

# Tree Trimming

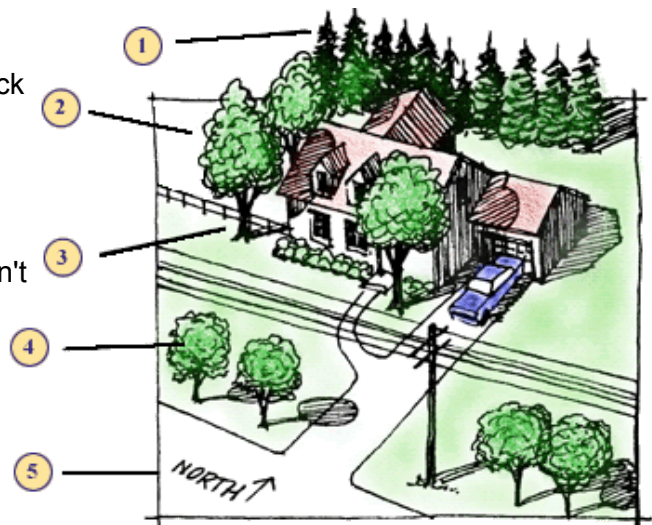
Rochester is fortunate to have a wide variety of beautiful trees, but if not properly maintained, trees near electric power lines can cause problems for both you and RPU.

Tree limbs can come in contact with these lines and cause power outages, property damage, and fires. Outages can also affect traffic lights, residents on life-support systems, and other vital public facilities.

Tree pruning is not only important; it's necessary. Utilities regularly prune trees growing near high voltage power lines to ensure safety around electric facilities and to minimize disruption of service to customers.

To prevent outages, RPU employs full-time tree trimmers and contractors to keep trees trimmed around power lines. We practice directional pruning, which is an accepted industry standard and the preferred way to prune trees near power lines for their health, safety, and longevity.

- 1** An evergreen windbreak on the north or northwest side of the house will help block cold winds in winter.
- 2** Large shade trees on the southeast, southwest, and west sides of the house provide cooling shade in summer but don't obstruct the low winter sun.
- 3** Maximum shade comes from deciduous (broad-leaf) trees planted close to the house (about 10 feet).
- 4** Remember: short flowering trees won't clash with utility lines.
- 5** Shade from trees improves human comfort, reduces air conditioning costs, and reduces peak electricity loads, which lessens the chance of power outages.



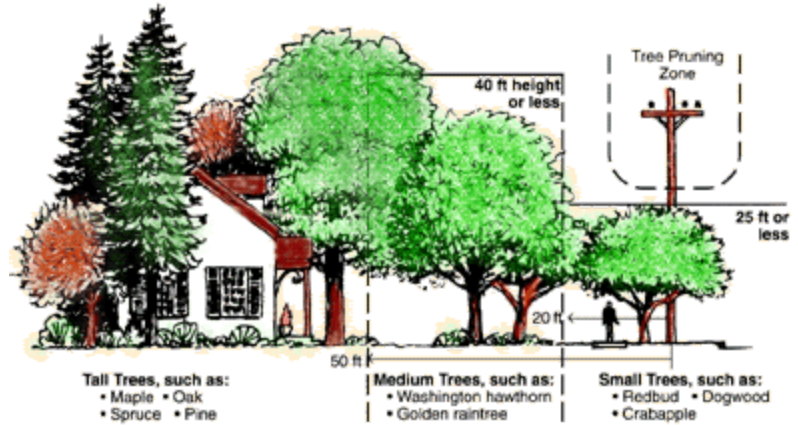
# Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

*Taller trees should be planted away from overhead utility lines.*

Trees are prized possessions in our communities. They give needed shade in summer, help clear the air of pollutants, provide a home for songbirds and wildlife, and please the eye with the beauty of their foliage and blossoms.

But when a tree's branches start to come close to or actually touch utility power lines, a potentially hazardous situation is created.

Trees and power lines can co-exist, and potential conflicts can be avoided by selecting and planting trees with size and growth characteristics appropriate to their location:



## How to Plant Trees for Winter Warmth

Conifers form the best windbreaks. Two or more rows are best if space allows, but even a single row will help.



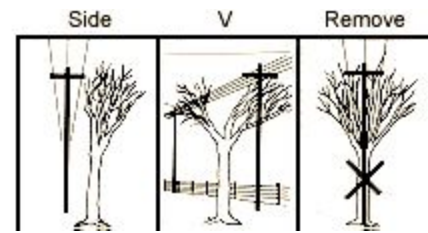
**Low Zone** – Beneath power lines and 20 feet to either side of them, plant species that will not exceed 25 feet in height. Taller existing trees in this zone should be pruned by the utility company to grow around the wires.

**Medium Zone** – Trees that grow no more than 40 feet in height are recommended for areas immediately adjacent to the Low Zone in order to avoid high branches that overhang power lines or trees that could topple into the lines during severe storms.

**Tall Zone** – Higher trees could be used in any location at a distance of 50 feet or more from power lines. Trees near your house can provide significant energy benefits by providing cooling shade in summer and protecting from winter winds.

## Pruning

Directional pruning removes only those branches that conflict with the power lines. Instead of cutting the limbs back to unnatural stubs, branches are pruned back to the trunk where trees normally shed them. This helps direct future growth away from the power lines and minimizes weakly attached regrowth.



At first, your trees might look different after directional pruning. However, down the road, they will be less susceptible to pest problems, decay, and will be less likely to drop branches during storms. Directional pruning is actually better than other pruning methods for safety and your tree's health.

V-pruning and side pruning are the two main variations of directional pruning. Some trees with one straight, main trunk may not be good candidates for directional pruning. These must be "topped" in order to achieve clearance.

Please [contact us](#) if you have questions about where or what trees to plant near RPU power lines.



For a free copy of a brochure, ***The Right Tree for the Right Place***, write The National Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Ave., Nebraska City, NE 68410.