

## ***Trees and vegetation in the right-of-way:***

1. Cause power outages, blinking lights, or internet outages.
2. Obstruct visual inspections, making repairs difficult and costly.
3. Block access for maintenance and repairs, causing delays.
4. Waste electricity by drawing it into the ground.
5. Become a fire hazard.
6. Become a safety hazard for utility workers and members.



**Children and adults should never climb, trim, or touch trees that contact power lines.**

***MVEC continues its commitment to service with regular Right-of-Way maintenance. We appreciate our members' cooperation.***

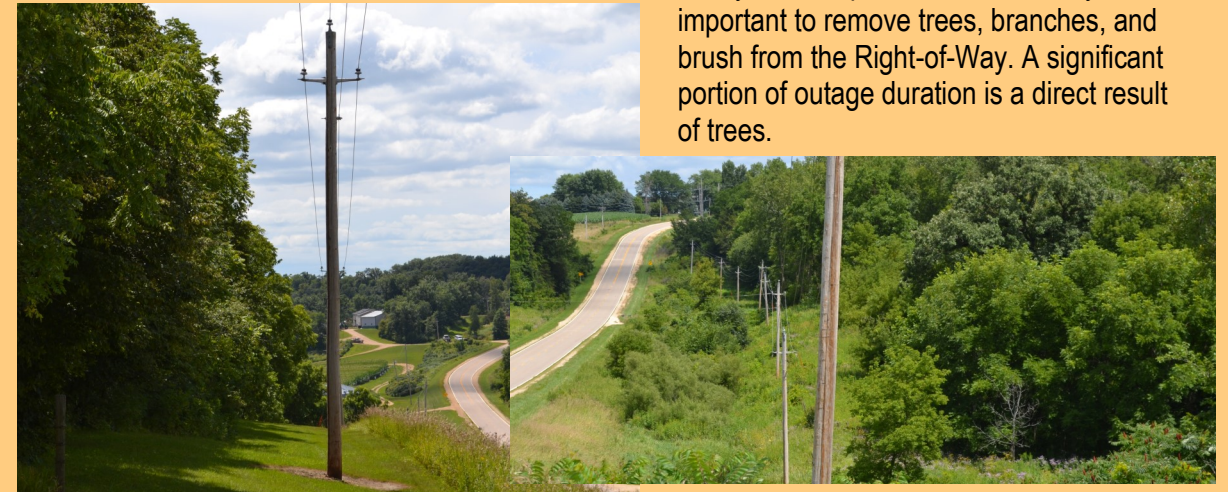


## **Right-of-Way & Planting Guide**



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[www.mvec.coop](http://www.mvec.coop)**

Maquoketa Valley Cooperative wants to work with our members to ensure trees and shrubs are planted away from power and fiber lines, or are properly maintained to ensure continued service for our members and neighbors.



### ***What is the Right-of-Way Program?***

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative works hard to balance the aesthetic needs of our members with the Cooperative's service reliability goals. A clear Right-of-Way reduces the number and length of outages and improves safety for everyone! As part of the service agreement the member commits to with MVEC, to have electric and fiber services provided, this agreement provides for continued maintenance of the Right-of-Way.

### ***History***

Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative delivers power and fiber internet service with a system of overhead and underground lines. The Cooperative has a proactive strategy to continue a safe Right-of-Way near these lines. The investment in safety and service for members has reduced emergency clearings, major power or internet outages, and dangerous conditions.

### ***Why is a clear Right-of-Way Important?***

We all enjoy trees, but when they interfere with power and internet lines, reliability and safety are compromised. That's why it's important to remove trees, branches, and brush from the Right-of-Way. A significant portion of outage duration is a direct result of trees.

### ***Storm Repairs***

No one, including MVEC, likes it when the power goes out or the internet service is down. That is why we do our best to minimize outage time with extensive tree trimming and fast power restoral. Keep in mind, that while a member's home may have service, a neighbor may not. Trees will be cut and branches cleared to untangle and re-string line or repair poles. Quite often, the days immediately following a storm are filled with making permanent repairs to those lines. This means members' trees may not be cleaned up to their standards, or not cleaned up in a timely manner. Our storm repair process simply cannot follow the same standards as our daily Right-of-Way work if we are to meet our members' request for safe and reliable service. As always, do not hesitate to call with questions.



How is the Right-of-Way cleared?

The right-of-way is cleared by cutting, trimming, mowing, and where permissible, applying eco-friendly herbicides.

The Cooperative’s service area is regularly inspected for dead, dying, and leaning trees. When found, they are trimmed or removed to eliminate threat to power and fiber lines. In most cases, all shrubs, brush, and trees are trimmed or removed under primary (main), high-voltage overhead lines. They are also removed, as necessary, underneath and around secondary, low-voltage power lines that bring power from the transformer to your meter. The Cooperative will not trim or remove trees that are too large for our equipment or where removal risks impairment to member-owned structures. Considerable time is added to power restoration if downed lines have to be untangled from brush.

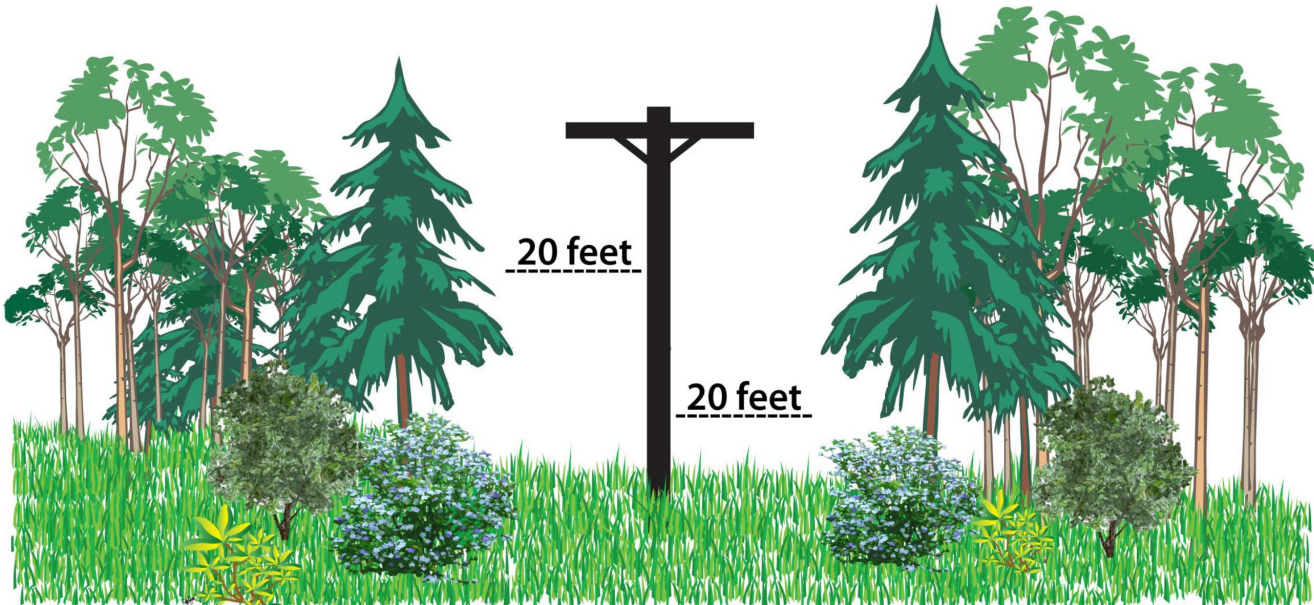
Cutting and trimming is done by professional contractors or Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative linemen using specific and proven standards typical to the industry and with respect for the environment.



What happens if I plant in the Right-of-Way?

In the best interest of all members, new plantings are not allowed in the Right-of-Way. The Cooperative may request plants be transplanted or removed.

*All vegetation must be planted away from power/communication lines so that mature branches cannot grow into the right-of-way. Vegetation that is planted in, or grows into the right-of-way, needs to be trimmed or removed. Vegetation within 20 feet on either side of the lines is at risk for removal due to line maintenance, repair and replacement. For safe, reliable service, please follow these guidelines:*



What happens to the debris?

Tree stumps and logs are the property and responsibility of the landowner. Branches and small debris are left to decompose where they are cut. In maintained yard areas, branches and small debris are generally left piled together.

Spraying

In addition to mowing and cutting the Right-of-Way, spraying may also be necessary to permanently clear an area. Spraying may be done initially, or may be done following mowing or cutting. Contractors and the Cooperative use eco-friendly herbicides, being cognizant of their surroundings, yet focused on clearing.



Keep “GREEN BOXES” Clear

While underground power and fiber lines eliminate utility poles and overhead wires, they require pad-mounted transformers (green boxes) in some yards. Unfortunately, some homeowners attempt to hide pad-mount transformers or internet terminal boxes from view with paint, fences, covers, or landscaping.



This can create an unsafe situation for all, including our linemen. MVEC recommends leaving at least **15 feet of clear space** around pad-mount transformers. Linemen perform

maintenance while boxes are energized so homeowners don’t experience an interruption in service. Linemen also need to have clear access in the event of an outage. To ensure safety, they use an 8-foot fiberglass hot stick that requires about 10 feet of elbow room in front of the access panel.

Overheating is another big concern. Pad-mounted transformers surrounded by vegetation or a structure may overheat and cause service interruptions when the air circulation around them is compromised.

Although we try to minimize the impact, Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative is not responsible for damage while maintaining cooperative equipment or restoring power.