

CLP ROW Frequently Asked Questions Quick Reference Guide

What is Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM)?

The primary objective of the CLP Integrated Vegetation Management Program is to control the growth of vegetation along the electric lines so that the Cooperative can provide safe, reliable, affordable energy services to our members. This is accomplished by defining a cycle, using qualified personnel, contractors, and/or foresters, to monitor the condition of the utility right of way and by initiating various vegetation control practices to reduce, manage or eliminate undesirable growth. This approach is called an Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) Program.

IVM Programs incorporate manual, mechanical, and chemical maintenance to comprehensively manage the vegetation that is incompatible with the right of way use. Depending on vegetation species, densities, locations, and sizes, the most appropriate tool will be utilized for the given situation and circumstances. IVM Programs are designed to incorporate management tools to provide long term, environmentally sound right of way.

The consistent implementation of industry-accepted vegetation management practices greatly reduces the risk and likelihood of tree and power line conflicts, as well as service interruptions, and allows for the full utilization of the electric distribution system.

What is a Right Of Way (ROW)?

Strips of land on which CLP distribution lines are located are referred to as Right of Way (ROW). CLP acquires ROW for the purpose of construction, as well as safe and reliable operation and maintenance of its plant facilities and infrastructure. The majority of CLP ROW is granted in the form of easements.

What is an Easement? A legal right granted by a landowner to another person or entity to use a portion of their property for a specific purpose. Easements allow CLP to establish and professionally manage its ROW. This includes keeping the ROW clear of obstructions and activities in order to construct, operate, maintain, repair, and replace electrical facilities for the distribution of high voltage power. Easements allow ingress and egress across adjacent lands to and from the ROW. Landowners may continue to use easement areas provided the use is consistent with the easement agreement.

Why is a clear Right-Of-Way important?

A clear right of way improves power quality, reliability, and safety. We all enjoy trees, but when they interfere with power lines, reliability and safety are compromised.

All electric utilities have an obligation to provide safe clearances around trees and energized conductors throughout their system.

For CLP members and the communities we power, initial and subsequent line clearings as well as ongoing vegetation management are key to improved reliability and safety for everyone.

CLP's Vegetation Management Program requires preventive maintenance along Cooperative's ROW which includes maintenance and clearing and trimming of trees and vegetation that threaten the transmission and distribution system. For more information, please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program and other quick reference guides included on the website.

How are trees, branches and vegetation in the Right-Of-Way problematic?

- Cause power outages.
- Cause lights to blink.
- Obstruct visual inspections, making repairs difficult and costly.
- Block access for maintenance and repairs, causing delays.
- Waste electricity by drawing electricity into the ground.
- Become a fire hazard when trees are near power lines.
- Become a safety hazard for line workers and members and general public.

Why do you clear trees and shrubs so far from the lines?

Service reliability and safety are improved when trees and brush are far enough away from lines to prevent contact. Right of Way widths vary from utility to utility and varies depending on the type of line. Most of CLP's ROW widths are as follows:

Type of Line	Typical ROW Width
Secondary Overhead Distribution	10 ft. (5 feet each side of center)
Primary and Secondary Underground Distribution	15 ft. (7.5 feet each side of center)
Primary Single Phase Overhead Distribution	40 ft. (20 feet each side of center)
Primary Three Phase Overhead Distribution	50 ft. (25 feet each side of center)

Another reason is that work crews need adequate access to power lines for safe, quick repairs. An improperly cleared ROW creates challenges for our crews, especially at night. For example, stringing wire through brush is not easy or safe for our line workers.

For more information, please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program and other quick reference guides included on the website.

Can CLP switch to underground lines?

CLP installs underground lines whenever feasible (economically, technically, and physically).

For example, the physical terrain may not be suitable to obtain adequate depth for underground installation. This is especially true with ledge rock or rocky terrain where buried sharp rocks may pierce the jacket of the cable, causing a fault. Other considerations are on the technical front, such as a long, underground primary line with very low load at the end can cause charging capacitance, thereby requiring extra equipment (rectifiers) to remedy, both creating a large financial impact as well as wasting electricity (creating intentional line loss).

Because we cannot see underground lines, maintaining and restoring power can often take longer than overhead lines, especially in winter, when frost becomes a challenge.

A member may pay the full cost for conversion of an overhead line to underground. For more information, please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program.

How is brush selected for clearing?

Generally, all standing vegetation within the designated clearing zone is removed. For more information, please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program.

Do CLP crews perform ROW work?

Cutting and trimming as part of the scheduled Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) cycle is done by trained professionals contracted by CLP. CLP line workers will remove trees and vegetation during outages and occasionally as part of the scheduled IVM cycle. For more information, please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program and other quick reference guides included on the website.

How will I know what will be removed or trimmed, and when work will be done?

The intent of the notification process is to provide multiple points of contact using multiple methods to diminish miscommunication or non-communication. Our processes are designed to promote discussions with property owners before a tree is cut down.

Personal contact by contractor supervision is the preferred standard method for notifying members of upcoming maintenance activities. If personal contact is made, the nature and extent of the work should be explained to the property owner. Talking with members personally facilitates CLP's ability to clearly establish its intent and allows the Cooperative to gain an understanding of the property owner's expectations, which may enable it to provide flexibility where appropriate and warranted.

For complete details on the Cooperative's communication guidelines, including herbicide application, please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program.

What happens to the cut trees, limbs and brush after crews complete their work?

Please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program and the CLP Tree Debris and Cleanup Quick Reference Guide.

What can I plant and where?

The right tree planted in the right location provides environmental, economic, and aesthetic benefits for the property owner and the community. To maintain the beauty of your landscaping, public safety, and reliability of electric service, it's important to ensure that any tree planting does not interfere with any overhead or underground utility lines.

For safety and reliability, a minimum clear zone is required on both sides of a power line. A tree should never be planted closer than its height at maturity to the edge of the clear zone. For instance, an 18' tree must be planted at least 18' from the edge of the clear zone.

Please refer to the Cooperative Light and Power Association's Vegetation Management Program and the CLP Tree Planting Guidelines Quick Reference Guide.

What should I do if I think I have a tree threatening a co-op line?

If you have a hazard tree on your property that could cause a power outage, or for questions about planting vegetation near power lines, contact the Cooperative.