



OG&E[®]

Vegetation Management Customer Guidelines



We know that our customers value their trees because they provide shade and beautify where we all live and work. Trees that grow into OG&E power lines, however, can cause outages and create safety hazards for our customers and crews. To reduce this hazard and further strengthen the electrical grid, we utilize certified arborists to prune and remove trees on a regular schedule across our service area.

Our goal is to prune and remove trees on a four-year schedule with certified line-clearance arborists to control the estimated 2.3 million trees growing near overhead power lines through our service area.

We want our customers to know more about our tree management practices and provide information on ways they can help, like planting the right tree in the right place.



Why do we prune trees?

Trees that grow into power lines or other equipment can cause outages and create a safety hazard for our customers and crews. We prune and remove trees to mitigate that risk and help us continue to provide safe and reliable electric service to our customers.

Does OG&E follow any pruning guidelines?

OG&E follows proper arboricultural guidelines and industry standards set forth by the American National Standard Institute, ANSI A300, or the ISA's Best Management Practices for Pruning and Integrated Vegetation Management. These guidelines promote directional pruning methods which minimize pruning stress and focus on tree health while obtaining necessary clearance from power lines.

What kind of cuts or pruning do you perform on trees?

Proper pruning is used when performing tree work and includes the 3 cut method (see Fig 1) which is used to avoid bark peeling and ensure the branch collar remains intact to minimize any potential damage to the tree. When a proper lateral cut at the required clearance standards is not possible, limbs are pruned back to the next proper lateral branch.

OG&E also removes limbs (See Fig 2) that overhang power lines or that encroach from underneath power lines. The pruning includes directional pruning of the tree away from the wire zone.

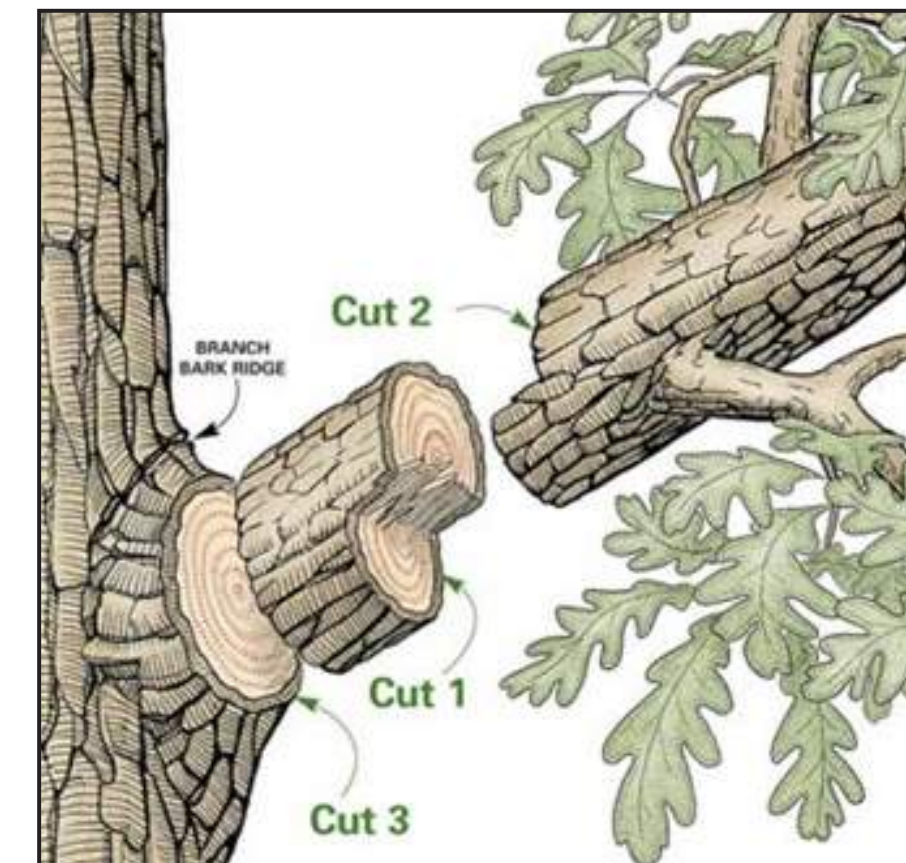


Fig. 1- Proper Pruning Cut

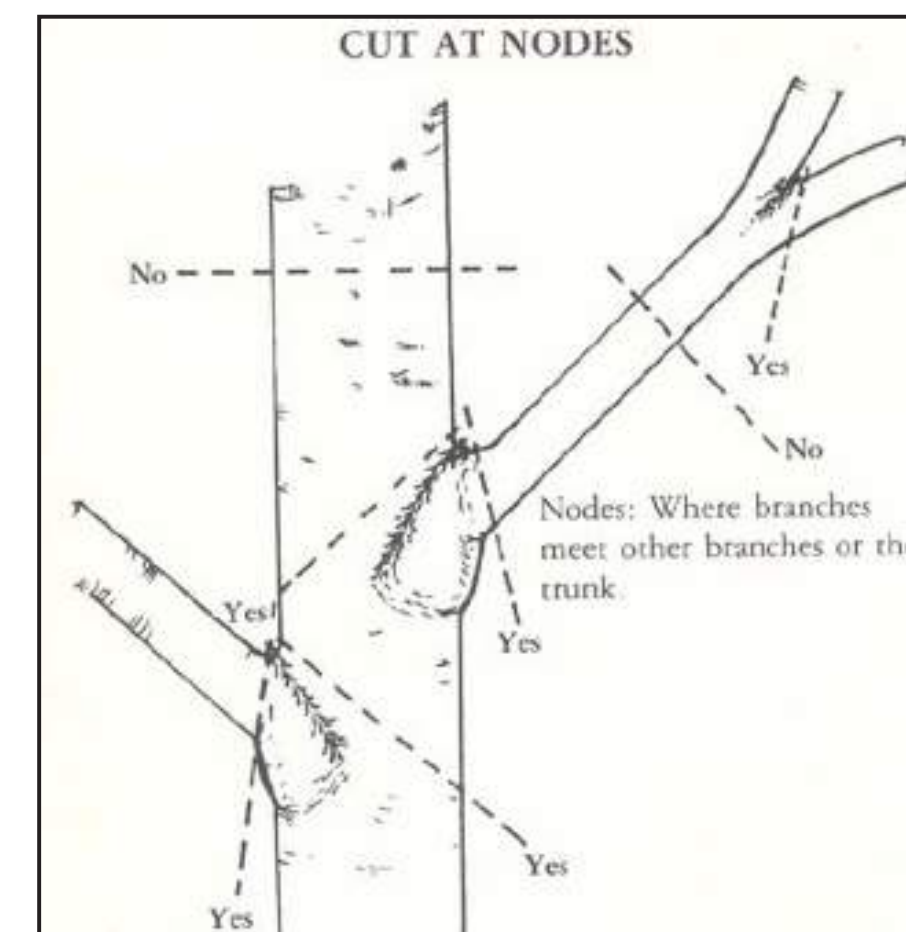
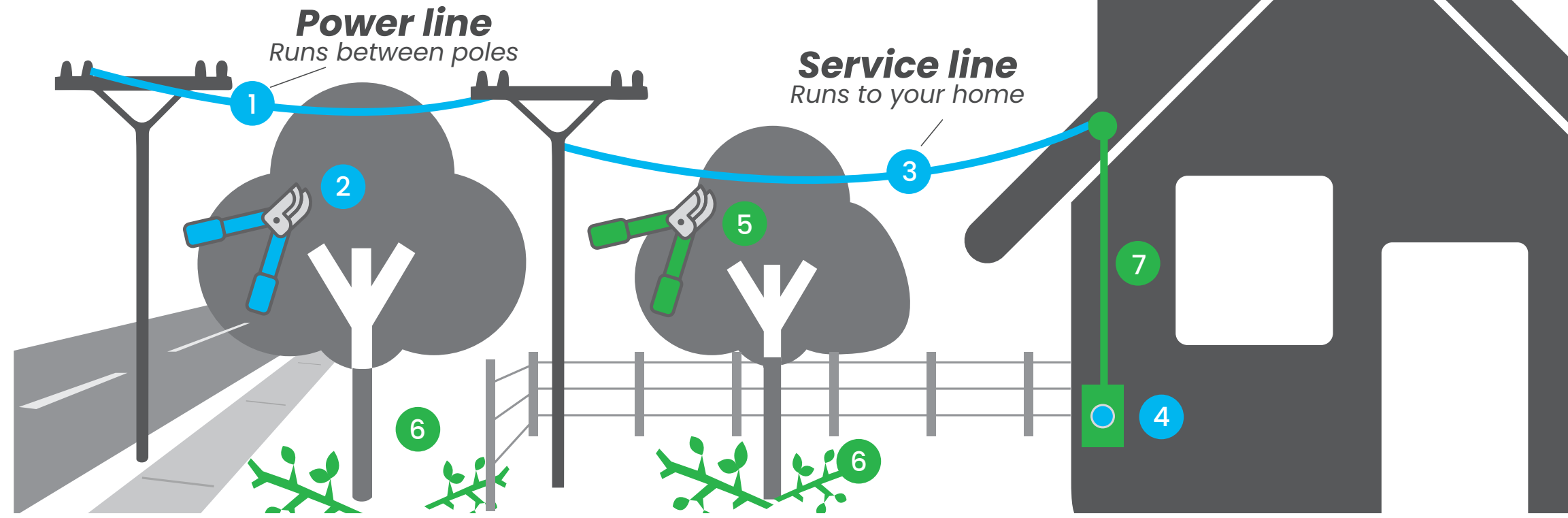


Fig. 2- 3 Cut Method

Our Process

Customers can help minimize outages by making sure to plant the right tree in the right place.

Who does what?



- 1** **OG&E** repairs power lines
- 2** **OG&E** clears trees from power lines
Trimming/removing trees near power lines helps prevent power outages and hazards.
- 3** **OG&E** repairs service lines
- 4** **OG&E** installs meters
- 5** **Customer** clears trees from service lines
It is the customer's responsibility to prune trees around these lines, but this should only be done by qualified professionals. You can request OG&E to disconnect the line while this work is performed.
- 6** **Customer** disposes of storm debris
After an act of nature, OG&E will move tree debris to the curb but it's the customer's responsibility to dispose of the debris. After our routine maintenance trimming, OG&E will dispose of tree debris.
- 7** **Customer** repairs weather head and meter base
These repairs are the customer's responsibility. They must be done by a licensed electrician before power can be restored.

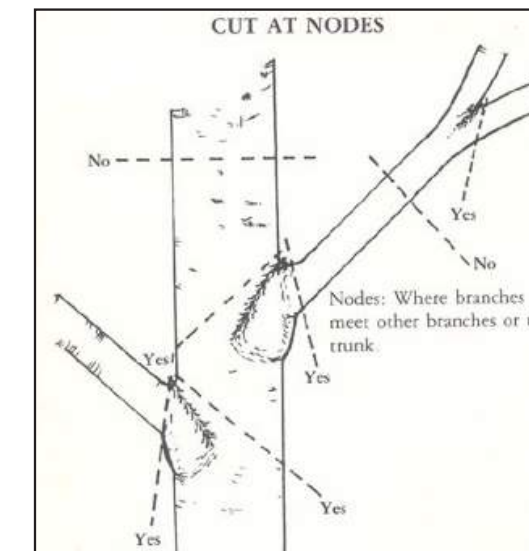
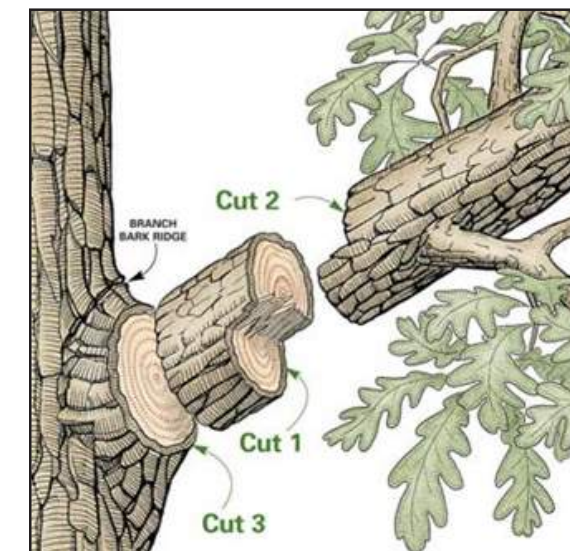


Answering the Call

OG&E is a member of the Midwest Mutual Assistance and Southeast Electrical Exchange. Member companies impacted by major outage events can increase their workforce with paid restoration workers from other companies in unaffected areas.

How do we prune trees?

We use directional pruning, which removes branches growing towards the power lines and prunes them back to select branches growing away from the conductors. Reduction cuts are prune branches back to a lateral branch that is at least one-third the diameter of the branch being removed. This allows for proper wound closure which should reduce regrowth towards the power line and other equipment. Directional pruning usually removes fewer branches and increases wound closure which will reduce stress and internal decay.

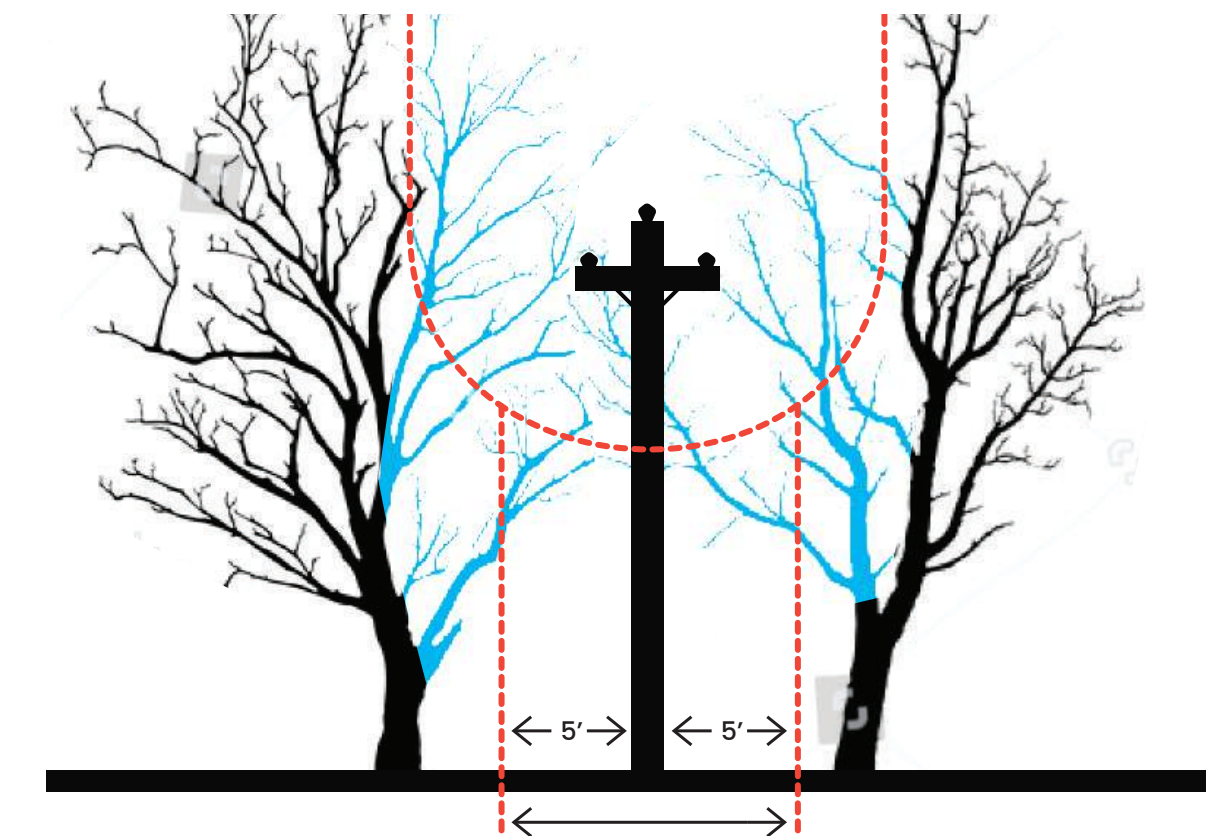


Why does OG&E have to prune trees if they are not touching power lines?

Pruning trees to direct growth away from power lines before an issue occurs is the best way to prevent tree-caused outages and helps us continue to provide safe and reliable electricity to our customers. Our goal is to prune trees BEFORE they pose a risk to power lines and other equipment. Tree growth rates are dependent on their environment and can change year to year. Potential issues are trees that sway in the wind, sag with ice or snow weight, and uprooting of trees. These issues can occur, especially in storms, if the trees are not maintained and allowed to encroach on the electrical conductors.

Does OG&E remove trees?

We recommend trees for removal when they are fast-growing species such as Hackberry, Elm, and Mulberry that are difficult to control and contribute to a larger percentage of issues. Removal of dead, dying or diseased trees that might be a higher risk for failure is also recommended. Removal is also recommended if the amount of pruning or construction work needed will significantly impact the health or stability of the tree.



Remove fast growing trees 12" dbh or smaller. Target larger trees for removal that are fast growing, can be removed quickly and/or will require more than 50% of the crown be removed to obtain clearance. Branches extending into the easement (the shell) shall be removed.

What happens if I don't let OG&E trim the trees on my property?

If a property owner refuses to let us or our contractors access their property and perform the work, a letter explaining the need for the work and containing a summary of the legal authorities which allow OG&E to be on the property and perform the work will be sent by certified mail to the property owner. The letter will also include a new date and time at which we or our contractors will be back to perform the work. After the letter is sent and before the next scheduled date for work, we will attempt to resolve the situation with the property owner. If the property owner continues to refuse us or our contractors to perform vegetation management, we may suspend service or take other action to enforce its rights.



Storm Debris Cleanup

Following an act of nature, it's the customer's responsibility to dispose of any tree debris. OG&E will move the debris to the curb in the front yard, but it's the customer's responsibility to dispose of it.

Repairs to the wire that runs from the utility pole to your house and the meter are OG&E's responsibility. Repairs to the cable that runs down the side of your house and the box that holds the meter are your responsibility. Having a qualified electrician perform the repairs you're responsible for helps ensure we can restore your power quickly after an outage.



Frequently Asked Questions

[OG&E - FAQs online \(OGE.com\)](https://www.ogee.com)

Why does OG&E clear vegetation away from power lines?

Preventing tree conflicts is better than waiting for a problem to occur.

Trees that grow into power lines can cause problems three ways:

- **Safety** — Trees and tree limbs can knock down power lines, causing a safety hazard for our customers. In addition, it's possible to be shocked by simply touching a tree in contact with high voltage wires. Power lines are just as dangerous if touched by someone climbing in a tree as they would be if touched by someone standing on the ground. Trees and limbs also compromise the safety of our employees due to visibility and other obstructions.

- **Outages** — Tree limbs contacting power lines are one of the most common causes of power outages. Trees can affect service reliability at the precise location where a tree may contact a line, at nearby locations on that line or at other distant locations on the electric grid. Trees or limbs can fall across wires, causing power failures. High growing bushes, shrubs, vines and trees may cause electrical blinks and flickers. If you have concerns about trees or vines growing near power lines, contact us. To be safe, never attempt to prune a tree near our wires yourself.
- **Voltage Loss** — Trees touching power lines drain electricity off the electrical system. The resulting voltage loss can affect customers all along the electrical circuit serving your neighborhood. Low voltage can damage motor-driven appliances (refrigerators, air conditioners, etc.) and sensitive electronics in your home. Neighboring businesses, schools and medical facilities can be affected the same way.



How often does OG&E clear trees from its lines?

Our goal is to clear lines of limbs and trees on a four-year maintenance cycle, which has been determined to be the best compromise between providing safe, reliable power and managing vegetation costs. We contract with hundreds of professional arborists who work year-round. Trees may need to be pruned more often in rare situations where growing conditions or other variables make four years of clearance impractical. In some areas it may be longer than four years between tree pruning activities, depending on environmental conditions.

How will I know when you are trimming in my area?

Our planners place notices on the doors of homes, businesses and other buildings to notify customers about vegetation work in the area.

How far do you trim the trees from the lines?

In the case of most trees, our goal is to prune between 10 feet and 14 feet from the wires. It is possible some trees may be pruned further, if species or conditions warrant. Trees with trunks close to the power lines require much heavier pruning than trees located further from the line. When pruning operations are performed, our trimming experts make every attempt to prune sufficient clearance so that the tree will remain safe until we return on our next routine maintenance, approximately every four years. Trees directly under the wires or close to poles with a 12" diameter breast height (DBH) or smaller may be removed if they are a large growing species. Our tree experts work in accordance with International Society of Arborists (ISA) standards and accepted industry practices.

Can I trim my own trees?

Pruning trees around power lines should only be completed by trained professionals. Serious injuries and even fatalities have occurred when untrained individuals attempt to clear trees near power lines. Please contact us for an evaluation of the trees and vegetation around power lines prior to trimming them yourself or hiring a private arborist. State and federal safety regulations require any person working within 10 feet of a high-voltage electrical line to have proper training and certification.

Do you trim trees from the wire that runs from the pole to my house?

Maintaining clearance around the service drop (the lines that run from the pole to a home) is a property owner's responsibility. Although the voltage through a service drop is much lower than that of pole-to-pole power lines, we recommend that you use a professional tree service to do this trimming. A professional tree service does not need line clearance certification to prune near your service drop. For property owners who prefer to do it themselves, we strongly encourage a call to OG&E Customer Service to request a temporary service disconnect to prevent electrocution.

Can I hire my own arborist to prune the trees from the lines?

Line Clearance work is different from other forms of tree care in that the insurance and training requirements are much different. Any arborist that works on a tree within 10 feet of power lines is technically working "on the electric system" and must have permission from the system operator. For this reason, OG&E only allows approved Line Clearance contractors to work near their power lines for the safety of the arborist and the public.

Many independent tree trimmers claim they are "line-clearance certified." Some may have worked for a qualified line-clearance tree company. However,

certification is not transferable between companies, unless the company is line-clearance qualified.

If you have a dead tree, or are planning to have work done on a tree closer than 10 feet to the power lines, please contact OG&E for a safety inspection. OG&E is committed to safety and in some cases we may need to make the tree "safe" for removal.

How much will this cost me?

Line clearance is a normal maintenance procedure. There is no direct charge to the customer. Keep in mind, however, all customers are essentially paying for the maintenance and upkeep of the lines, poles and other equipment that deliver power to their homes and businesses. For this reason, it is essential that new trees be planted away from power lines to prevent the need for trimming, help keep rates low and ensure safe, reliable power.



Where can I get more information about the proper care and placement of trees?

The right tree planted in the right place can provide not only beauty but energy savings for your home. Consider cooling shade from deciduous trees on the south and west side of the home and shelter from cold winter winds by evergreens on the north and northwest side of your home.

Basically, always look up before planting and observe the following guidelines:

- Never plant trees or shrubs directly under power lines or within 6 feet of poles or pedestals (green electrical boxes)
- Small, maturing trees and shrubs that will grow to 15' should be planted at least 5' laterally from power lines
- Medium, maturing trees that will grow to 40' should be planted at least 20' from power lines
- Large, maturing trees should be planted a minimum of 50' from power lines.

A good rule of thumb is to check the tag at the nursery. The maximum height of the tree should be approximately how far the tree should be planted from the power lines. Care also should be taken to find out where underground facilities are located before you plant by dialing 8-1-1. Trees should be planted at least six feet to the side of underground facilities. Underground utility cables and equipment need to be accessible for maintenance and repair.

Why don't you put all the power lines underground?

Some lines cannot be feasibly placed underground. We place our lines underground in new residential developments but there are many obstacles to placing lines underground in established neighborhoods. Existing trees and their root systems would be impacted, undermining the health and stability of those trees. Considerable expense, time and disruption would be involved in trenching through existing roads and landscaping. Most homes in neighborhoods with

overhead lines would also require major upgrades to accept underground service. The cost of such a major overhaul to the utility infrastructure would be significant and would be passed, in part, to our customers (you) in the form of higher electric rates and directly as all individual homes would likely need service upgrades which would be the responsibility of the homeowner. Other utilities, such as phone and cable, also may be using the same poles as the power lines, so removal of the power lines may still leave other overhead lines.

Is OG&E responsible for clean-up after pruning trees?

The majority of our pruning and cutting occurs during routine line maintenance cycles. Our policy is to chip and haul small limbs and brush that are pruned or removed during the course of normal maintenance work. Any wood larger than 4 inches in diameter may be cut into manageable lengths (firewood) and stacked on site for your use. When an "Act of Nature" (such as lightning, high winds, tornadoes, etc.) causes trees or other vegetation to fall across power lines and create power outages, we cut the trees and brush so poles and lines can be replaced and re-energized. Disposal of any wood, limbs or debris resulting from this type of emergency operation is the property owner's responsibility.

Why don't you paint or repair cuts made from pruning?

Painting cuts has been found to be ineffective and in some cases detrimental for preventing disease and reducing tree- stress from pruning.

What if my tree is away from the lines, but its branches grow out above the wires?

The primary action will be to prune the branches away from the line, removing all overhanging branches. Trees also may be elected for removal in situations where certain hazards exist.

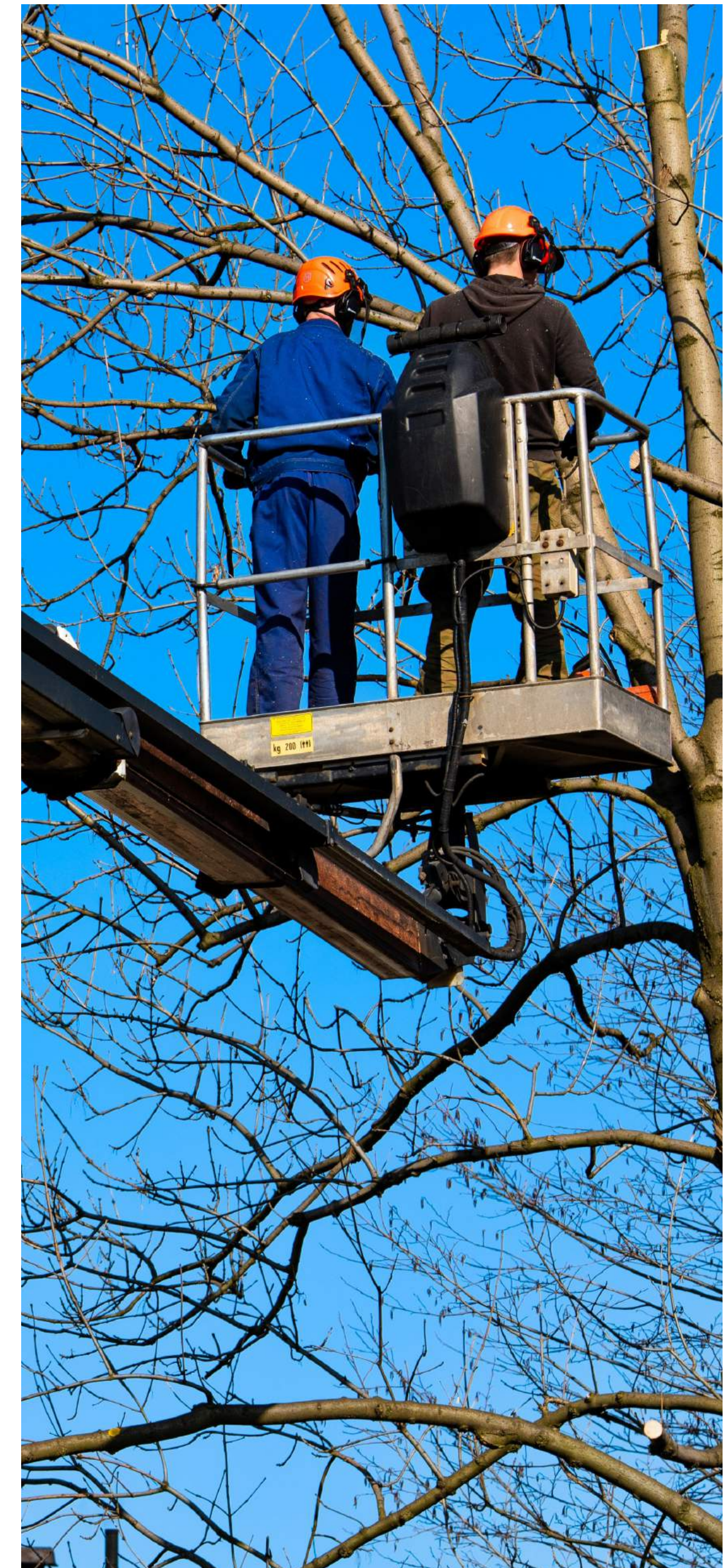
What if I don't want my trees trimmed?

OG&E is committed to balancing the importance of trees with the equally important need to provide reliable electricity to all customers. Keep in mind that although it is desirable to keep the natural beauty of a tree, tree contact with power lines is unsafe and also could cause momentary outages and/or lengthy loss of service, not only for you but for many residents and businesses in your area.

When OG&E identifies tree pruning or pole clearing work to be done on your property, reasonable efforts will be made to notify you. While it is our intention to work with all customers to address their concerns, OG&E is legally required to maintain its facilities, and therefore permission to prune trees or perform other vegetation management is not required. Utility easements and rights of ways are often conveyed in the deed to a property. In addition, as a condition of electric service to your home, you agree to allow OG&E representatives access to your property for maintenance at all reasonable times.

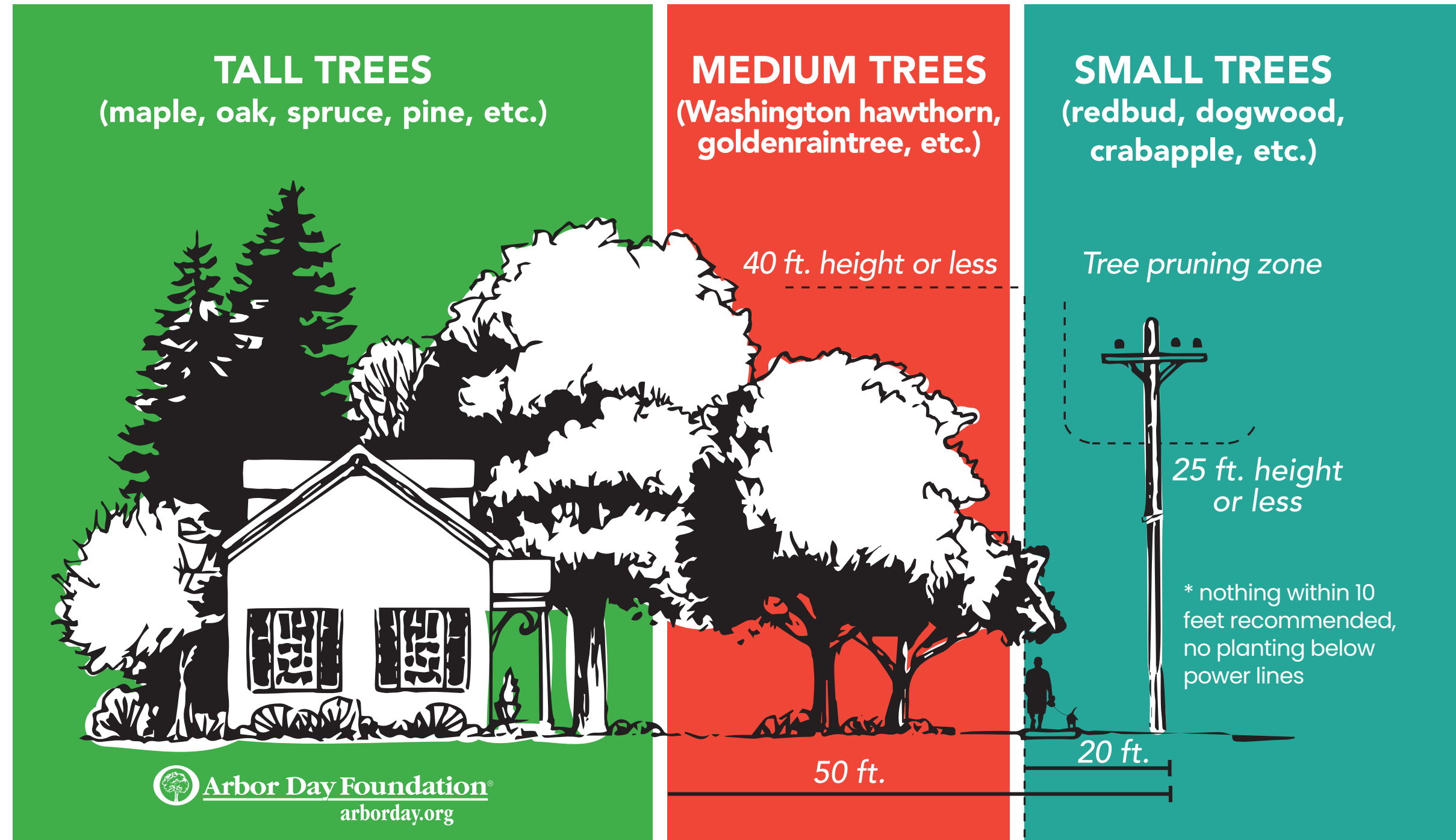
Does OG&E use herbicides?

OG&E uses selective herbicides registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other state and federal agencies and adheres to the application rates specified on the product label. For added safety, we employ only licensed, experienced contractors to do this work. The products used have the same active ingredient as products available to the homeowner at garden centers, except these products are labeled differently for rights-of-way. In general, the products we use have been used by farmers, homeowners and utilities for over 30 years and have demonstrated exceptional environmental and economic benefits.



Tree Zones

The Zone 1 and 2 trees listed below refer to the recommended location or proximity of planting to the energized conductors and the image below. It is not recommended to plant any tree directly under the conductors or within 10' of a utility pole.



Zone 1 Small trees



Mexican Plum/*Prunus mexicana*
Full sun-part shade, 15-20' tall.
White showy spring flowers, can produce edible tart fruit.



Eastern Redbud/*Cercis canadensis*
Full sun-part shade, 20-30' tall.
Reddish-lavender flowers in early spring.
Good yellow fall color. Persistent seed pods.



Chaste Tree/*Vitex agnus-castus*
Full Sun, 6-15' tall.
Violet/blue flowers in July/August.



Chinese Fringe Tree/*Chionanthus retusus*
Full sun-part shade, 15-25' tall. Nice white fringe flowers in mid-May. Appears to be pH adaptable and heat tolerant but intolerant of drought conditions.



Crape Myrtle/*Lagerstroemia indica*
Full sun-part shade, 10-25' tall.
Very colorful summer blooms, nice bark.



Fringe Tree/*Chionanthus virginicus*
Full sun-part shade, 15-20' tall. Large shrub to small tree. White, fragrant flowers in May/June. Appears to be pH adaptable and heat tolerant but intolerant of drought conditions.



Desert Willow/*Chilopsis linearis*
Full Sun-part shade, 15-20' tall.
Purple, pink, white flowers from spring-fall, may need winter protection.



Flowering Dogwood/*Cornus florida*
Part sun- part shade, 15-20' tall. Needs protection from hot sun and wind. White or pink flowers in April and red fruit that birds like to eat. Good red fall color. Best suited for the eastern part of the state.



Amur Maackia/*Maackia amurensis*
Full sun-part shade, 20-30' tall.
White flowers in June



Kousa Dogwood/*Cornus kousa*
Full sun- part shade, 15-25' tall. White flower bracts in May. Needs a sheltered location from hot sun and wind. Exfoliating bark on older specimens.



Shantung Maple/*Acer truncatum*
Full sun- part shade, 15-25' tall. Good heat and drought tolerance, great yellow fall color.



Rough-leaf Dogwood/*Cornus drumondii*
Full sun- part shade. 5-15' tall.



Teddy Bear Magnolia/*Magnolia grandiflora* 'Southern Charm'
Evergreen, Full sun-part shade, 15-20' tall.
Nice white summer flowers



Smoketree/*Cotinus coggygria*
Full sun, 10-15' tall. Drought tolerant.
Yellow-green insignificant May flowers and good orange/red mixture of fall color.

Zone 1 Small trees (continued)



Red Buckeye/*Aesculus pavia*
Part sun- part shade, 10-18' tall.
Clump-forming, rounded-top, small tree
with red flowers in pril-May.



American Smoketree/*Cotinus obovatus*
Full sun, 15-25' tall. Yellow-green insignificant
May flowers and good orange/red mixture of fall
color.



Allegheny Serviceberry/
Amelanchier laevis
15-30' tall. More tree form than most service
berries. Nice white flowers and edible fruit.
Good orange color in fall.



Star Magnolia/*Magnolia stellata 'Royal Star'*
Full sun-part shade, 10-15' tall. White, fragrant
flowers in March. Upright, densely branched
shrub or small tree that becomes more rounded
with age.



Serviceberry (Juneberry)/
Amelanchier arborea
Full sun-part shade, 15-25' tall. White flowers
before the leaves in spring. Birds love the red-
purple-black June fruit. Yellow to red fall color.



Malus Spp./*Flowering Crabapples*
Varying forms and sizes. 10-30' tall. Many
cultivars available. Select for size, form, flower
color, fruit color, and rust and scab resistance.



Rusty Blackhaw Viburnum/
Viburnum rufidulum
15-20' Large. Rounded shrub or small tree
depending on pruning. Small white flowers in
spring. Berries turn dark blue in September.
Great red fall color.



Yaupon Holly/*Ilex vomitoria*
Evergreen, Sun-part shade, 10-20' tall.
Females produce red berries.



Ilex/*'Nellie R. Stevens'*
Evergreen, Full sun to part shade, 15-25' tall.
Best holly for drought and heat tolerance,
bright red berries.



Winterberry/*Ilex verticillata*
Evergreen, Full sun-part shade. 10-15' tall.

Zone 2 Medium Trees



Birthday Candle Oak/*Quercus x warei*
'Birthday Candle'
Full Sun, 45' tall x 20' wide. Bright orange/yellow
fall color, drought tolerant.



'Arnold' Tulip Poplar/*Liriodendron tulipifera*
'Arnold'
Full sun, 45' tall x 15' wide. Bright yellow fall color.



Crimson Spire Oak/*Quercus robur x Q.*
alba 'Crimschmidt'
Full Sun-part shade, 45' tall x 15' spread. This
columnar, tightly fastigate hybrid has good
reddish fall color. Relatively fast growing tree
that is drought tolerant.



Columnar Hornbeam/*Carpinus betulus*
'Fastigiata'
Full sun, 30-40' tall x 20-3' wide.
Yellow/orange fall color.



Kindred Spirit Oak/*Quercus x warei*
'Nadler'
Full sun, 30' tall x 6' wide.
Drought and heat tolerant.



Princeton Sentry Ginkgo/*Ginkgo biloba*
'Princeton Sentry'
Full sun, 40-50' tall x 20-25' wide.
Fruitless slow grower. Great yellow fall color.



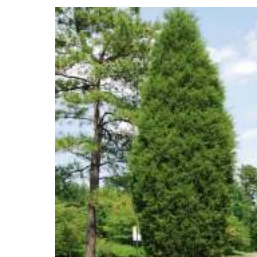
'Slender Silhouette' Sweetgum/
Liquidambar styraciflua 'Slender Silhouette'
Full sun, 50-60' tall x 5-6' wide. Yellow/orange/
red fall color. Somewhat fruitless.



Taylor Juniper/*Juniperus virginiana*
'Taylor'
Evergreen, Full sun, 15-20' tall x 4' wide.
Good heat and drought tolerance.



'Arnold' Tulip Poplar/*Liriodendron tulipifera*
'Arnold'
Full sun, 45' tall x 15' wide. Bright yellow fall color.



Brodie Juniper/*Juniperus virginiana*
'Brodie'
Evergreen, Full sun, 15-20' tall and 5-8' wide.
Good heat and drought tolerance