



## VEGETATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

### I. OBJECTIVE

To maintain adequate vegetation clearance from Mason County Public Utility District No. 1 (PUD or District) electric infrastructure such as power lines and other electric utility equipment vital to the safe and reliable operation of the electric distribution and transmission systems. Properly maintaining vegetation minimizes the probability of contact with power lines and equipment thus reducing the likelihood of fire ignition and interruptions. Proactively maintaining vegetation will increase safety for PUD employees as well by providing adequate access for line operations.

### II. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

The PUD will seek required government permits or applicable authorization for vegetation and tree removal or trimming, including but not limited to, federal, state, municipal, and tribal laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations.

The PUD will use hand cutting, pruning, and mechanical cutting to maintain proper clearances in accordance with, but not limited to, the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), Rural Utility Service (RUS), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), federal, state and local laws and regulations pursuant to the operation of electrical facilities. The PUD specifically requires that the ANSI A300 Tree Care Operations standard practices relating to quality tree care, pruning, and integrated vegetation management be followed where practical when planned maintenance is being performed in the vicinity of electric lines and equipment. Employees and contractors shall also adhere to ANSI Z133.1 Safety Standards.

### III. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

In general, vegetation management consists of three primary components, preventative vegetation management, corrective vegetation clearance, and emergency vegetation clearance. Preventative vegetation management generally includes planned activities in right-of-way (ROW) with PUD facilities and are performed on 3 to 7-year cycle depending on species and risk factors. The PUD will mail a notification for all planned vegetation management activities. (See Attachment A: "Customer Notification of Vegetation Management"). Corrective vegetation clearance consists of completing corrective and emergent vegetation orders to fix clearance discrepancies that the contractor or PUD discovers. If an order is designated as High Priority, the PUD must prioritize that work and make the correction immediately. Emergency vegetation clearance includes completing maintenance on an as-needed basis for any major disaster or emergency events. For example, if a storm results in fallen trees and branches, the PUD must mobilize as soon as possible to clear the vegetation.

ROW corridors will be managed to:

- (15) feet on either side of pole
- (50) feet on either side of structure centerline for transmission line routes.

Aerial Pruning will be managed to:

- (15) feet radially from all PUD conductor, per attachments B & C.
- All trees are cleared to the ground at
  - (15) feet from center of pole for 1-phase power lines, per Attachment B
  - (19) feet from center of pole for 3-phase power lines, per Attachment C

The PUD will strive to remove all trees, whether hazardous or not, growing beneath the District's power lines in a public or the PUD's ROW. All trees that can be reasonably removed from private ROW, with the landowners' permission, shall be removed. A special effort shall be made to remove all young trees in ROW while they are small and before they become a hazard to the power line. Brush and other vegetation will be removed during regular tree trimming procedures.

Trees endangering PUD owned lines may be cut down or pruned by the PUD to eliminate any immediate hazard. Trees less than 8" inches in diameter in rural, forested, and agricultural road right of way corridors will be removed with or without the consent of the property owner.

A "Hazardous Tree" is a tree that is dead, severely damaged, or may present reasonable risks to the PUD's lines and facilities. A Hazardous Tree may be in the PUD's ROW, a public ROW, or on private property. For the safety of the public and/or all involved, the PUD may opt to remove a landowner's Hazardous Tree or remove the line from service to allow the landowner to safely remove the Hazardous Tree. A Hazardous Tree shall be removed or pruned in accordance with this Policy to mitigate safety hazards.

Landowners shall provide the PUD access to all public ROW and District easements where maintenance and cutting or pruning of vegetation and trees may be needed, in the opinion of the PUD, to avoid danger to the public or interference with the operation and maintenance of its power lines or facilities. The PUD has no affirmative duty to remove trees outside the District's rights-of-way. With a written request from a landowner, the PUD may assist the landowner with the removal of a Hazardous Tree outside the ROW at no cost to the landowner, as long as the PUD has identified the tree as a Hazardous Tree.

The PUD is responsible for maintaining tree clearance only on power lines owned by the PUD. Responsibility for tree clearance on customer owned lines belongs to the customer. When the line belongs to the customer, hiring of a professional tree service is recommending ensuring customer safety and prevent damage to electric lines.

Removal of branches and other debris from vegetation and tree removal in or outside the ROW or easement is the sole responsibility of the landowner unless otherwise agreed upon in writing. Stumps shall be cut as close to ground level as possible. Complete removal of a stump is the responsibility of the landowner.

The PUD shall control vegetation and trees around its property, including the fenced boundaries and within a substation, to ensure the safety of its landowners, employees and public while maintaining the reliability and integrity of the PUD's facilities.

The PUD will educate the public on planting trees in and around the PUD's power lines. The PUD shall encourage customers to report trees that are potential hazards, in and outside the ROW, which may become a threat to public safety and/or the system's reliability.

#### **IV. CUSTOMER PLANTING GUIDE**

Customers should consider the mature canopy size of trees to be planted on their property. Trees shall be planted in accordance with Attachment D as to not interfere with distribution or transmission lines when fully grown. If a customer's tree is in violation of the required distance, the trees will likely be trimmed as part of the tree trimming cycle or be subject to removal.

Customers and contractors should contact 811 to locate underground utilities to avoid personal harm and damage to the lines and interruption of electrical service when planting or moving trees. Customers and contractors will be responsible for paying repair costs for lines that are damaged due to digging.

#### **V. RESPONSIBILITY**

The General Manager and/or their designee is responsible for the administration of this policy.

Date



October 20XX

## Notice of Vegetation Management/Tree Trimming:

Mason County PUD No. 1 is committed to improving electric service in your area. Since trees are a major cause of power outages in Mason/Jefferson County, one of our 20XX projects is to make sure the trees along the power lines that comprise our circuits are not a concern. Our in-house/contracted tree trimming crews will be working in your area from August 20XX through December 31, 20XX.

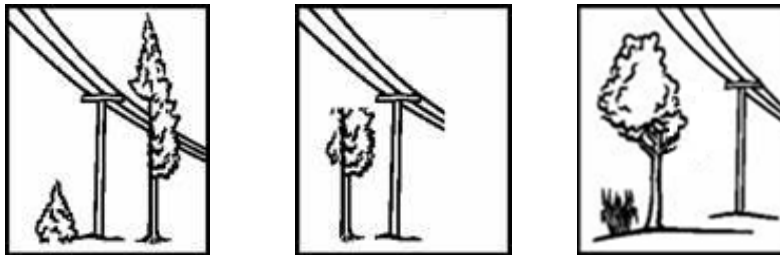
If PUD 1's primary electric lines cross your property, we will need to access our easement. After you receive this notification, be sure to unlock gates and move cars away from the overhead primary electric lines.

Although **no response is necessary**, if you have any questions, or wish to discuss removal or replacement of inappropriate trees adjacent to our primary lines, please call our superintendent.

**Please note: These crews do not trim around the secondary electric line that runs from the pole to your home, (the twisted line going to your house meter).**

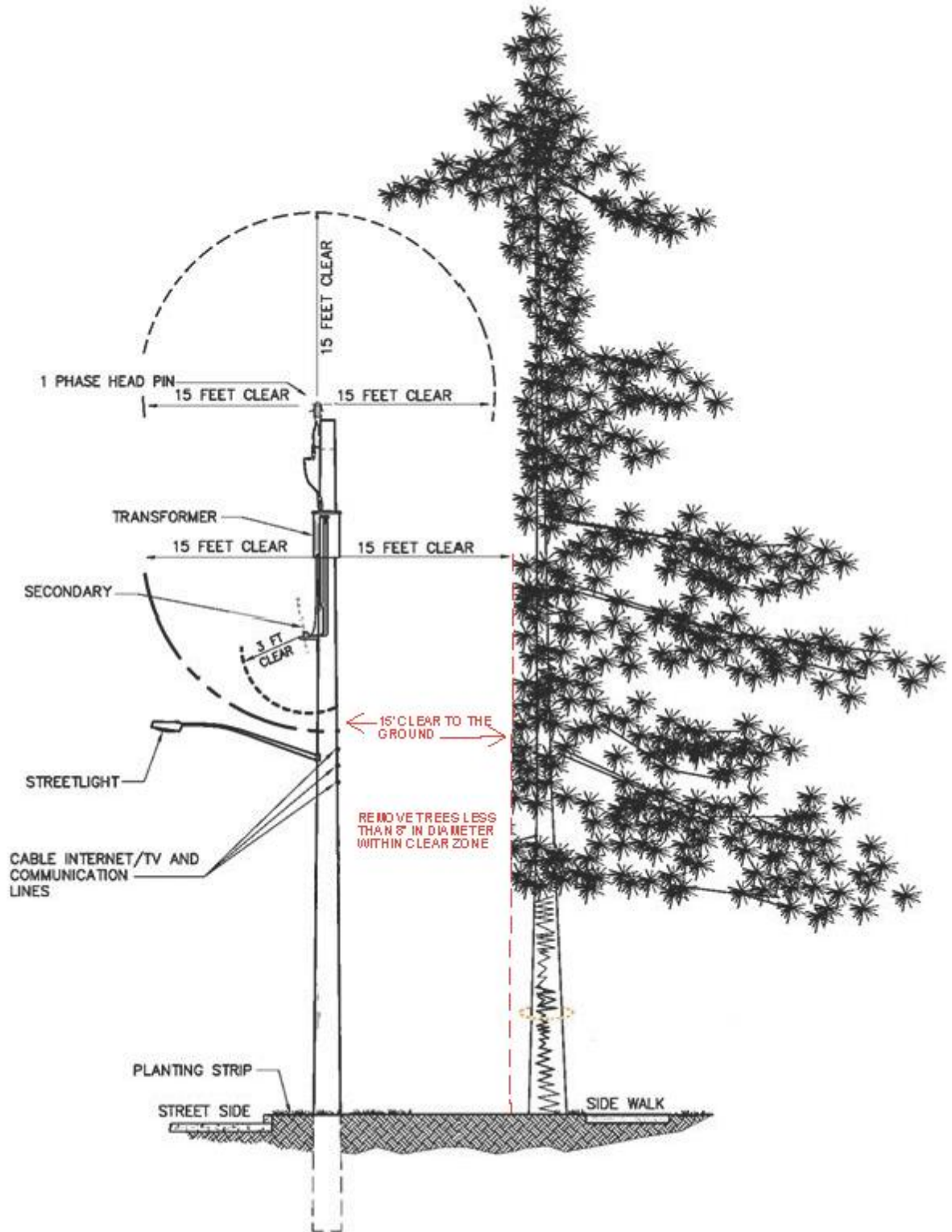
**Thank you for helping us to maintain public safety and provide the reliable service you depend on.**

Necessary arboricultural methods change the appearance of trees near electric lines.

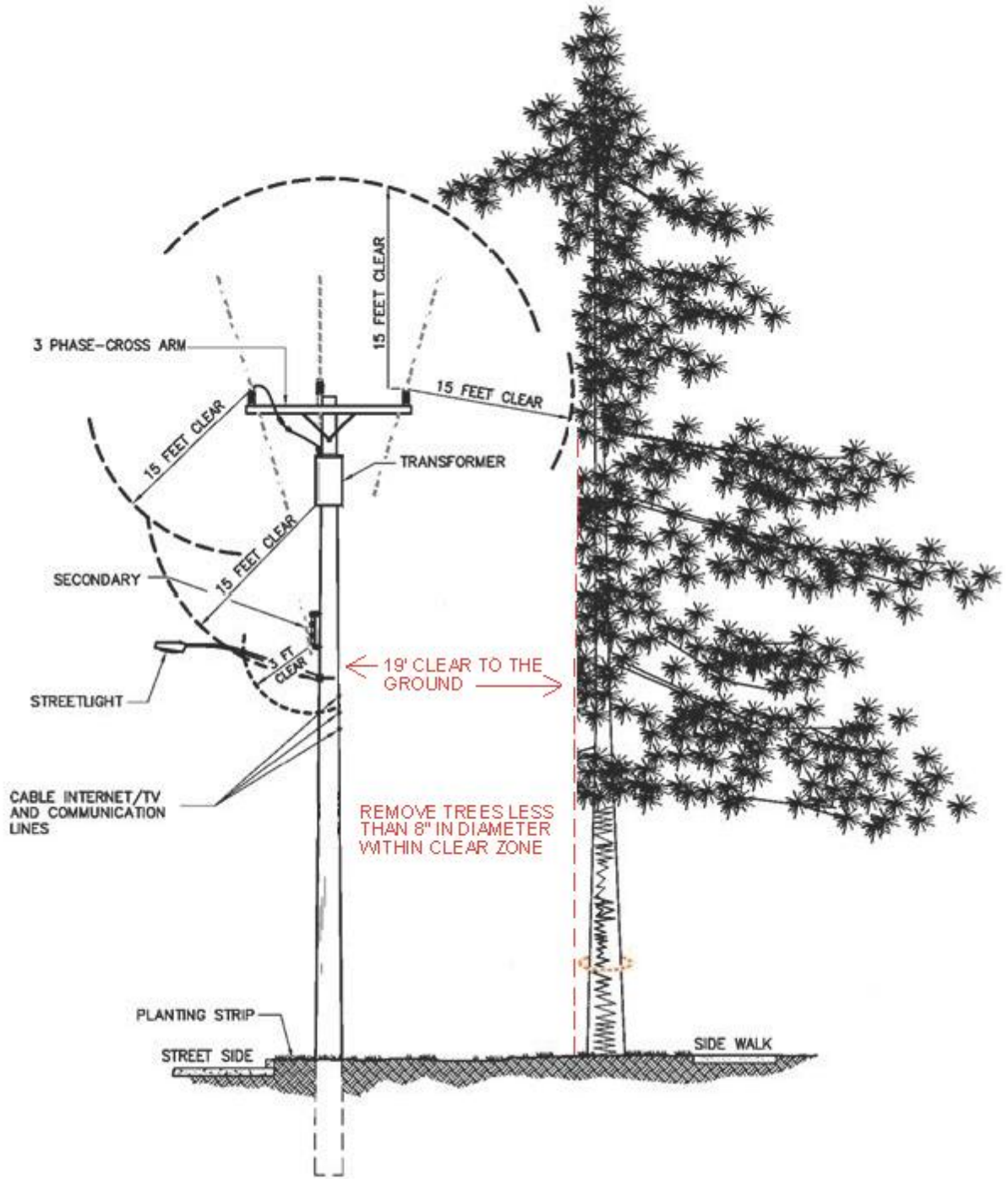


Trees must be side pruned or topped to provide safety and reliability.

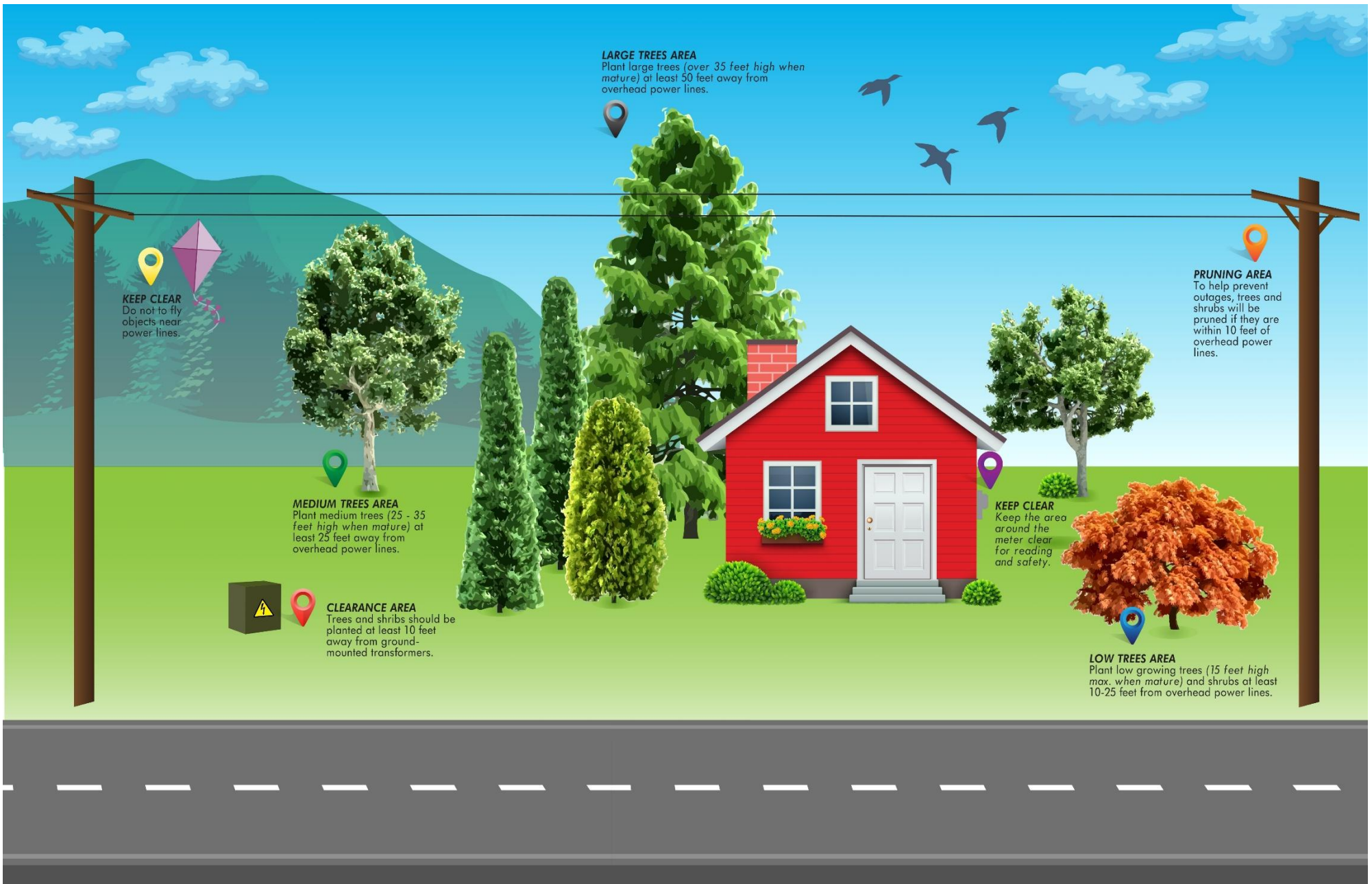
**Attachment A** - (This is printed on PUD letterhead with relevant contact District information.)



**Attachment B - (1-PHASE POWERLINE SIDE PRUNING GRAPHIC.)**



**Attachment C - (3-PHASE POWERLINE SIDE PRUNING GRAPHIC.)**



**LARGE TREES AREA**  
Plant large trees (over 35 feet high when mature) at least 50 feet away from overhead power lines.

**KEEP CLEAR**  
Do not to fly objects near power lines.

**MEDIUM TREES AREA**  
Plant medium trees (25 - 35 feet high when mature) at least 25 feet away from overhead power lines.

**CLEARANCE AREA**  
Trees and shrubs should be planted at least 10 feet away from ground-mounted transformers.

**KEEP CLEAR**  
Keep the area around the meter clear for reading and safety.

**PRUNING AREA**  
To help prevent outages, trees and shrubs will be pruned if they are within 10 feet of overhead power lines.

**LOW TREES AREA**  
Plant low growing trees (15 feet high max. when mature) and shrubs at least 10-25 feet from overhead power lines.