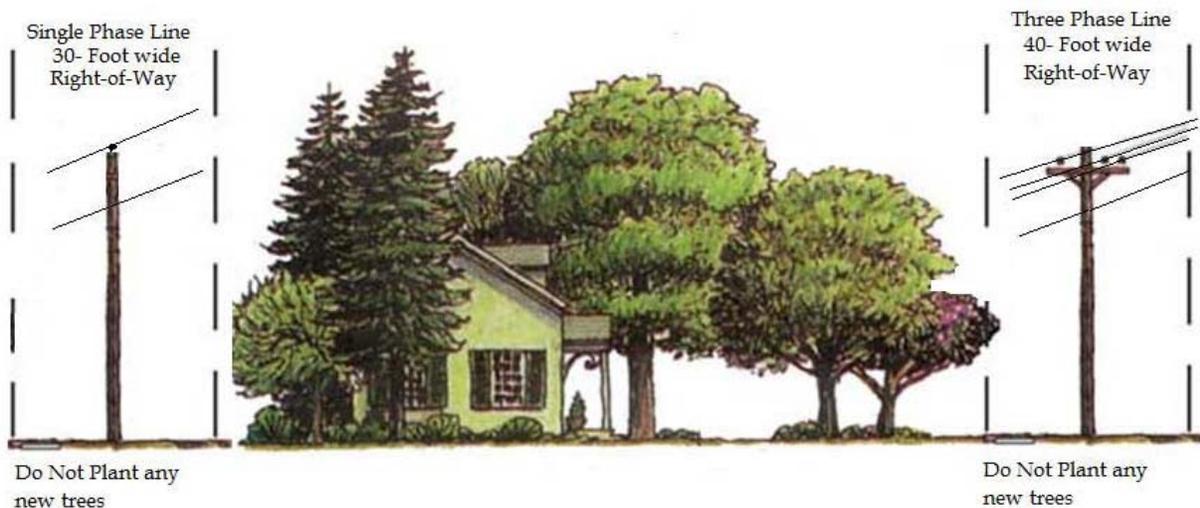


## 6. Right-Of-Way Standards

Harrison REMC's overhead and underground utility lines carry potentially deadly electric current, therefore it is very important to understand landscaping requirements around these lines and their supporting facilities. Because improper landscaping is a major cause of power outages and added maintenance expense, our right-of-way department staff strives to find and eliminate situations which may lead to tree/line conflicts.

Easements attached to the property over which Harrison REMC's lines pass allow Harrison REMC to remove or trim plant material as necessary to provide a safe, reliable, cost-effective electric distribution system to its members.

Figure 6.1



Brush trees which have grown up within the right-of-way easement will be removed if they are less than 6" in diameter at chest height. **No new trees are allowed to be planted within the right of way.** Even though our right of ways currently have older trees directly under the lines which must be continually trimmed, it is not acceptable to plant new trees. Harrison REMC is continually talking with members to encourage them to allow the removal of these unhealthy, poorly situated trees. Newly planted trees within the easement area will be removed by Harrison REMC contractors when found. Please think first and plant appropriate species. Contractors will remove brush, however; any wood over 4 inches in diameter will not be removed from trees which are cut down. This wood will be cut to lengths of at least 4-5 feet and left on the site.

## Landscaping Standards:

### *Near Underground Equipment:*

No trees, shrubs, bushes, or structures are to be located within 10 feet of any pad-mounted transformer door and 3'-0" feet from any other side. Trees, shrubs or bushes should not be planted within the right of way of underground utility lines. Before digging to plant anything in your yard, call 811 to have any underground cables or lines located at no charge. After the lines are located keep all plantings at least 10 feet on either side of the red marks or flags designating underground electric lines.

### *Near Overhead Equipment:*

Trees, shrubs, or bushes cannot be planted within a Harrison REMC overhead line easement. These materials add to the number of trees requiring trimming, therefore increasing the costs to maintain line clearance in the future. When planting these materials, they must not block Harrison REMC access to its overhead lines during routine and emergency situations.

**Harrison REMC reserves the right through easement to remove any trees, bushes or shrubs planted within its utility rights of way which pose a current or future threat to the access or reliability of the electrical distribution system.**

**Harrison REMC reserves the right through easement to remove any structure or remove or trim back plant material which does not adhere to these specifications**

## Tree Trimming

### Q&A

#### What happens if a tree is cut down by Harrison REMC?

If a tree has been agreed to be cut down by member and REMC representative, REMC has strict policy in how these trees will be handled after being cut down.

- A dead tree cannot be chipped up as the dead wood will damage equipment. A dead tree will be dropped and the left for the landowner. The REMC will not remove this wood.
- For Trees that are not dead, REMC will chip the limbs and cut the larger wood into manageable pieces unless otherwise specified. The REMC will not remove this wood, it is left for the landowner.

#### Why do electric companies trim trees in my backyard?

Harrison REMC is required to maintain the reliability and safety of their system, including those lines that are on consumers' property. This is partly done by keeping trees and branches away from their power lines.

## **Do electric companies trim the trees themselves?**

Harrison REMC hires professional tree trimmers to help remove branches or trees that may interfere with the power lines.

## **How much trimming will be done? Are there guidelines?**

Harrison REMC is on a 5 year maintenance cycle. Typically we are on a trim/treat program, meaning we trim one year and follow the next year with herbicide treatment where applicable, in order to maintain our right-of-ways. We want to achieve a 40' right-of-way on all 3 phase lines and 30' right-of-way on all single phase lines ground to sky. This eliminates any hazards growing from underneath our lines, while also eliminating any that may fall from above. We feel by achieving this clearance on our normal maintenance cycle, there will be less chance of trouble areas before our next scheduled cycle. By keeping our right-of-ways clean and free of brush, our outage times are cut drastically, by aiding in finding the outage source and providing the access to fix it in a timely manner.

## **How will I know if tree trimming is planned for my street?**

Members may be notified when tree trimming will occur in their area. The notices, usually hung on the door or mailed, include a telephone number for members to call with questions. Depending on the company, the member can be notified anywhere from two or more days prior to the trimming. **Notices do not have to be given and this procedure does not apply to emergency trimming performed in an effort to restore service after a storm.**

## **What can I do to avoid having the electric company trim my trees?**

The following are steps you can take to help avoid the electric company trimming trees in your yard.

- When planting trees in your yard, select a location away from power lines. See Figure 6.1
- Check with a nursery about the correct types of trees for planting in the space you have available.
- Trim all trees and bushes that are under and near power lines each year to keep them from growing toward the lines.

## **What if I have concerns about tree trimming that will be performed in my area?**

Members should call the tree trimming service prior to the trimming to get information about the work to be done and express their concerns. If the member is not satisfied with the information received from the tree trimmer they should contact REMC directly.

## **What can I do to prepare for tree trimming?**

Members should be certain that they completely understand the work to be done on their property. It is a good idea for the member to take pictures of the trees prior to trimming and get in writing, in as much detail as possible, the trimming that will be done. Most tree trimmers will try to work with members regarding their concerns with trimming when possible.

## **Are utility representatives or their tree trimmers allowed to enter my property?**

Yes, utility representatives or contractors may enter property to trim any branches that are touching or are close to power lines. It is necessary to enter private property so that the reliability of the power system is maintained and outages are avoided. Utility companies have this right through an "easement." An easement is essentially permission for the utility to maintain its power lines on a customer's property. Easements are filed with the County Recorder's office and copies are typically kept on file at the utility.