

September 1, 1996

TREE-TRIMMING GUIDELINES

1. Tree-trimming practices shall consider costs, safety, continuity of service, the health and vigor of affected trees, aesthetics, concerns of property owners, wildlife management, and environmental concerns.
2. Tree-trimming should be performed in accordance with the American National Standard for Tree Care (ANSI A300), unless the property owner insists otherwise. Each right-of-way clearing work crew should be familiar with and have access to those standards and these guidelines. Intensive maintenance practices may be unnecessary or not cost-effective in heavily wooded, rural, and mountainous locations.
3. Each right-of-way clearing work crew should be familiar with and have access to the utilities' right-of-way clearing specifications (1) which generally conform to the above noted standards and guidelines and (2) which should include sketches of trimming techniques for trees in close proximity to overhead distribution lines and guidelines addressing proper tree clearances based on both the chosen trimming cycle and tree species.
4. Right-of-way clearing operations must comply with applicable standards published by the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (29 CFR Part 1910 .269(r), "Line-clearance tree-trimming operations"), and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI Z133.1, "Pruning, Trimming, Repairing, Maintaining, and Removing Trees, and Cutting Brush-Safety Requirements").
5. Severe pruning in urban areas should be avoided in the summer.
6. In areas where aesthetics are important to the property owner, severe V-notch trimming and sidewalling should be minimized.
7. Trimming and pruning during emergency weather conditions is sometimes necessary in order to restore service. Policies of contacting each homeowner may or may not be enforced because of the nature of the work, and clean up of debris under emergency situations may or may not be performed according to the utility's discretion.
8. Tree removal should be considered where long-term maintenance costs will be high, where property risk is high, or where the extent of trimming necessary will severely alter the shape of the tree.
9. Utilities shall attempt to notify property owners prior to trimming except when prior approval has been obtained from absentee property owners. A written message (e.g., a letter/notification-card/door-hang-tag) is an appropriate alternative when verbal communication is not practical.