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High Voltage

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Trees and Power Lines Don't Always Mix

Trees add beauty to any landscape, but they have some impressive practical benefits as well. They clean the air, reduce carbon dioxide and (when positioned correctly) provide protection from wind and sun, reducing heating and cooling costs. If a tree grows too close to a power line, however, it can cause power outages and become a life-threatening danger.

A growing problem

Trees can be a contributing factor to as many as 50% of power outages. Problems can

occur suddenly, such as when a branch breaks during a wind or ice storm. Issues can also develop over time through natural growth patterns, with growing branches crowding or rubbing against power lines.

Trees located near power lines represent a real threat to children who may be tempted to climb them, or to homeowners attempting to tackle a tree-trimming job on their own. Limbs and branches that come into contact with power lines may themselves become energized.

Trimming back

To improve safety and reduce the risk of power outages, your power company maintains a vigilant program of tree and brush removal and trimming. Trimming is performed according to directional pruning techniques that meet the standards of the National Arborist Association, the American Association of Nurserymen and other groups. Directional pruning guides new growth away from power lines. Limbs or portions of limbs growing near power lines are trimmed back to the main branch or trunk, where they would naturally shed if the limbs died from natural causes. This preserves the natural defense system of the tree and minimizes impact on the crown. In some situations, an entire tree is removed. This may be because the tree is leaning toward a power line or it has a structural defect that increases its risk of falling.

Right place, right tree

Adding trees to your landscape? Carefully consider different tree species and how they may affect power lines on your grounds. No tree should be planted near high-voltage transmission lines. Some species, however, normally grow to a mature height of 20 feet or less. These include:

- Crabapple
- Flowering Dogwood
- Hawthorne
- Bristlecone Pine
- Common Juniper
- Trident, Amur, Paperback and Tartarian Maples
- Rose Acacia

These species can typically provide an attractive addition to your landscape without interfering with distribution lines. The following species, however, grow particularly tall and should be planted no closer than 60 feet from distribution lines:

- Oak
- Colorado Blue Spruce
- Silver and Norway Maples
- Most pine species

If you're planning a landscape project, overhead power lines are not your only concern. Knowing where utility lines are buried can help you avoid injury, service outages and costly repairs. Call 811 to have underground lines marked before you dig.



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Spring Storms: Is Your Home Ready?

Spring is a time of hope and renewal, but it can also bring severe weather and flooding. Are you prepared. Take these steps to keep your home and family safe during spring storms.

Safety first

Make sure your family is ready to stay safe during a storm or other emergency.

- Sign up for your community's emergency warning system.
- Discuss storm safety with your family and what to do in case of severe weather.
- Prepare an emergency kit. Include water bottles, non-perishable food, blankets, first-aid supplies, flashlights and a battery-powered radio.

Inspect the outside of your home

Your house is designed to shelter you from the storm. Take a walk around your property and look for these potential issues.

- Check for loose roof shingles or siding. Repair or replace them if necessary.
- Look for any tree branches extending over your house or driveway that could fall during stormy weather. Trim them back if needed.
- Inspect unattached structures, like sheds or storage bins, and make sure they are firmly secured.
- Check gutters and downspouts for any debris that may block drainage and clear it away.
- Make sure all gutters are firmly attached and downspouts drain away from the foundation.
- Check the grading around your foundation. A downward can allow water to build up during heavy rain and leak into your basement. Repair the grading so that there is an upward slope, allowing rainwater to drain away from your house.
- Make sure fence posts are firmly secured in the ground. Loose fencing can blow over during high winds.

Sump pump checkup

Your sump pump can help keep your basement from flooding in heavy rain. Make sure it's working properly.

- Open up the cover on your sump pump pit and look inside. Clear away any debris that can clog the pump and cause an overflow.
- Make sure the drain hose is connected, and that it's not blocked or frozen.
- Check the inlet screen and make sure it's letting water enter the sump pump pit.
- Lift the water level float up and down to make sure it moves freely.

Test the sump pump to make sure it's in working order. Fill the pit with a bucket of water to turn your pump on. Watch it carefully to see if it's getting rid of the water, then check the discharge pipe outside to make sure it drains properly. If the pump doesn't run, make sure it's plugged in and the circuit isn't tripped.

Flood readiness

Floods can be damaging and dangerous. Take these steps to make sure you're prepared.

- Learn your vulnerability to flooding by determining the elevation of your property.
- If you live in a flood-prone area, keep sandbags, plywood and plastic sheeting on hand.
- Contact your local emergency management agency to learn what protective measures should be taken around your home.
- Seal the walls in your basement with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.

Flood damage may not be covered by standard homeowner's insurance. If you live in a flood-prone area, see the **National Flood Insurance Program** for information about obtaining flood insurance.

Power outages

Although your electric service is generally reliable, a storm may lead to an extended power outage. Be prepared. Have candles and flashlights available. Use a battery-powered radio or your mobile device to get information about the status of power restoration. For backup power, consider purchasing a generator and operate it safely according to manufacturer's guidelines.

Power Outage Information



If you lose power due to wind, rain, or other circumstances, don't worry CEL&P crews will work quickly to restore your power. Report downed power lines by calling CEL&P at 765- 362-1900 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a week or call 911.

Outage information updates will be posted on our **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **Twitter** pages.



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