Compatible Trees and Shrubs

Trees and shrubs planted in the right-of-way border zone should have a mature height of no taller than 25 feet. Below is a sampling that meet this criteria. Your local nursery is your best source for deciding which planting is best suited to your property.

A Sustainable Approach

Over time, the transmission corridor will be a sustainable, diverse habitat, with grasses, shrubs and trees that can safely coexist with transmission lines.

Vegetation Management Along Electric Rights-of-Way

Our Integrated Vegetation Management Program creates a diverse, sustainable and aesthetically valuable habitat for a wide range of wildlife species while ensuring the safe and reliable transmission of electricity in these corridors.

For More Information

800-793-2202
TransmissionInfo@eversource.com
Eversource.com
Eversource regularly prunes, cuts and removes tall-growing trees and selected invasive shrubs on more than 2,300 miles of electric transmission corridors. Managing vegetation within these corridors minimizes potential safety hazards and improves the reliability of the transmission system for you, our customers, businesses and communities. In many cases, the management of vegetation and the degree with which pruning or clearing is performed is mandated by federal regulations.

For Safety and Reliability
Vegetation in close proximity to energized transmission facilities poses a serious safety hazard. Vegetation contact may lead to an outage that could extend well beyond the immediate area, impacting hundreds or thousands of electric customers. Managing and maintaining required distances between vegetation and energized facilities is the main reason for performing routine pruning and clearing.

The importance of this work was underscored in 2003, when trees contacting transmission lines in the central part of the U.S. resulted in a blackout that affected most of the Northeast and, most recently the outages resulting from Tropical Storm Irene and the October Nor’Easter of 2011. As a result of the 2003 blackout, the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission (FERC) issued numerous regulations affecting the management and operation of transmission systems in the U.S. One of these new standards deals specifically with vegetation management and requires that utilities employ best management practices when managing rights-of-way.

The Wire and Peripheral Zones
Eversource’s vegetation management program employs a Wire Zone – Peripheral Zone method to maintain our transmission corridors. This method allows for the creation of two separate management zones:

The Wire Zone is the area directly under the conductors, extending outward 15 feet from the outermost conductors on each side. Within this zone, trees and brush are selectively removed to allow for the establishment and preservation of low-growing plant communities that have a mature height of 8 feet or less.

The Peripheral Zone is the area 15 feet from the outermost conductors to the limits of clearing on each side of the right-of-way. Within this zone, incompatible trees and brush are selectively removed while trees and shrubs with mature heights below 25 feet and all other low-growing plant species are preserved. Outside the cleared limits of the right-of-way, trees that have the potential to grow or fall into the energized facilities are pruned or removed with permission from the land owner.

In transmission right-of-way corridors where we have employed the Wire Zone – Peripheral Zone method of vegetation management for many years, the resulting vegetation conditions provide a stable, open area comprised of early successional plant communities. These aesthetically-pleasing grass/forb/shrub meadows attract diverse and numerous plant and animal life, and serve as ideal habitat for a wide range of wildlife that includes many federal and state-listed species.

Long-term Benefits
Because the selective control of incompatible plant species (tall-growing trees and invasive shrubs) supports the establishment of native, low-growing plant communities that inhibit the establishment of targeted plant species, the benefits include:

- Longer maintenance cycles (less frequent need for human intervention)
- Reduced mechanical/manual clearing requirements; less impacts on the right-of-way ecosystems
- Reduction in incompatible plant populations that result in less work during each successive maintenance period
- When herbicides are employed, over time, less overall amounts need to be applied