



POLICY

SUBJECT: Right-Of-Way Management

DEFINITIONS

Danger Tree shall be defined as a tree outside the Cooperative's Right-Of-Way (ROW) that, in the judgement of a Cooperative staff member applying prudent utility judgement, presents an imminent threat to the Cooperative's primary distribution line due to the condition of the tree. Due to the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) pest within the Cooperative's service territory, and due to the nearly 100% kill rate of all species of Ash trees by the EAB, Ash trees shall be treated as dead trees when evaluating their potential threat to the Cooperative's primary distribution system, even if the Ash tree has not yet been infected by the EAB.

Herbicide shall be defined as a chemical used to control, suppress, or kill plants, or to severely interrupt their normal growth process.

Neutral Conductor shall be defined as the current carrying conductor within the Cooperative's primary distribution system, the purpose of which is to return any current imbalance on the 3-phase distribution system to the source (substation transformer). The Neutral Conductor is always the lowest conductor among the Cooperative's electrical conductors on a distribution pole, regardless of the total number of conductors. Secondary electrical conductors, communication wires, or other low voltage conductors can be located below the Cooperative's Neutral Conductor.

Overhead Secondary Service shall be defined as the wires that extend from the Cooperative's transformer pole to the member's point of service demarcation, which is either a point of attachment on a house/building or a member-owned meter pole. Typically the Overhead Secondary Service for a residence consists of a bare neutral conductor twisted with 2 coated phase conductors, which are collectively called "triplex."

Right-Of-Way shall be defined as a 30-foot wide land area centered on the Cooperative's electric line, which shall be maintained in a manner consistent with this Policy.

Topped Tree shall be defined as a tree that has been trimmed such that its top is no closer than 8 feet below the Neutral Conductor of the Cooperative's primary electric distribution system.

POLICY

Primary:

It shall be the policy of the Delaware County Electric Cooperative, Inc. to maintain an 8-year cycle Right-of-Way (ROW) clearing program for all of the Cooperative's primary overhead distribution Rights-Of-Way. The 8-year cycle ROW clearing program shall include mechanical cutting, including topping, of undesirable species in year 1 of the cycle for a given section of ROW followed in year 2 by the application of appropriate herbicide treatments of undesirable species within the ROW, except where land owners have requested no spraying on their property.

The Cooperative shall minimize the number of topped trees within the Cooperative's ROW and shall limit the impact of Topped Trees on system reliability and safety by requiring best practices of the Cooperative's Tree Crew. Best practices shall include:

- remove rather than top trees whenever practical; topping trees is a last resort method of pruning
- create at least 8 feet of separation between a Topped Tree and the Cooperative's Neutral Conductor any time a tree is topped
- apply qualitative field judgement to consider the future growth of the tree in addition to the present condition of the tree



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- consider the Neutral Conductor as if it were a hot conductor because damage to the Neutral Conductor creates a safety risk for DCEC workers as well as members of the public
 - apply qualitative field judgement to consider the impact of snow and ice loading, which both have the effect of reducing separation distances between the Neutral Conductor and trees

Management and staff of the Cooperative shall research, adapt, and communicate to the membership best practices for the management of rights-of-way with the following goals:

- Educate land owners about the specific herbicide practices utilized by the Cooperative and the value of herbicide treatment to the cost-effectiveness, safety, and reliability of the electric distribution system.
- Engage members in the management of the vegetation within the ROW on their own property.
- Encourage pruning and mowing activities that prevent the advanced growth of undesirable species in the ROW.
- Encourage planting of desirable low-grow species within the ROW.
- Encourage planting of native species with the potential to create desirable habitat for threatened or endangered animal and insect species including certain species of bees and butterflies.
- Encourage the active management of exotic, invasive plant species, which threaten the plant species native to this area.

Secondary:

The Cooperative shall respond to vegetation threats to safe and reliable operation of secondary service wires discovered by a Cooperative employee or contractor in a timely fashion. In addition, the Cooperative shall respond to member requests for Overhead Secondary Service tree clearing in a timely fashion. The Cooperative shall, upon member request, clear an area with a 3-foot diameter (1.5-foot radius) around the member's Overhead Secondary Service wire. If a member requests additional trimming of Overhead Secondary Service wires, the Cooperative shall either perform the requested trimming or offer to temporarily remove the member's Overhead Secondary Service wire to allow the member or the member's contractor to safely perform tree trimming or tree removal. The decision to perform the requested trimming or to temporarily remove the member's Overhead Secondary Service wire shall be made solely by the staff of the Cooperative with the goal of minimizing costs and maximizing operational efficiency for the Cooperative.

Other:

The Cooperative shall remove or cause to be removed any Danger Tree in a timely fashion after the Danger Tree is reported by a land owner or discovered by a Cooperative employee or contractor. When practical, land owners shall be notified prior to removal of Danger Trees. In the event of interference with Danger Tree removal by a land owner or others, the Cooperative should attempt to reason with the land owner and should take reasonable and customary legal measures to enforce the Cooperative's right to remove Danger Trees, but in no case shall the Cooperative risk physical confrontation with any person in the performance of Danger Tree removal.

Reasonable effort should be made by the Cooperative's Tree Crew to address members' concerns and consider the aesthetic impacts of tree cutting. However, no member of the Cooperative's staff, employee or contractor, is authorized to operate outside this policy even if requested to do so by a land owner or member.

RESPONSIBILITY: Tree Crew Foreman and General Manager

DELAWARE COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Approved by Board of Directors	August 25, 2015
Revised by Board of Directors	October 25, 2016
Revised by Board of Directors	November 28, 2017