Tree Care

>> Enhancing electric system reliability using sensible tree and vegetation management procedures.

Trees are a leading cause of power interruptions. When power is disrupted during wind or ice storms, it is often due to tree limbs making contact with power lines and equipment. To help avoid tree-related service interruptions, we manage vegetation around thousands of miles of power lines, keeping these areas free of trees and undergrowth.

We Prune Trees Only Near Our Power Lines

With our Tree Care program, we prune and sometimes remove trees and vegetation that could come into contact with our power lines. If you believe trees around utility lines need to be removed or pruned, we encourage you to contact the appropriate utility company – NYSEG or RG&E, the cable company or the telephone company. **Do not attempt this work yourself**. The illustration to the right can help you identify utility lines.

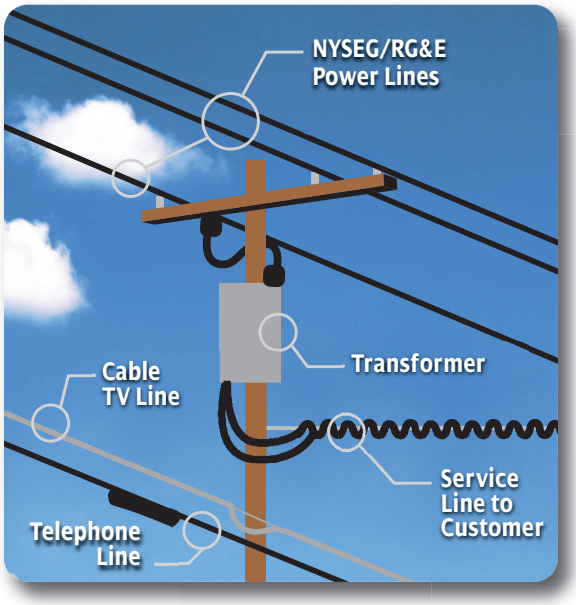
If you have trees that are not interfering with utility wires but need to be pruned, skilled tree contractors are best qualified to handle the job safely. A tree or limb that comes in contact with a power line could be deadly.

Plan before you plant or build:

Consider the location of power lines when planting or doing construction work. To minimize the chance of tree-related power interruptions it's best to avoid planting new trees under power lines. If you have no other place for a tree and must plant near a power line, there are many low-growing ornamental trees and shrubs that add beauty to your property and cause little or no interference with power lines. To learn more, visit **arborday.org** or call **1.888.448.7337**.

Our tree debris removal policy:

- During scheduled maintenance tree work in residential and landscaped areas, we chip and remove smaller branches less than six inches and cut larger ones into manageable lengths and leave onsite.
- When customers request that we clear vegetation outside of our scheduled maintenance or in rural, non-landscaped areas, we leave the cut material behind for customer disposal.
- Following a storm, our first priority is to restore service safely and as quickly and efficiently as possible, so when we have to cut vegetation, we leave cut materials behind for customer disposal or to naturally decompose.



For your safety:

- Never attempt to remove tree debris when downed power lines may be entangled in the debris.
- 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 or climb on pad-mounted transformers.
- Avoid planting new trees under power lines.

For more information, visit **nyseg.com** or **rge.com**.

NYSEG RG&E

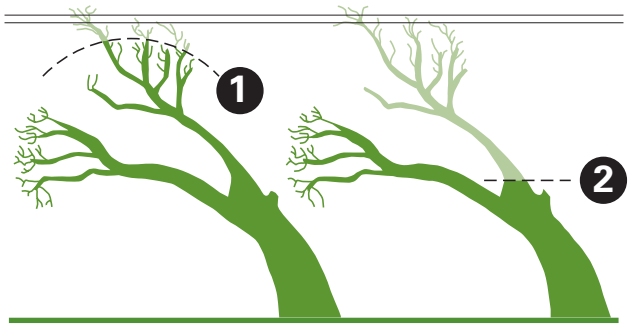
Natural Pruning Method

In yards and other landscaped areas, trees will be pruned using natural pruning methods established by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards and Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) guidelines. (Please note that during an emergency we may not be able to adhere to the natural pruning method.)

This pruning method involves cutting limbs where the tree would normally shed them and directing future growth away from power lines. While a newly pruned tree will look different, natural pruning protects the health of the tree, minimizes regrowth and requires fewer cuts. We will not paint pruned trees with tree wound dressings. Such dressings are cosmetic and do not stop decay. In fact, some studies show them to have a detrimental effect.

Why not just shape trees?

Shaping or "rounding over" was once a popular practice. Some have likened it to pruning a hedge. Tree shaping is now considered a poor practice, as shaped trees regrow quickly with excessive sprouting. These sprouts are weak and are more likely to break off, even in moderate storm or wind conditions, thereby increasing the chance of a power interruption.



1: Tree pruned to natural shape – incorrect. Problem: quick regrowth, excessive sprouts.

2: Correct approach using natural pruning.

Selective Tree Removal

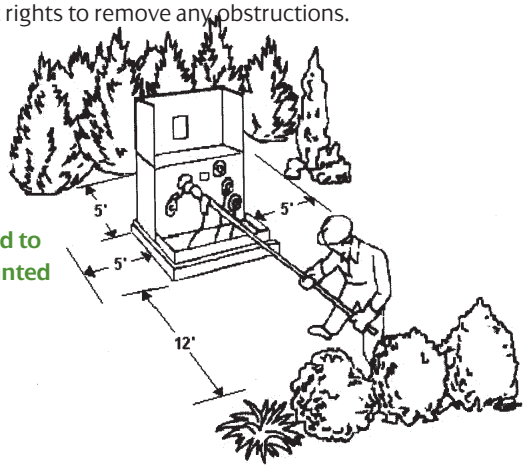
In rural and wooded areas, tree removal is an effective and economical method for controlling vegetation. Whenever practical, trees that are likely to grow into power lines will be removed. Tree removal is the best option when pruning alone cannot achieve adequate clearance from power lines.

Pad-Mounted Transformers

Underground electricity service also requires vegetation management and safety consideration. Some housing developments have underground service with pad-mounted transformers, green metal boxes mounted on a fiberglass or concrete foundation. They are locked for your protection. If you find one unlocked or damaged, call us right away; do not open them or let people near them.

Please don't plant or place items around pad-mounted transformers. The risk of serious injury when digging near energized electrical equipment is significant. If there are plants or other obstructions, do not attempt to remove them yourself. Contact NYSEG/RG&E or a qualified contractor.

As part of our continuing effort to provide safe, reliable service, we routinely inspect pad-mounted transformers. On occasion we need to access them to maintain the equipment or restore service during a power interruption. To make this work possible, we need to be sure there are no trees, shrubs, plants or other obstructions within 12 feet of the front of the transformer and within five feet of the other three sides. (The front is the side with the padlock and/or warning sticker.) We have easement rights to remove any obstructions.



Clearances needed to work on pad-mounted transformers.

Online Resources

- The National Arbor Day Foundation | www.arborday.org
- International Society of Arboriculture | www.isa-arbor.com
- Trees Are Good | www.treesaregood.com/treecare

Important Contact Information

NYSEG

Electricity interruptions or emergencies:
nyseg.com or 1.800.572.1131
(24 hours a day, every day)

Natural gas odors or emergencies:
1.800.572.1121 (24 hours a day, every day)

Hearing- and speech-impaired: Dial 711
(New York Relay Service)

nyseg.com

RG&E

Electricity interruptions or emergencies:
rge.com or 1.800.743.1701
(24 hours a day, every day)

Natural gas odors or emergencies:
1.800.743.1702 (24 hours a day, every day)

Hearing- and speech-impaired: Dial 711
(New York Relay Service) or 1.800.962.3293

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