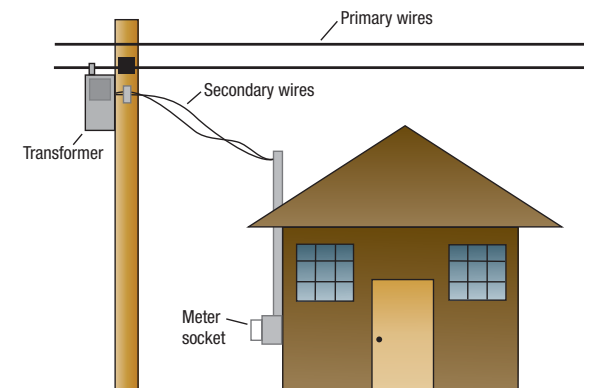
When feasible, lines can be moved or located underground at the member's expense.



Member tree requests

If you have concerns about a tree in your yard or would like assistance in removing a tree:

- We provide assistance to obtain standard clearances. We recommend hiring a qualified tree contractor for additional work.
- Work which goes beyond standards will be performed at the member's expense.
- Lines beyond the meter belong to the member.
- Generally, trees near secondary lines are pruned to provide adequate clearance. A free line drop of secondary lines can be arranged if the member wants to remove a tree.
- Disposal of debris is the member's responsibility.



Storms and outages

- Trees causing outages may be cut down or cleared by the line crew or tree crews.
- All debris is left on site.