

## Tree Management FAQ's

***Q Why does CU trim trees?***

- A** CU prunes trees away from electric lines in order to provide reliable electric service to our customers.

***Q What determines how much to trim?***

- A** Line voltage determines the amount of tree/electric line clearance required.

High voltage transmission lines running from substation to substation require a minimum of fifteen feet clearance, with no overhanging branches.

Primary voltage lines running through neighborhoods require a minimum of ten feet clearance, with no overhanging branches.

***Q Does CU trim around service lines to homes?***

- A** Property owners are responsible for keeping tree limbs away from this line. For your safety, consider hiring a professional for major trimming.

If you choose to do the trimming yourself, CU will gladly disconnect the service wire and reconnect it when the trimming has been completed. There is no charge for this service. Allow two days notification for scheduling.

At your request, CU will trim for minor clearance around the service line when we are on your property doing our regular maintenance work.

***Q What is the Power Line Safety Act?***

- A** The Power Line Safety Act requires workers and equipment to stay at least ten feet away from overhead power lines. If you will be trimming, or hiring someone to trim within ten feet of CU's overhead power lines, please contact us for assistance at 863-9000.

***Q Does CU clean up broken branches left after storm-related outages?***

- A** During emergencies, CU leaves the tree clean up to you in order to allow our staff more time to restore your neighbor's power.

***Q What happens to the chips and wood left over after pruning?***

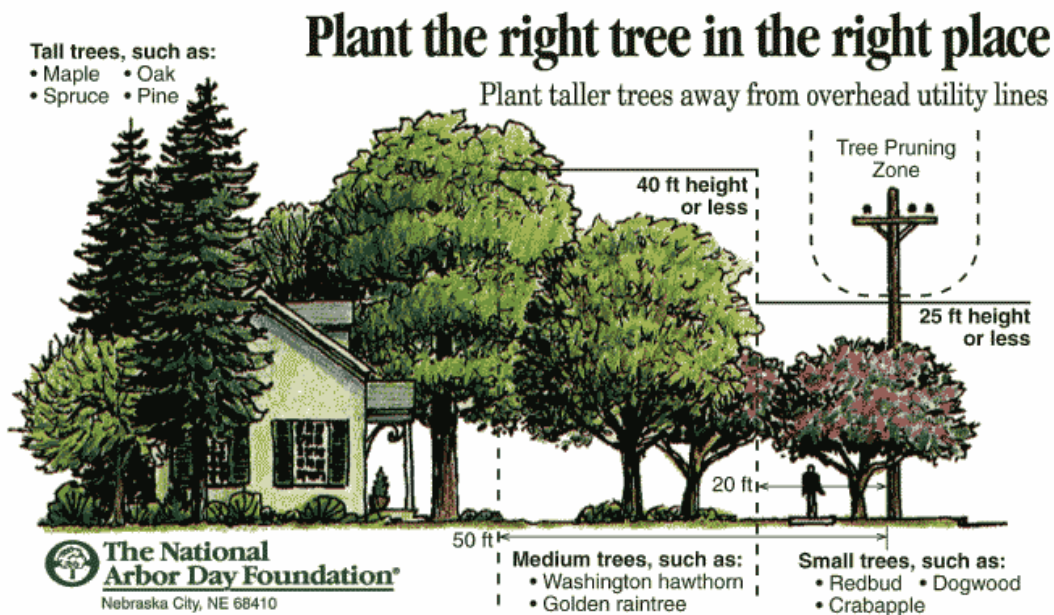
- A** At the property owner's request, CU will remove the chips and wood for disposal. Wood chips are available to the public for pickup anytime at 740 N. Belcrest. Contact CU at 863-9000 for firewood.

**Q** *Why does CU prune trees the way they do?*

**A** Although utility pruning has different objectives than other types of pruning, CU arborists adhere to professional industry standards recognized by the International Society of Arboriculture. This type of pruning requires that cuts occur at locations causing the least damage to a tree, enabling the tree to properly recover and heal from the pruning.

The natural structure of the tree, the growth pattern, and the tree's mature size and shape are all considered before pruning begins. The intent is to remove branches back to lateral branches or parent stems that will grow away from utility facilities.

Topping or rounding over the tree's canopy is discouraged because this practice severely damages trees and encourages rapid re-growth back into facilities. When these cuts are repeated over time trees are weakened, their food stores are depleted, and their ability to resist insects, diseases, and failure is decreased.



**Q** *Who does pruning for CU?*

**A** CU currently uses contract arborists for pruning. These arborists receive intensive training from both their employer and CU to make certain they meet our standards. Our current contractor is Asplundh Tree Expert Company.

**Q** *Who do you recommend for private tree service?*

**A** Although CU does not recommend one tree service company over another, there are criteria recommendations to consider: 1) Make certain the tree service has an ISA Certified Arborist on staff; 2) Verify the tree service company is licensed and insured; 3) Ask for a free estimate from more than one tree service; 4) Think twice before using a tree service that will “top” trees.

**Q** *What can I plant near electric lines and underground transformers?*

- A** Consider the mature height and spread of trees before planting near electric lines and facilities. Trees that will be 25 feet or taller at maturity should be planted at least 25 feet from overhead facilities.

When planting around underground equipment, plants must be at least 10 feet away from the front and 3 feet from the sides. Ask for CU's brochure with information on ornamental trees that can be planted near electric facilities.

**NO OVERHANG**

In cases where major trimming on a service wire is needed, you may want to consider hiring a professional. If you are a do-it-yourselfer, CU will gladly disconnect the service wire and reconnect when you have completed your trimming. There is no charge for this service and we are available seven days a week. Please call 863-9000 a minimum of two days before you trim to allow for scheduling.

**10 FEET**

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A service wire is the overhead wire that extends from a pole to your house. Keeping tree limbs away from this service wire is your responsibility as a homeowner.

Trees are beautiful, peaceful, calming and an asset to any community. They also can be hazardous when contacting power lines.

When trees grow into overhead electrical lines, your electric service may be interrupted. Planting trees in the right place makes our job easier to

maintain a minimum ten-foot separation between tree growth and electric lines. This reduces the chance of electric service disruption and safety hazards.

Our Tree Management staff is available to answer your questions and help you

make the right choice when planting your next tree.

Please call 863-9000 during normal business hours to talk to a tree professional.

**CITY UTILITIES**  
*Bringing Power Home™*

*Q How can planting trees reduce heating and cooling costs?*

*A* Planting deciduous trees with dense foliage on the south, east and west sides of your home, will provide maximum shading from the hot summer sun. An added benefit, these trees drop their leaves and offer no obstruction to winter sunshine, which will help warm your home during the cold months.

Plant evergreen type trees on the north side of your home, to protect it from the cold northern winds of winter. A tree with low branches will provide protection close to the ground.

*Q What precautions should I take around overhead utilities?*

*A* Always look up before climbing, trimming or removing trees close to electric lines. Do not allow children to climb or build tree houses in trees close to electric lines. Consider all lines on utility poles as hazardous. Never touch or let anything you are holding touch any overhead line. Do not get near downed lines, even if they appear to be de-energized. Learn more safety tips at [here](#).

*Q What is Tree Line USA?*

*A* The National Arbor Day Foundation, in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters, recognizes public and private utilities across the nation demonstrating practices that protect and enhance America's urban forests. Utilities must meet three requirements in order to be recognized as a Tree Line USA Utility: 1) Quality Tree Care; 2) Annual Worker Training; 3) Tree Planting and Public Education.

**City Utilities  
a Tree Line USA Utility since 1994**