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CUSTOM TREE TIMES

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SERVICES

Tree Pruning

Tree Removal

Stump Grinding

Tree Planting

Firewood Sales

Emergency Service



We employ certified arborists by ISA & KAA

Licensed & Insured

Member of NE Kansas Better Business Bureau

OVERHEAD UTILITY TREE PRUNING

I'm sure probably most of you have seen the "pruning" by the local utility to keep trees away from electric lines. It can be rather unsightly and has been a hot topic of discussion recently. My office gets comments on this matter almost daily and my own crews have even been mistaken for these utility crews on a few occasions by irate passerby's.

However, it is the responsibility of the electric provider to maintain safe distances from their wires. This minimizes outages and damage to the electrical system. It also ensures the safety of those who might come into contact with these trees, such as a child climbing the tree. Trees are conductive objects and when a limb touches an energized line it can transmit an electric shock. This may energize the entire tree. Most electric lines in residential areas that run from pole to pole are rated at 7,200 volts which is more than enough to be fatal. But it could be a much higher voltage. Transmission lines carry hundreds of thousands of volts. And as the voltage increases the clearance has to be greater.

So obviously trees and overhead lines cannot exist in the same space. When larger tree species are planted too close to the wires, it is next to impossible to make them look good during line clearance operations. It is not a good practice to leave stubbed off branches or to top trees. This often leads to a tree that looks like half of it has been cut off. The leaves are how the trees makes its food and it is recommended not to remove more than one fourth of the green foliage in one season. This will lead to excessive sucker growth and stress to the tree.

Now all of this can and should be avoided very easily by planting the ***right tree in the right place***. It is a very common mistake for a six foot tall tree to be planted right under the wires when the mature height is sixty feet. When planning for a new tree we need to think about the mature height and spread of the tree and look up and around to see what might pose a problem in the future. There are several smaller species of trees that can be planted near utility wires without any problem.

I have worked in the aftermath of some of the worst wind, snow, and ice storms this country has experienced, where power outages have lasted weeks. Line clearance tree pruning is a necessity to ensure safe electric power is delivered to our homes, businesses, and schools. Tree work can be dangerous especially in the vicinity of energized lines. We can help the utility companies by not planting trees that will interfere with their lines.

Greg Gathers
President
Custom Tree Care, Inc.



By planting the right tree in the right place, you can avoid trees that look like this.

