

Call before you dig

Do your garden and landscape projects include digging, planting a tree, installing a new mail box or bringing in a backhoe for trench work? Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water and electric lines, can be a shovel thrust away from turning a summer project into a disaster.



Dial 8-1-1 the national "Call Before You Dig" phone number, at least 72 hours before digging or excavation work. Your call will be routed to a local "one call" center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing and local utilities will be notified.

A locator will arrive to mark the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes and cables with flags or marking paint so you'll know what's below. Then safe digging can begin.

It's free!

It's easy!

It's the law!



Residential Planting Guide



Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative
Barron Electric Cooperative
Bayfield Electric Cooperative
Chippewa Electric Cooperative
Clark Electric Cooperative
Dunn Energy Cooperative
Eau Claire Energy Cooperative
Freeborn-Mower Cooperative Services
Hawkeye REC
Heartland Power Cooperative
Jackson Electric Cooperative
Jo-Carroll Energy
Jump River Electric Cooperative

Oakdale Electric Cooperative
People's Energy Cooperative
Pierce Pepin Cooperative Services
Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative
Price Electric Cooperative
Richland Electric Cooperative
Riverland Energy Cooperative
St. Croix Electric Cooperative
Scenic Rivers Energy Cooperative
Taylor Electric Cooperative
Tri-County Electric Cooperative
Vernon Electric Cooperative



Putting in some new landscaping or trees this year? Or perhaps planning your garden?

Here are some tips to keep you safe around electricity.

Landscaping around electricity

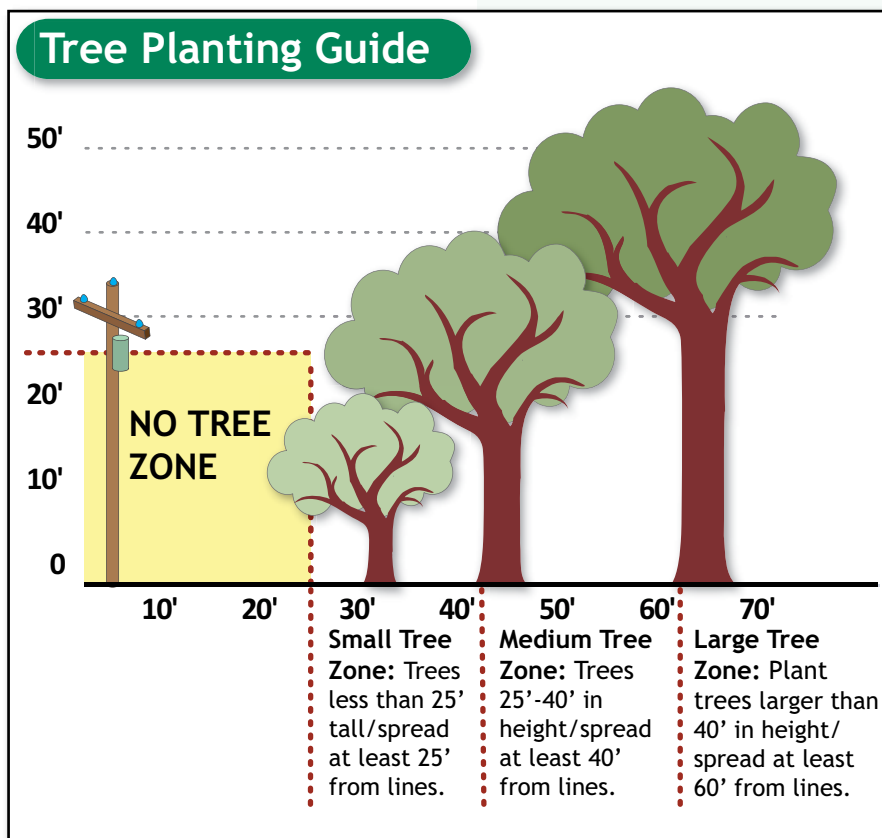
As you plan your tree and landscape plantings, consider that trees and shrubs need space to grow both above and below ground. Reduce fire hazards, power outages and the need for frequent pruning with proper selection and planting of trees near utilities. Trees can help cool your home, break cold winds to lower your heating costs and provide food for wildlife. Properly placed trees can lower line clearance costs for utility companies, reduce tree mortality and result in healthier community forests.

In our part of the country, we use dense windbreaks to protect homes from harsh winter winds. Winter sun should be able to reach south-facing windows. Refer to this helpful graphic to determine which species to plant in various locations on your property:

Tall trees surrounding your home, such as maple, oak, elm, pine and spruce, provide summer shade to lower cooling costs and keep out cold winter winds. Medium trees, 40 feet or less in mature height, include hawthorn, pagoda dogwood, serviceberry, star magnolia and Amur maple, while smaller trees suitable for planting near distribution utility lines might include crab apple, sumac, burning bush, winterberry, dwarf Alberta spruce or dwarf Serbian spruce.

These tree recommendations are for planting near local distribution power lines. The only trees that may be planted within the 80 foot wide electrical transmission line right of way are ornamentals or dwarf fruit trees that grow no taller than 12 feet at maturity.

- Take care to plant trees away from underground utilities, as tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees.



- Always look up for nearby power lines before you cut down any tree or trim branches. If a tree falls into a power line, contact your electric co-op.
- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- If you have trees that appear to be growing into or leaning toward power lines, contact your electric utility. Never try to prune them yourself.

Yard and garden safety

Use only electric appliances marked for outdoor use for cutting the lawn, trimming the bushes and flowers and cutting tree limbs. Practice these safety precautions when you work with electric appliances outside of the home:

- Unplug electrical tools and disconnect spark plug wires on gasoline powered tools before making adjustments or cleaning jams near moving parts.
- Inspect power tools to repair or replace frayed cords, broken plugs.
- Be sure power tools are turned off and made inoperable if they must be left unattended to prevent use by children.
- Never work with electrical power tools in wet or damp conditions.
- Use only fiberglass or wooden ladders if you must work near overhead wires. Ladders that contact a power line can prove fatal, even if the ladder is made of wood.
- Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in outlets where water may be present.
- Teach children to stay away from pad mounted transformers (those green metal boxes) and substations which carry high voltages. Explain what posted warning signs mean.



- Place waterproof covers on all outdoor outlets.
- Never touch a person or an object that has made contact with a power line.

For more safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.