

# Line clearance **project**



Trees growing too close to power lines can interfere with electric service and cause power outages. Our crews soon will be performing line clearance work, or tree pruning, in your area to minimize outages, fire hazards and other dangers.

Here are answers to common questions about our work. You can find additional information about our line clearance procedures on our website: [www.we-energies.com/forestry](http://www.we-energies.com/forestry)

## **How will I know if my trees are going to be trimmed?**

Property owners with overhead electric service will receive a letter about upcoming line clearance work. Renters and property owners with underground service may not receive this letter.

## **When will work begin?**

A line clearance expert will inspect each property to identify trees that pose a reliability or safety risk, and determine what type of equipment and workers are needed for the job. We leave a door hanger at the property after the inspection is complete.

When extensive pruning or large tree removal is required, we communicate the work to the property owner before we begin.

## **What are the line clearance experts going to trim?**

Our line clearance experts follow guidelines set by the International Society of Arboriculture and the Tree Care Industry Association. We use directional pruning (removing entire branches and limbs to the main tree trunk) to remove branches that are hazards to our facilities and system reliability. Detailed information on our line clearance practices and pruning techniques are outlined in the project notice letter or can be found below.

*Please note:* Our work focuses on the safety and reliability of our electric lines. When we have completed our work, a tree still may pose a threat to homes or people. Property owners are responsible for remaining dead or dangerous trees or limbs. We recommend using certified professionals for extensive tree trimming and tree removal.

## **What about clean up?**

Small brush created by our line clearance work in this area will be chipped and hauled away.

Wood larger than 4 inches in diameter will be cut to a manageable size and left on the property for the owner to dispose of or use. Other dead tree debris also may be left onsite for the property owner to take care of.

*Please note:* Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources regulations prevent us from moving invasive or prohibited species. This debris will be left on site for the property owner to dispose of properly.

## **Will I have to pay for this work?**

No. You will not be charged for pruning necessary to protect the safety or reliability of our electric distribution system. For trees that you choose to cut, we recommend that you contact a [professional arborist](#) for an estimate.

[www.we-energies.com/forestry](http://www.we-energies.com/forestry)

# Line clearance **practices**



Trees growing too close to power lines can interfere with electric service, especially when weather brings lightning, ice or high winds. For reliability and compliance with the National Electric Safety Code, we've established a line clearance program to prune or remove trees that threaten electric service.

We hire qualified tree specialists to prune trees and maintain proper clearance along our power line corridors. These line clearance contractors follow guidelines set by the American National Standards Institute and use practices identified by the International Society of Arboriculture. They use proper pruning techniques to promote tree health and are trained to safely work near electric lines.

## How much pruning is necessary?

High voltage primary lines are cleared based on the species and location of trees. All trees are pruned back to existing tree lines. If no tree line exists, the trees are classified as either slow-growing or fast-growing and pruned as follows:

- Slow-growing tree species — pruned to provide at least 6 feet of clearance from side of line.
- Fast-growing tree species — pruned to provide 10 feet of clearance from side of line.
- All limbs hanging over lines — pruned to provide 20 feet of clearance above line.

Secondary wires also are cleared according to growth rates. Slow-growing trees are pruned to provide 3 feet of clearance. Fast-growing trees are pruned to provide 5 feet of clearance.

Coated secondary, electric service and streetlight wires are cleared only if trees or limbs are deflecting the conductors.

We do not trim around phone and cable wires; please contact your carrier if you have concerns.

## When must trees be removed?

- Trees less than 12 inches in diameter within 10 feet of a high-voltage primary line will be removed.
- Diseased, structurally weakened or leaning trees that pose an imminent threat to the line, regardless of distance away from power lines, will be removed.
- Trees smaller than 4 inches in diameter that are located within the power corridor and are capable of growing into the electric lines will be removed.
- Stumps and young, tall-growing trees are treated with an herbicide to prevent regrowth. (Note: Stumps will not be removed.)
- Trees that have caused repeated safety problems or power outages will be removed.

## What about cleanup?

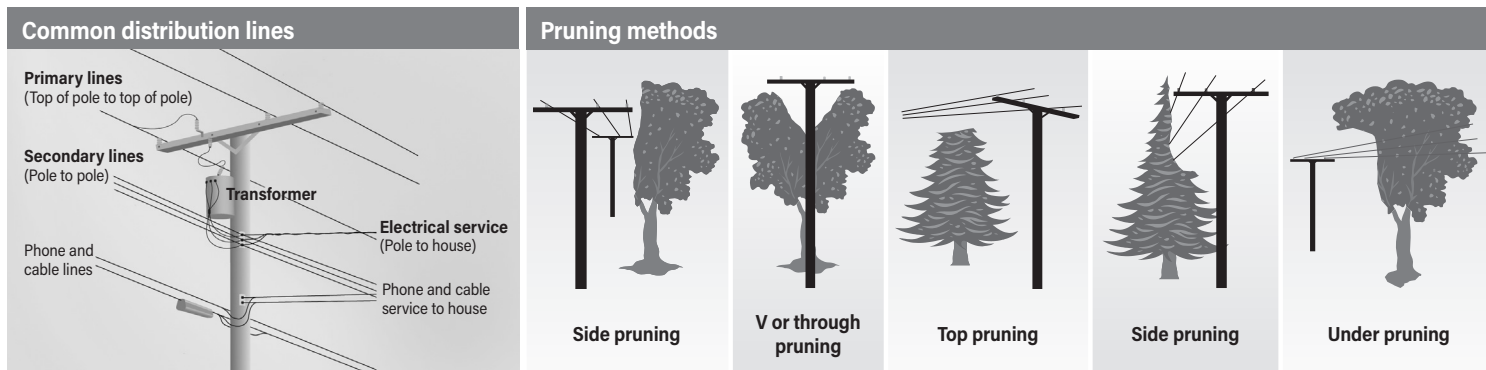
In rural areas, limbs and brush smaller than 4 inches in diameter are piled and left on-site. In urban areas, the limbs are chipped and hauled away. Wood larger than 4 inches in diameter is left on-site in both urban and rural areas.

## How are trees pruned?

Our line clearance contractors use natural pruning methods. Natural pruning reduces re-sprouting and allows the tree to seal itself naturally. This method maintains the health of the tree as much as possible.

## How can property owners avoid the need for tree pruning?

Plant trees that won't interfere with power lines when fully grown. Small ornamental trees or shrubs that will not exceed 15 feet in height are best to plant around power lines. Tall-growing trees should be planted at least 30 feet away from overhead power lines.



Visit [we-energies.com](http://we-energies.com) for more line clearance and tree planting information.