



February 2014

# EnergyLines

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## Exciting News Regarding the Heating Fund!

RG&E's Heating Fund program has joined forces with NYSEG's Project SHARE to form the new **Project SHARE Heating Fund**. Serving residents in the RG&E and NYSEG service areas, the new program is administered by HeartShare Human Services of New York, an organization with a proven track record of managing utility heating funds.

The **Project SHARE Heating Fund** will continue to help low-income elderly and disabled customers as well as active members of the military and veterans who are facing heating emergencies.

One hundred percent of donations to the **Project SHARE Heating Fund** go directly to our neediest neighbors. The **Project SHARE Heating Fund** is a fund of last resort, meaning all other assistance has to be exhausted.

### To receive a Project SHARE Heating Fund grant, you must have:

- A heating emergency
- Received HEAP and Emergency HEAP
- Exhausted all other state and local aid and be 60+ years of age and/or disabled

Active duty military personnel and well-discharged veterans with an energy emergency may qualify regardless of income.

To learn more or to see if you qualify for a Project SHARE Heating Fund grant call **1.800.599.HEART (4327)** weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or visit [heartshare.org/programs/energy-assistance/projectshare.html](http://heartshare.org/programs/energy-assistance/projectshare.html).



## Stay Connected with RG&E Email Notifications

When you sign up, we'll send you emails regarding:

- Weather conditions that may impact your electrical service.
- Updates on reported outages.
- Energy efficiency tips and information about RG&E products and services.

It's easy to sign up for RG&E's email notification service by going to [rge.com/mynotifications](http://rge.com/mynotifications) and completing our form.



## An RG&E Uniform for Every Season

### Meter services personnel recognizable with standard clothing

So you can recognize us when we access the meter on your property, here are photos of our uniforms with variations to accommodate New York weather.



For your protection, every RG&E employee and contractor carries photo identification. Always ask to see this badge before granting entry to your property. If you're still not sure, call RG&E at **1.800.743.2110** to confirm the status of anyone claiming to represent RG&E.



# Trees: A Leading Cause of Power Interruptions

When power is interrupted, it is often due to a tree coming into contact with our power lines. To minimize interruptions, we prune or remove trees and plants in our rights of way.

## Removing Trees Near Transmission Lines

High-voltage transmission lines move large amounts of power from where it's produced to our local distribution system. In addition to our regular transmission maintenance work, as a direct result of the 2003 blackout (where tree limbs came into contact with transmission lines in Ohio) the New York State Public Service Commission does not allow trees to be pruned when they may grow too close to, come into contact with or fall into a high-voltage transmission line; in those cases, utilities must **remove** the trees.

## Pruning and Removing Trees Near Distribution Lines

For distribution lines – the power lines that deliver electricity to homes and businesses – we may prune or remove trees and vegetation depending on the situation. Any pruning we do follows American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards and Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) guidelines.

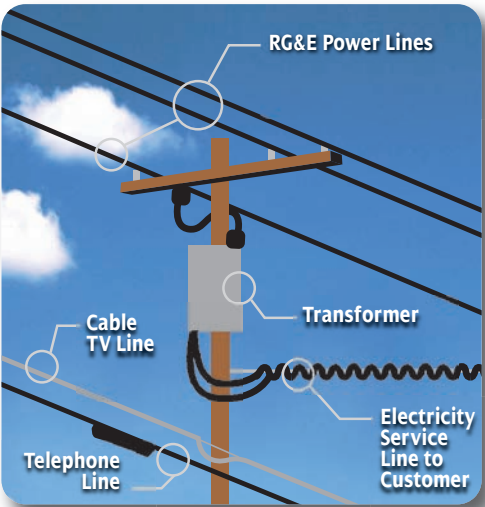
If you believe trees around utility lines need to be removed or pruned, we encourage you to contact the appropriate utility company (see illustration). Trees and plants on or near your electricity service wires should be pruned by qualified tree contractors. **Do not attempt this work yourself.**

To learn more visit [rge.com](http://rge.com), click on "Usage and Safety," "Electrical Safety" and then on "Trees and Powerlines."

**Plan Before You Plant or Build:** Consider the location of distribution lines when planting or doing construction work. Never plant or build anywhere near transmission lines.

### Our Tree Debris Removal Policy

- During scheduled tree work in residential and landscaped areas, we chip and remove smaller branches less than six inches in diameter and cut larger ones into easy-to-handle lengths.
- When customers request that we clear vegetation outside of our schedule or in rural, or non-landscaped areas, we leave the cut material behind.
- Following power outages, our priority is to restore electricity service quickly, so when we have to cut vegetation, we leave cut material behind in all cases.



### For Your Safety

- Never attempt to remove tree debris when downed power lines may be entangled.
- Leave cutting and pruning of trees near power lines to professionals. A tree or limb that contacts a power line could be deadly.
- Remind children not to climb trees near power lines.

# Everyone Pays the Costs of Theft

Theft of energy or equipment costs billions of dollars annually; those stealing energy also create potentially dangerous situations for themselves, the general public, emergency responders and utility workers.

Who pays the cost? We all do. Theft of service is built into customers' rates. RG&E is committed to protecting our customers, the general public, emergency responders and employees by watching for and eliminating theft. We also rely on the public to inform us of any suspicious situations, including theft of copper or other utility equipment. If you have information, you can call our theft tip line at **1.888.253.2247** or complete our online form at [rge.com](http://rge.com) (click on "Usage and Safety" and then on "Energy Theft"). All information is confidential.



## Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 9

When setting clocks ahead, don't forget to replace batteries in battery-operated smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.