

Vegetation Management

What is vegetation management?

To keep the lights on and provide safe and reliable service to our customers, PECO invests millions of dollars each year in a scientific approach to vegetation management, which includes pruning, tree removal, mowing and public education. Our vegetation management program is a key element of PECO's overall preventive maintenance program.

Why do we do it?

- Broken tree limbs, fallen trees and other vegetation that come in contact with electrical equipment cause about one-third of power outages each year.
- Our vegetation management program and routine tree pruning:
 - decreases the number of tree-related outages by about 40 percent.
 - shortens the duration of outages that do occur.
- Federal standards mandate that utilities have a vegetation management program to prevent widespread outages on the transmission system.
- The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) also requires PECO to adequately maintain its equipment to provide reliable electric service to customers. Service reliability is closely monitored each year.

How does PECO manage vegetation on our electric system?

- PECO maintains more than 13,500 miles of aerial transmission and distribution lines that deliver power to 1.6 million electric customers across southeastern Pennsylvania.
- We perform annual inspections of our electric transmission and distribution systems.
- We also prune trees and other vegetation across our service territory on a five-year cycle to prevent branches and trees from posing a threat to safe and reliable service for our customers.
- In some cases, "hazardous" or unhealthy trees, or fast-growing invasive trees may be removed.
- Our specially trained arborists are qualified and trained in accordance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300 standard.
- When customers call to report a concern, or if a storm has recently impacted the area, inspectors will patrol the area to identify and, if necessary, correct any vegetation problems.

Which trees should customers plant?

- We want to help customers plant the right tree in the right place. We encourage our customers to plant only low-growing or compatible trees near electric distribution lines.
- This reduces the need for future pruning around utility lines and helps to maintain reliable electric service.
- To learn more about planting the right tree in the right place, visit www.peco.com and click on the *Trees and Powerlines* link under the *Customer Service/Service Request* tab on the homepage.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

To report a downed tree on power lines or emergency:
1-800-841-4141

General non-emergency questions or concerns:
1-800-494-4000

To learn more:
www.peco.com

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Ongoing tree and vegetation pruning

ALONG TRANSMISSION LINES

Transmission lines are high-voltage wires that run along large towers and form an interconnected grid that brings power from power plants to local substations. Disruptions to transmission lines can have serious consequences. In August 2003, more than 50 million people in the Midwest, Northeast and Ontario, Canada, were affected by a blackout that began when trees came in contact with transmission lines.

Federal standards mandate that utilities have a transmission vegetation management program to prevent widespread outages on the transmission system. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (www.nerc.com) strictly enforces these standards. Utility companies can be fined up to \$1 million per day for each violation for failure to comply with these standards.

PECO maintains three zones of vegetation around transmission equipment:



- 1 Wire Zone** – Vegetation under wires and around towers will be mowed or removed.
- 2 Border Zone** – Low-growing vegetation less than 15 feet tall at maturity may be permitted on the borders of the right-of-way (ROW).
- 3 Off ROW Zone** – Mature trees and normal vegetation growth are permitted beyond the right-of-way.

Contact PECO before planting anything in an electric transmission right-of-way.

ALONG DISTRIBUTION LINES

Distribution lines carry power from substations and deliver it to homes, businesses and other customers. The overhead wires are typically mounted on poles along streets and between properties. If there is a problem with these lines, service can be interrupted to a single customer, a group, or as many as a few thousand customers.

PECO uses a technique called directional pruning (or natural target pruning), which encourages tree growth away from lines and equipment. This method has been adopted as a national standard by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).



Pruning trees or other vegetation near electrical equipment can be extremely dangerous and can result in injury or death. Only qualified professionals who are trained to work safely around electric equipment should do so.