

OWEN ELECTRIC CONNECTION

April 2024 • Owen Electric • A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

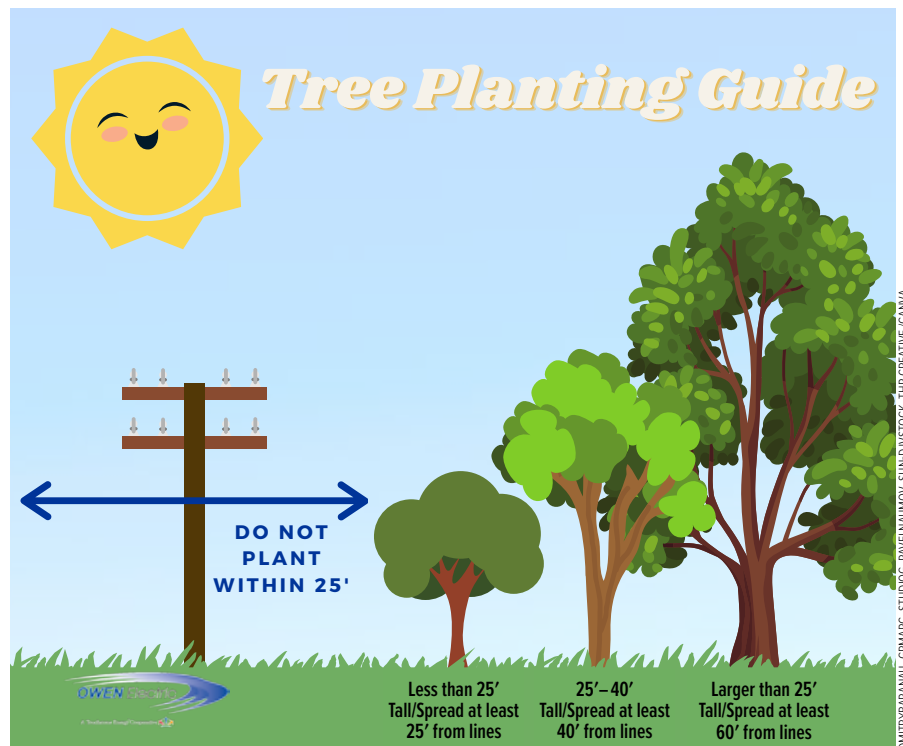
Tree trimming: a balanced approach

Trees are beautiful and welcome additions to our landscape, but it's important to remember that they can often impede our ability to deliver reliable power to homes and businesses. That's why Owen Electric Cooperative strives to balance maintaining the beautiful surroundings we all enjoy with ensuring reliable electricity. You might not realize it, but there are several benefits to regular tree trimming.

Reliability

Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. We've seen the effects of Mother Nature during severe weather events with fallen tree limbs taking down power lines and utility poles. While many factors can impact power disruptions, many outages can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you sometimes see our right-of-way crews trimming trees near power lines. These crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards and best practices for controlling vegetation and tree growth.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to



prepare for severe weather events. It's also more cost-effective to undertake preventative maintenance than it is to make repairs after the fact.

Safety

Working near power lines can be dangerous, and we care about your safety and that of our lineworkers. If trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose a grave danger to families. If children can reach those trees, they can potentially climb into

a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor such as a tree.

Any tree or branch that falls across a power line creates a potentially dangerous situation. A proactive approach lessens the chances of fallen trees during

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severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for line-workers to restore power.

Affordability

As a co-op, Owen Electric always strives to keep costs down for our members. If trees and other vegetation are left unchecked, they can become overgrown and expensive to correct. A strategic vegetation management program helps keep costs down for everyone.

When it comes to vegetation management, there are ways you can help, too. When planting new trees, make sure they're planted a safe distance from overhead power lines. Medium-height trees (40 feet or smaller) should be planted at least 25 feet from power lines. Taller trees (over 40 feet) should be planted at least 60 feet from power lines. You can also practice safe planting near pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 feet from the transformer door and 4 feet from the

sides. If your neighborhood has underground lines, remember to contact 811 before you begin any project that requires digging.

Additionally, if you spot an overgrown tree or branch that's dangerously close to overhead lines, please let us know by calling (800) 372-7612, option 4.

We have deep roots in our community, and we love our beautiful surroundings. It takes a balanced approach, and our vegetation management program is a crucial tool in ensuring service reliability.

Call before you dig

Spring is just around the corner, and it's time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Whether you're preparing for a new garden or some new landscaping, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects—especially those that require digging near underground utility lines.

It's easy to forget that electric, gas, water and other utility lines can be buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want. If you are planning a project that requires digging, call 811 at least three business days before you start. You can also submit a request online by visiting www.call811.com/811-In-Your-State.

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be

notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Owen Electric Cooperative sponsors Frankfort Youth Tour

Nearly 100 high school students representing Kentucky's electric cooperatives gathered at the Kentucky Capitol on February 21 for the Frankfort Youth Tour, a program designed to offer rising young leaders a personal understanding of Kentucky history, civic engagement and their role as citizens and members of electric cooperatives.

Students were welcomed by Rocky Adkins, senior advisor to the governor, before touring the Capitol and attending meetings of the Senate Health Services and Senate Natural Resource and Energy committees. Throughout the busy day, students interacted with legislators and elected officials in the hallways and heard from Gov. Andy Beshear and Rep. Samara Heavrin about their legislative priorities and issues facing Kentuckians. In June, many of these students will travel to our nation's capital during the Washington Youth Tour.

The following students were selected to represent Owen Electric on the Frankfort Youth tour: Nevaeh Race, Grant County High School; Jackson Grothaus, Our Lady of Lourdes Academy; Tanvi Rakesh, Randall K. Cooper High School; Reilly Little, Larry A. Ryle High School; Massey Woodyard, Grant County High School; Roger Phelps, Gallatin County High School; Harper Mann, Williamstown High



PHOTOS: TIM WEBB

School; Karaline Peer, Williamstown High School; Quentin Ellis, Randall K. Cooper High School; and Ariana Hager, Great Crossing High School.

Since the inception of the youth tour program, co-ops have sponsored more than 1,800 Kentucky high school students in Washington, D.C., and thousands more in Frankfort. Owen Electric is proud to invest in our future leaders.

The launch of the 2024 Co-ops Vote initiative—a nonpartisan effort to boost voter turnout in the areas served by rural electric cooperatives—coincided with the Frankfort Youth Tour. Secretary of State Michael Adams spoke to students about the importance of being involved in the democratic process and making their voices heard by voting.

“Over the past four years, our commonwealth has received attention and praise nationally, and even internationally, for how we conduct our elections,” Adams says. “I encourage all Kentucky voters to take advantage of the increased ease in voting, and to be heard.”

Sophia Stover, a 2023 Youth Tour alum and Co-ops Vote ambassador, along with Hardin County Clerk Brian Smith, shared



their experience launching the first county-level Co-ops Vote project.

“I implore you to see voting not just as a right, but as a privilege that generations before us fought tirelessly to secure,” Stover told youth tour students. “Let’s honor their sacrifices by actively participating in the democratic process. Our future is in our hands, and it’s up to us to shape it.”



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Out and about in our communities

The house was full for training at the Dry Ridge Fire Department as the state fire instructor provided training on electric vehicle fires and safety. Owen Electric was happy to provide its EV for demonstration purposes.



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Employee training and education

All employees recently participated in CPR and first aid training. Whether working in the field or in the office, its important for Owen Electric's employees to have the skills to assist during a medical emergency, if necessary.



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