

## What You Should Know About Trees and Your Electric Service

Trees enhance the quality of life in every community—converting carbon dioxide to oxygen—keeping the air clean. However, diseased and/or weakened trees, along with trees planted and growing near power lines, can contribute to power outages when they come in contact with overhead electric lines. National Grid’s goal is to ensure everyone’s safety and deliver reliable energy.

For information about our tree trimming programs, please select from the following:

- **Safety around trees and electric wires**
- **Combat invasive tree-killing insects and help save the environment**
- **National Grid’s routine tree trimming responsibilities and schedule**
- **Homeowner tree trimming responsibilities**
- **Identifying your electric service**
- **Tree cleanup and wood disposal**
- **Digging In? Please call Dig Safely**
- **Planting trees? Plan ahead and choose plantings wisely**
- **Frequently asked questions**
- **Choose a qualified contractor**

### **Safety around trees and electric wires.**

When you’re enjoying the outdoors, remember to play it safe and avoid dangerous overhead electric lines. Children and adults should not climb, play or work in trees that are near electric wires.

For safety reasons, always treat all wires as high-voltage wires, energized and dangerous to touch, whether such wires are covered or bare, on the pole or fallen to the ground.

**Important Note:** During or after any storm event, consider all downed wires to be energized and dangerous, including telephone, fiber optic and cable TV wires. They may be in contact with energized electric wires that are not within your view. To report downed electric wires, please call **800-867-5222**.

**This is an important notice.  
Please have it translated.**

Este é um aviso importante. Quiera mandá-lo traduzir.  
Este es un aviso importante. Sírvase mandarlo traducir.  
Avis important. Veuillez traduire immédiatement.

Questa è un'informazione importante, Si prega di tradurla.

ĐÂY LÀ MỘT BẢN THÔNG CÁO QUAN TRỌNG  
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Это очень важное сообщение.  
Пожалуйста, попросите чтобы  
вам его перевели.

## Combat invasive tree-killing insects and help save the environment.

Look for and report these symptoms:

**Emerald Ash Borer** – small half-moon shaped exit holes on ash trees, tree death from the top down and “s”-shaped larval galleries under the bark.

**Asian Long-Horned Beetle** – 3/8 inch round exit holes on the trunk and branches, sawdust and sap on and around the trees, round pits in the bark (egg niches), often on maple, horse chestnut, birch and willow trees.

To protect your property, only purchase firewood that has been harvested locally or heat treated for pests. For more information and to report infestations: Visit [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov) or call **866-640-0652** (email: [firewood@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:firewood@gw.dec.state.ny.us)).

## National Grid’s Routine tree trimming responsibilities and schedule.

To ensure safety and electric service reliability, National Grid schedules tree trimming in your area every five to seven years adhering to the industry “best practices.”

National Grid utilizes a technique called “directional pruning” in order to naturally “train” and direct growth away from the wires. This method is a true benefit to the health of the tree as it reduces disease and decay entry points. This pruning practice was developed in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service and is endorsed by the International Society of Arboriculture, the National Arbor Day Foundation and other tree-care professionals around the world.

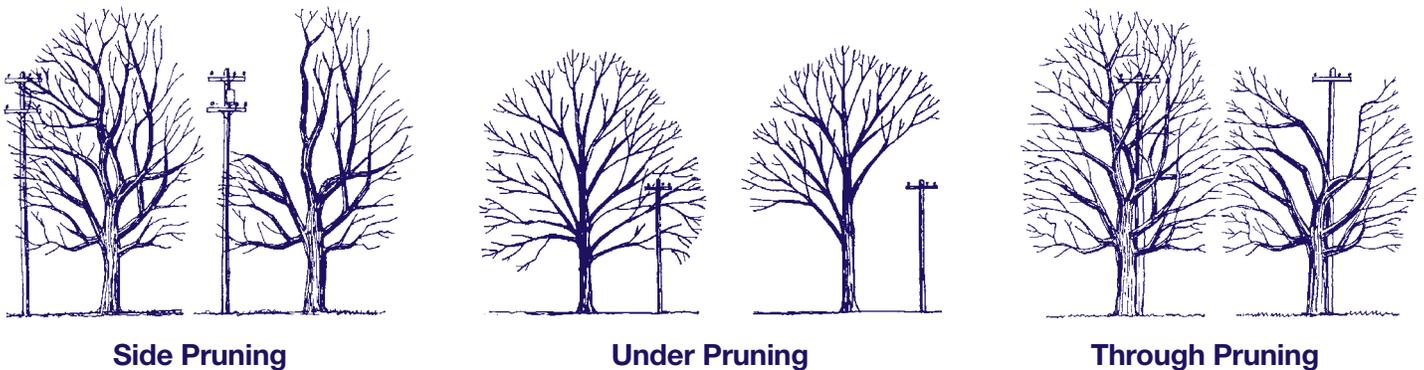
We only hire certified contractors to do this work.

Working efficiently as possible, we schedule trimming by geographic location. Unless there is a significant tree hazard affecting the electric wires in your area, we do not perform tree trimming outside of our trimming schedule.

National Grid’s trimming is limited to tree branches that affect electric wires only. We do not trim trees or branches that affect individual customer service lines or phone and cable wires.

Before trimming, we attempt to notify customers by postcard, door hanger or a National Grid crew visit. National Grid trims trees to maintain a minimum of 10-15 feet of clearance from our powerlines.

The following illustrations provide examples of the proper directional pruning for shade and ornamental trees:



As part of our tree trimming process, crews will chip the branches they remove from the trees in your yard. Wood pieces that cannot be chipped will be cut into manageable lengths and left near the base of the tree.

In areas that are natural and not actively groomed, wood/brush may be left to naturally decompose.

Often, customers need additional trimming beyond what National grid performs as part of our scheduled work. National Grid does not trim branches or remove trees that affect individual customer service lines. (See *Homeowner tree trimming responsibilities*.)

## Homeowner tree trimming responsibilities.

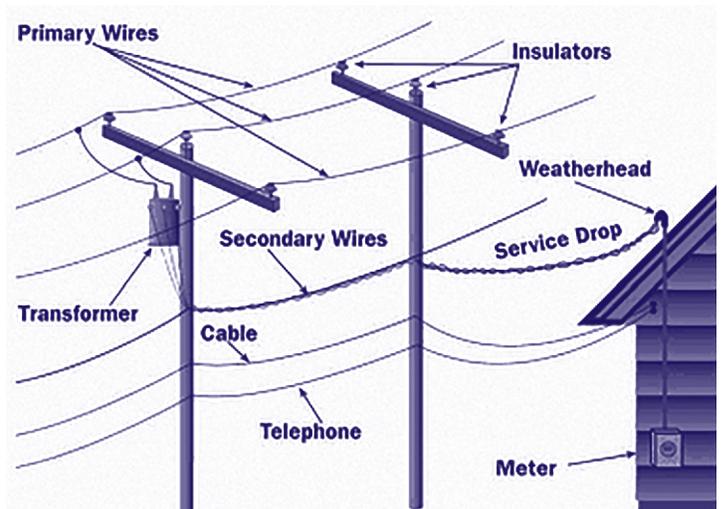
Often customers need additional trimming and pruning beyond what National Grid performs. Working efficiently as possible, we schedule trimming by geographic location. Unless there is a significant tree hazard affecting the electric wires in your area, we do not perform tree trimming outside of our trimming schedule. If additional pruning work beyond what we provide in our scheduled maintenance program is desired, you may hire an electrically qualified tree contractor (see *Choosing a Contractor*) to complete that work at your own expense. We will work closely with you and your qualified contractor.

**Important Note:** During or after any storm event, consider all downed wires to be energized and dangerous, including telephone, fiber optic and cable TV wires. They may be in contact with energized electric wires that are not within your view. To report downed electric wires, please call [800-867-5222](tel:800-867-5222).

## Identifying your electric service.

**How can you tell an electric line from a telephone or cable line? Here are a few important items you should know:**

- High-voltage electric lines are always at or near the top of the pole.
- These lines are usually found along neighborhood streets, but they may also be located in back yards or across open fields.
- If more than one utility line (telephone or cable) is mounted on the same pole, the high-voltage electric lines are at the top of the pole.
- A low-voltage electric line is located several feet below the high-voltage line.
- The low-voltage line attaches to your service weather head (a protective device is located where the line is connected to your residence.)
- The diagram below should also help you to identify electric lines.



**Important Note:** During or after any storm event, consider all downed wires to be energized and dangerous, including telephone, fiber optic and cable TV wires. They may be in contact with energized electric wires that are not within your view. To report downed electric wires, please call [800-867-5222](tel:800-867-5222).

## Tree cleanup and wood disposal.

As part of our routine tree trimming, crews will chip the branches they remove from trees in your yard. Wood pieces that cannot be chipped will be cut into manageable lengths and left near the base of the tree.

In areas that are not actively groomed, wood/brush may be left to naturally decompose and provide shelter benefits for wildlife. Paths and drainage ditches within the work area will be kept clear.

## Storm removal or cleanup

During a storm, our crews are focused on cutting and clearing trees from our lines to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. While we will remove broken utility poles, homeowners are responsible for removing all broken and/or damaged trees and limbs including those National Grid removes to expedite service restoration.

**Important Note:** During or after any storm event, consider all downed wires to be energized and dangerous, including telephone, fiber optic and cable TV wires. They may be in contact with energized electric wires that are not within your view. To report downed electric wires, please call **800-867-5222**.

## Digging In? Please call Dig Safely.

Deciding where to plant a tree is serious business, because electric and gas utility lines may be underground and where you least expect them. Tall-growing trees planted near, or adjacent to, utility lines may present a future hazard and eventually will require removal.

Call Dig Safely New York at **811** or **800-962-7962** at least two full working days before digging to plant or plan any excavation work. Dig Safely notifies National Grid and other participating utilities so that we can mark our underground wires, pipes or cables to prevent personal injury, property damage and service interruptions. To learn more, please go to [www.digsafely.com](http://www.digsafely.com).

## Planting trees? Plan ahead and choose plantings wisely.

Please plant tall-growing trees away from utilities lines to protect you and your community. For information on electing the right tree and planting near power lines, see *How to Avoid Tree and Utility Line Conflicts* at [www.nationalgridus.com/environment](http://www.nationalgridus.com/environment).

**Important Note:** Before planting, make sure to consider a tree's full growth potential to see how the location of the tree will affect any overhead or underground utilities lines and rights-of-way.

We work closely with homeowners and their contractors to temporarily disconnect service for safe trimming or tree removal. Please call us at **800-642-4272** at least five days in advance of the work.

**Proper Places for Trees Around Homes**  
*Consult your Arborist, Nursery or Landscape Professional for help selecting the proper tree.*

**Tall Zone Over 60'**  
Trees that grow over 60 feet in height  
Use large types of trees here, but plant them at least 35 feet away from the house.

**Medium Zone 40'**  
Trees that grow no taller than 40 feet  
This zone is used to decorate or frame your house. Select trees first, then plant shrubs to complement the trees.

**Low Zone 25'**  
Trees that grow less than 25 feet in height  
This zone ends 25 feet away from electric utility wires.

**HOUSE**      **LAWN**      **WALK**      **STREET**

*Possible Underground Lines*

Your cooperation in planting tall-growing trees away from electric lines will help assure greater public safety to you and your community. Tall-growing trees planted within utility rights-of-way or underneath overhead electric lines will require National Grid to prune or remove trees to maintain proper clearance from electrical wires. This may result in the tree having an unnatural appearance.

## **Frequently asked questions.**

### **Will National Grid trim or remove trees that are near the service drop to my home?**

National Grid is responsible for routine trimming around our high voltage wires to maintain reliable services to our customers.

Homeowners are responsible for trimming tree branches near the low voltage service drop to their individual home.

Many customers choose to remove these trees to reduce the risk that their tree may damage their home or electric service.

National Grid is available to work closely with your contractor to make the area safe for tree trimming or tree removal. In some cases, rubber sleeves can be placed over service wires. In other cases, it is necessary for us to temporarily disconnect your service lines from your home so that your contractor can safely trim or remove trees.

### **Your contractor damaged my property— who should I call?**

Please call Customer Service at **800-642-4272** to report any damage.

### **National Grid did not trim around the wires that I was concerned about.**

National Grid is responsible for trimming around high voltage electric wires. Our forestry professionals assess each customer's situation and will trim trees and branches that pose a risk to our high voltage electric wires. If a cycle trim for an area is scheduled, your trimming may occur at a later date. If the tree poses a risk to your individual service drop, your telephone or cable wires, please understand that National Grid is not responsible for trimming those trees/branches.

### **National Grid disfigured my tree.**

National Grid uses directional pruning in accordance with accepted national standards to prevent trees from coming into contact with high voltage wires. We apologize that while the tree's appearance is compromised, the procedure promotes tree health and is only conducted to preserve public safety and prevent power outages.

## **Choose a qualified contractor.**

New York state law requires that all tree work in the proximity of overhead electric facilities should be completed by individuals trained to recognize the hazards of working near energized lines.

If you need tree work near overhead electric lines on your property, ask your contractor if his/her employees receive such training. If not, National Grid can arrange the needed services, and may charge you and/or your contractor for the service provided.

Tree removals and trimming near service lines to your property should be done by an electric-qualified tree contractor and who employs workers specifically trained to work within 10 feet of electrical hazards.

If hazards to your service are present or you are planning to trim or remove trees near high-voltage wires, you may request that National Grid disconnect your service entrance wire temporarily from your home for your contractor.

Please contact Customer Service at **800-642-4272** at least five days in advance of the work. A forestry department representative will visit your property to assess the potential for any safety hazards or outage risks.