

Customer Requested Tree Work

Many times, customers see trees that are touching wires, sparking or appear to be a problem. When customers see such situations, we ask that they call us at 1-800-422-6199 to report the problem. When reporting the situation, customers are asked to be as accurate as possible and indicate whether the situation is suspected of causing a power outage.

The reported information is forwarded to a representative who will investigate and determine what action is needed. If the customer is not at home when the investigation is made, a NIPSCO representative will leave a "Customer Response: Tree Condition Report" form, which explains the results of the investigation. This form, along with our two tree brochures, will be left in a clear plastic bag that hangs on the doorknob.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about tree trimming, call 1-800-422-6199.

NIPSCO's Forestry personnel are always happy to help.



The Need To Trim Trees

Trees Need To Be Trimmed

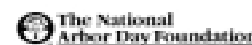
Trees not only provide beauty to your landscape, but they are also important to the environment. They clean the air we breathe, provide life-giving oxygen and reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide. Unfortunately, when tree branches grow too close to the electric lines they can cause a power outage.

Tree/wire contacts are a major cause of storm-related power outages. In fact, a single tree/wire contact may deprive hundreds of people of the electricity they need. If power is lost to medical facilities, water systems, traffic lights or emergency services, the results can seriously impact the affected communities.

Because a dependable supply of electricity is so important, Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) is required by the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to trim trees away from electric power lines. This keeps our electrical equipment operating safely and helps us provide our customers with reliable electric service.



A NiSource Company



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Trees + Power Lines

It is important that electric lines do not come in contact with objects touching the earth (grounded objects). Trees are well-anchored to the ground by their root systems and have a high content of water. This provides a potential path for electricity to travel to the ground.



Children love to climb trees. Electrical safety and the danger of climbing trees that are near power lines are important things that children need to understand. By climbing trees near a line, children could accidentally touch a wire or their weight could bend a limb, thus putting them in danger of electrocution. Remember, tree houses should never be constructed in trees that are close to power lines.

You should never try to trim limbs or remove trees that are located near power lines. Tree trimming near power lines requires specialized, non-conductive equipment and OSHA-mandated worker safety and skills training. For your safety, always contact NIPSCO if you see a tree/wire situation that you suspect is causing power outages. There is no charge for tree trimming around power lines that NIPSCO deems necessary.



A NiSource Company

Only Experts Perform Tree Work For NIPSCO

NIPSCO uses only nationally recognized, certified line clearance tree-trimming contractors to perform necessary tree work. More than 50 tree crews work

year-round to provide safe operating and reliable service to you with the least amount of inconvenience. Where routine trimming is scheduled, a contractor representative will knock on your door to advise you of the required tree work. When no one is at home, the tree crew will proceed with the required routine trimming. When complete tree removal is identified by NIPSCO as the best long-term solution to the tree/wire contact problem, you will be contacted for written consent for the tree removal.

Tree Trimming

Upon completing routine tree-trimming work, the crew will clean up all of the trimmings they created. Branches and leaves are ground into a wood mulch ideal for many landscaping projects. If you would like wood mulch, contact NIPSCO or the tree crew. We will do our best to arrange getting you a load of chips if we are working in your general area. Any limb wood resulting from the trimming that is firewood size will be left at the base of the tree for your use unless other arrangements have been agreed to.

Tree Removal

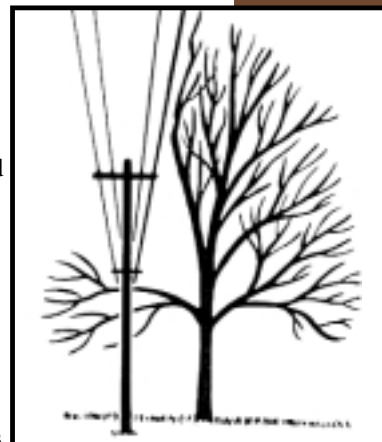
When tree removal is the best long-term solution, the removal only occurs after obtaining your written consent and only after the proposed removal work is explained to you by the contractor. Removal candidates are trees which, in NIPSCO's judgement, pose a high risk to electrical service. We do not remove the stump, but it will be cut as flush to the ground as possible and chemically treated to promote the natural decaying process. Firewood will be left in manageable lengths unless you request otherwise. All remaining brush will be removed.

If you desire additional tree work beyond what is needed for electric safety and reliability, we will be pleased to give you a written estimate to do the additional work.

Directional Pruning Techniques

All trimming performed along NIPSCO's power lines is done by directional pruning techniques. Directional pruning tends to guide new growth away from the electric wires. This pruning method is a cornerstone of modern tree care and meets standards and practices established by **The International Society of Arboriculture, The National Arborists Association and The American Association of Nurserymen.**

Depending on the location of the tree in relation to the power line, directional trimming techniques will be used to trim only the portion of the tree that directly involves risk to the power line. All limbs and branches are cut back to their supporting trunk or limb so that no stubs remain. This practice can minimize the impact on the tree crown.



Directional Pruning

Trimming the Proper Amount

Under normal conditions, some trees may appear to be a safe distance from power lines; however, that may not be the case during severe weather. When a tree is trimmed, the clearance distance between tree branches and electrical wires is based on guidelines developed from National Electric Safety Code requirements.

Trimming Considerations Include:

1. **The position of the tree and line.** Trees located directly beneath the power lines require the most extensive trimming.
2. **The tree's rate of growth.** Some tree species grow faster than others, and the amount of trimming is adjusted accordingly.
3. **The voltage of the line.** The higher the voltage, the more clearance from the line is required.
4. **The reliability of the line.** Lines that provide service to critical equipment or services require more extensive trimming.

In every case, trees are trimmed in order to maintain clearance from the wires for a three-year period. Weak, diseased or dead limbs are also removed to avoid contact with a line during severe weather.

Storms and Trees

Ice and wind storms cause severe damage to trees. Major tree limbs break and trees uproot and fall. During storms, NIPSCO's major concern is to restore service. When our tree crews work on damaged trees during storms that have caused power interruptions, they only do the work needed to get the power lines fixed and power restored. Due to our commitment to restoring power quickly, our crews will not clean up or remove branches during storm restoration.



Falling limbs and trees often hit and damage property such as houses, garages, fences and cars, as well as NIPSCO's electric power lines. Frequently, the tree that causes property damage does not belong to the individual whose property is damaged. NIPSCO does not own any of the trees that hit our power lines and is not responsible for their clean-up.

Tree work during storm situations is very dangerous and crews work long hours in the effort to quickly restore service. Your cooperation and understanding during these situations is greatly appreciated. **Any time you see electric lines on the ground or where they could be touched, please assume they are energized and DO NOT touch the lines. Any downed electric wire should be reported to NIPSCO at 1-800-422-6199.**

Prevention

Damage to electric lines during storm situations can be minimized with your cooperation and understanding when our tree crews are in your neighborhood. In an effort to prevent tree-related outages, NIPSCO has a program of preventative-maintenance tree trimming, which schedules trees to be re-trimmed every three years or so. The goal of this program is to prevent tree-related electric outages and provide the reliable electrical service you expect.