



## Tree Clearing Around Electric Lines Is Scheduled For The Area

To Our Valued Customer:

During the next several months, you will notice tree crews working in your area. Ohio Edison has contracted a vegetation management company to assist in clearing trees away from our electric lines. This necessary work benefits you and your neighbors by keeping the tree related outages and electrical hazards to a minimum.

The crews working in the field are qualified line clearance tree workers trained in OSHA safety standards (Z133.1-2000) and in proper pruning techniques developed by the National Arborist Association and published by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). These standards known as the Standards for Tree Care Operations (ANSI A300-2001) are prescribed by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the organization responsible for establishing and overseeing the Certification of Professional Arborists and Utility Specialists. Other supporters include the American Association of Nurserymen, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources State Urban Foresters, and the Ohio State University Extension Service. The contracted tree crews will be following a pruning technique that is often referred to as "directional" pruning. **Since this technique is visually very different from pruning practices you may have seen in the past, it may be unfamiliar and even unsightly to you. Be assured, however, that this technique is professional and best for the trees.**

**Some trees may require more pruning than others may and some may need to be removed.** There are several factors that determine whether a tree is to be pruned or be removed. These factors include the electrical voltage in the overhead lines, the trees' proximity to the electrical equipment, and its' growth rate and branching structure. Directional pruning often involves removing entire branches and limbs back to the main trunk that are growing under, beside or over the electric lines. These branches are carefully selected by evaluating the trees' structure and growth patterns. Properly made cuts take advantage of strong points in the tree and do not impede the trees' natural defense systems and other biological factors that protect the tree from decay and aggressive re-sprouting. Branches that are growing away from the electrical facilities are not pruned in order to maximize the benefits of these biological processes.

**Tree limbs and/or trees on your property are scheduled for clearing.** Upon a site inspection of your property, our contractor has determined that there are tree limbs and/or trees conflicting with or are in proximity to the electric line and require either pruning or removal. This information is being provided to you prior to the work being started so you are informed of the planned work. If a tree can not be pruned effectively to achieve sufficient clearance for the electric voltage or the required pruning will significantly impact the health of the tree, then the tree will be removed. Also, small trees (brush) that have the potential to conflict with the electric lines as they mature will also be removed. Low growing shrubs and ornamental trees are usually undisturbed unless they impede access to our facilities. In many cases, written or verbal consent may be requested prior to tree removal. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

**Disposal of branches and wood chips:** After a tree is pruned or removed, small tree limbs and branches are run through a chipper and hauled away. Wood chips are available, free of charge, in areas where our vegetation management crews are working. Chips are available only by the truckload, approximately 10 cubic yards (enough to cover a 10-foot x 100-foot area, 3-4 inches deep). If one of our vegetation management crews is working in your area and you want to arrange for delivery, please call us at 1-800-633-4766 or visit our web site at <http://www.firstenergycorp.com> to submit your request.

**WOOD THAT IS TOO LARGE FOR THE CHIPPER (generally 4 inches in diameter and larger) IS CUT INTO MANAGEABLE LENGTHS AND IS LEFT ON THE PROPERTY, NEAR THE BASE OF THE TREE.** Disposal or use of all such wood is the tree owner's responsibility

**If you would like more information about proper pruning techniques,** please visit our web site at <http://www.firstenergycorp.com> or contact the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Forestry or the Ohio State University Extension Office in your area. Additional information is also available on the Internet via the following web sites: <http://www.ag.uiuc.edu/~isa>, <http://www.natlarb.com>, and <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/>.

Tree work is scheduled for your area every 3 to 5 years. It is the Utility Arborists' responsibility to consider public welfare (safe and reliable electricity) along with tree aesthetics (tree shape). When these desirable goals conflict with one another, public welfare shall take priority over an individual's tree. The ultimate purpose of pruning and removing trees that are near electrical utility lines is to minimize electrical hazards to the general public and ensure reliable delivery of electricity to our customers.

## Variations on Directional Pruning

Directional pruning removes those branches that are growing towards the power lines. Rather than cutting limbs back to unsightly and unnatural stubs, branches are pruned back to the center of the trunk where trees normally shed them. Future tree growth is directed away from the power lines. Weakly attached re-growth is minimized and hazardous branches near the power lines are removed.

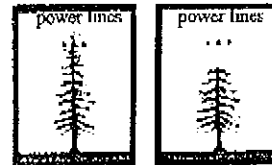
V-pruning and side pruning are the two main variations of directional pruning used to remove branches that conflict with power lines. Illustrations of possible outcomes and brief descriptions are shown here. Your tree may look different due to its form, structure, and past pruning history.

### V-PRUNING INVOLVES CUTTING BACK PORTIONS OF A TREE'S UPPER CROWN

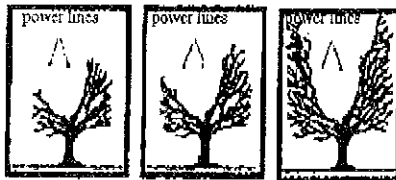


Before and After V-Pruning

### TREES WITH ONE MAIN TRUNK GROWING STRAIGHT MUST BE TOPPED TO ALLOW POWER LINES TO PASS SAFELY ABOVE



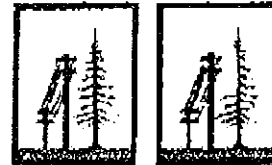
Before and After Topping



15-25 ft. 25-35 ft. +35 ft.

Tree aesthetics after pruning based on height

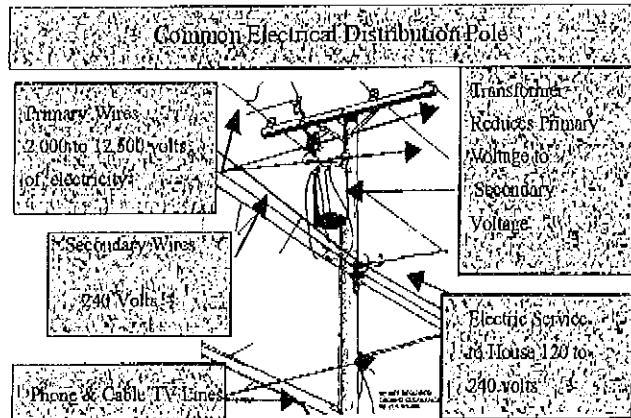
### SIDE PRUNING OF CONIFEROUS TREES OFTEN RESULTS IN A SHAPE SIMILAR TO THIS PICTURE



### SIDE PRUNING CONSISTS OF CUTTING BACK OR REMOVING SIDE BRANCHES



Before After Pruning\* After Pruning\*



## When Tree Removal is Necessary

In some cases, it may be necessary to remove a tree. According to experts, trees that require significant pruning more than once every 3 to 5 years for line clearance, are examples of the wrong tree in the wrong place. \*These trees are often good candidates for removal.

Removal is also necessary if a tree's proximity to power lines threaten human life. For example, children climbing in trees growing in power lines could be injured or electrocuted if they touch power lines or touch anything in contact with power lines.

## Improper Methods of Pruning

Improper methods of pruning, such as topping, rounding over, heading, de-horning, stubbing, lopping, tipping, and shaping, eliminate foliage and buds containing next year's growth. This stress to the tree stimulates the production of vigorous, crowded, poorly tapered and weakly attached shoots called water-sprouts. Since the use of energy has been redistributed within the tree, it is less resistant to pest problems, and prone to decay. The rapid growth is deceiving and is *not* an indication of good health. Topping destroys the natural structure of the tree and makes it more susceptible to breakage.

Each tree-pruning situation must be evaluated on an individual basis.

**OhioEdison**  
A FirstEnergy Company