



NEWS & INFORMATION

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Tree trimming helps keep people safe and the power on when storms hit

To protect electric reliability and personal safety it is important that crews for your utility periodically trim trees near power lines in your community. Tree limbs and power lines are a bad combination, especially with storms involving high winds, lightning, or ice. Trees are one of the most common causes of electric service outages and severe storms can disrupt power for extended periods of time.

Tree limbs and branches that extend into power lines can pose a significant risk to public safety during any kind of weather. Anyone in close contact or trying to trim or climb such trees could be seriously injured.

Professionally trained crews usually trim trees around primary transmission and distribution lines every few years. Franchise and easement agreements with the communities they serve allow utilities to trim affected trees on private property. Crews generally use directional pruning, which helps protect tree health and direct growth away from lines. The goal is to trim no more than is necessary for public safety and electric service reliability. Fast-growing trees may need to be cut back more than slow-growing trees.

Always check for nearby power lines before planting or trimming your own trees. Trimming a tree near a power line will require a professional tree trimmer and you should contact your electric utility about this. Try to plant trees away from power lines. If a power line is in the vicinity, determine how tall and wide a tree is likely to be when it is fully grown. Placing low-growing trees near power lines will help prevent service problem and limit the need for tree trimming in the future. Many utilities can provide customers with information about different species of trees because they sponsor tree-planting programs for environmental and energy-saving reasons. Also remember to contact Iowa One Call, by dialing 811 or 1-800-331-5666, at least 48 hours in advance of any tree planting to have underground utilities marked. Trees can provide valuable shading during hot weather and protection from cold winds during other times of the year.

Customers with any questions or concerns about tree trimming or planting on their property or in their neighborhood should first contact their local utility. If questions or concerns persist, they may also contact the Iowa Utilities Board toll-free at 1-877-565-4450.

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