

POLICY TITLE: <h2>Vegetation Management</h2>		
OWNER: Distribution Operations Manager	ADOPTED: 09/10/2024	NEXT REVIEW: 01/01/2029

**PURPOSE:**

To maintain reliable electrical service to MPU customers by establishing vegetation maintenance standards to reduce or eliminate vegetation interference with utility operations.

**POLICY:**

Trees are private properties that often interfere with utility lines. This policy outlines MPU actions for trimming trees and other vegetation management activities necessary to ensure safe, reliable electrical service to MPU customers.

Routine Trimming by MPU for Line Clearance

Trees that are too close to power lines can interfere with electric service, particularly during bad weather. MPU prunes or removes trees that threaten electric lines and to comply with the Wisconsin State Electrical Code. MPU routinely trims trees within the utility rights of way (where utility lines are permitted to exist) and at no special charge to customers. A four-year trimming cycle is established, clearing one quadrant of the city each year.

Tree trimming crews follow guidelines established by American National Standards Institute (ANSI). MPU crews shall be trained to recognize and correct line clearance hazards. Crews shall employ directional pruning methods to direct future growth away from the power lines, reduce re-growth and to protect the tree from decay. Crews will remove entire trees only when the hazard is severe and will cut them as close to the ground as possible. MPU will not remove stumps. Exhibits A, B and C (attached) indicate normal line trimming clearances.

Primary and Secondary Lines (pole-to-pole-wires): Trimming requirements vary according to line type, tree species and line proximity. Branches can extend above or below but not too close to wires. The preference is to prune branches, but in some rare cases, may need to remove an entire tree if the separation cannot be maintained until the next trimming cycle.

**Overhead Service Lines (pole-to-home wires):** The service line is owned by MPU and it connects to the property owner's service mast on the building. The property owner is responsible for trimming trees to prevent damage to the MPU service line and to prevent damage to the property owner's service mast. MPU will, at no cost to the customer, trim branches that contact the service line but only to the extent required to keep the service line hanging freely. MPU may opt to install a sleeve on the service line to prevent the tree from rubbing the service line bare.

**Cable or Telephone Lines:** MPU does not trim trees for these facilities; customers will need to contact their telephone or cable company.

MPU or its contractor will attempt to contact the property owner via letter, in person, or via door notice when trimming trees located on private property (i.e. not located in roadways). Crews only perform work needed to maintain reliable electric service.

Trees and brush are private property. When MPU conducts routine trimming for line clearance, however, MPU will dispose trimming debris as a customer courtesy (unless the customer asks MPU to leave it).

#### Trimming for Emergencies or to Restore Power from Storm Damage:

Trees and brush are private property. Trees and tree limbs falling on power lines during storms is one of the greatest threats to electric reliability. When storms occur, MPU will mobilizes crews to restore power. MPU shall remove fallen trees and broken limbs only to the point where power can be restored safely and quickly. In these situations, MPU does not provide advance notice or assist in disposing trimming debris.

#### **DEFINITIONS / REFERENCES**

- Wisconsin State Electrical Code PSC 114 (Incorporates National Electrical Safety Code, Section 218)
- Wisconsin Administrative Code PSC 113 (Subchapter V Customer Service and Protection)
- ANSI Standard A300 Part 1 "Tree, Shrub and Other Woody Plant Management - Standard Practices"