What is DREMC's Rights of Way?

DREMC's distrubution system consists of more than 6,100 miles of line that carry safe and reliable electricity to residential, commercial and industrial members in our area. Along with maintaining 6,100 miles of line, we also maintain our 40-foot right of way.

Our rights of way are the corridors through which power lines pass across portions of the 16 counties we serve. Trees growing too closely to high-voltage power lines can cause outages, which can endanger people and property. We work every day to keep rights of way clear of trees and dense brush and protect our distribution lines to quickly perform maintenance and power restoration when necessary.

Why is my property affected?

If your property is located near a power line right of way, more than likely, some vegetation bordering your property may hamper safe and efficient electric service and power line access because:

- Trees and branches touching power lines cause most service interruptions. Clearing trees helps prevent extended outages and system damage.
- Trees and vegetation limit electric repair crews access to power lines. Controlling growth allows for thorough inspection and routine maintenance.
- Tall trees serve as bridges to electrical lines. Children and animals sometimes can't resist temptation to climb and explore. Removing the trees promotes safety for your family and the environment and assures a continuous flow of electricity.

Years of experience and study demonstrate that one of the most efficient ways to keep rights of way clear of unwanted trees and vegetation is through the careful and selective use of herbicides.

Selectively controlling trees, brush and other vegetation along the power line rights of way helps keep your lights on. It assures safety and easy access for service and maintenance needs and also preserves and enhances natural surroundings, including wildlife habitat, for all to enjoy.

Why herbicide? *It works!*

Herbicides are used to remove incompatible vegetation from DREMC's rights of way without the harmful effects of other alternatives.

- Mowing and hand clearing effectively remove incompatible vegetation above ground, but they leave root systems intact and viable. Furthermore, desirable plants are often removed during mowing activities.
- Repeated mechanical clearing often results in accelerated growth and a dense layer of vegetation that is both unsightly and of limited benefit to landowners or wildlife.
- Herbicide application enhances habitat diversity for wildlife, including bees and other pollinators.
- Herbicide encourages low-growing, non-woody plants such as native wildflowers and grasses, while also discouraging invasive species.
- The herbicide application reduces the need for heavy equipment and lessens disturbance of people, land and wildlife.

Are the herbicide chemicals safe?

Herbicides used in the DREMC service area are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. A listing of the chemicals used in DREMC's Integrated Vegetation Management Program is included in this brochure. DREMC contracts with trained and licensed commercial herbicide applicators. All herbicides are applied by trained applicators in accordance with the product labels as well as applicable state and federal laws. Extra precautions are also enforced when herbicides are applied near crops, gardens, livestock operations and environmentally sensitive areas.

How are the herbicides applied?

DREMC and its contractors primarily use selective low-volume backpack application for controlling vegetation in the cooperative's rights of way. Typically, backpack applicators are targeting only woody stems or incompatible species that threaten electric service reliability or hamper access to the distribution lines. Repeated selective application results in a drastic reduction of woody plants over time, as well as reducing the amount of herbicides being applied, and creates a right of way of compatible vegetation.

Before you plant your next tree or shrub, please remember to plant according to the expected height and width of the particular species at full maturity. This chart should assist in helping you decide where to plant in relation to overhead power lines.

Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting, contact DREMC or visit www.ArborDay.org.

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Oak
- Spruce
- Pine
- Birch
- Sweetgum
- Linden

MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

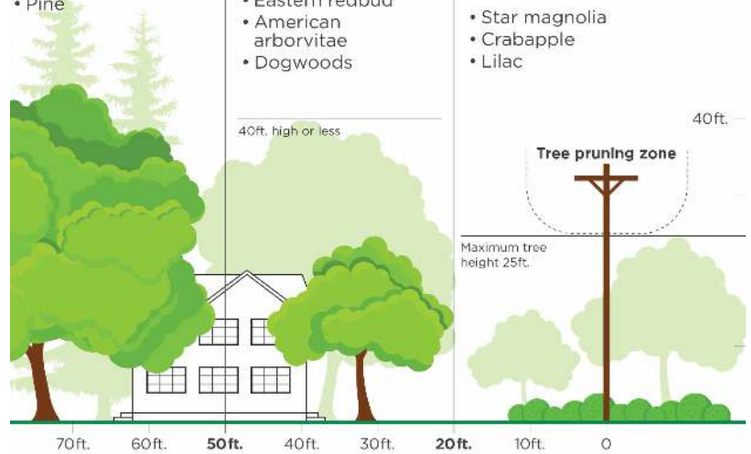
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenraintree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



Be safe! Always call 811 to locate any buried utility lines before you dig.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association