



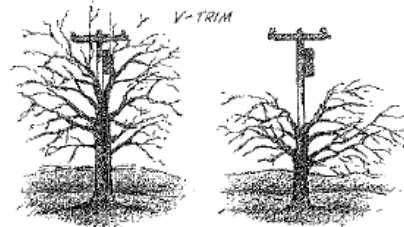
TREE TRIMMING PROGRAM

PPEC recognizes that trees and utility service lines are vital parts of our community that must coexist together. Each is essential to our high standard of living. It is our ultimate goal to keep trees alive and healthy while ensuring that they do not interfere with electric lines.

PPEC has recently adopted the lateral pruning method developed by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and approved by the National Arborist Association, the National Arbor Day Foundation and the Metro Tree Ordinance.

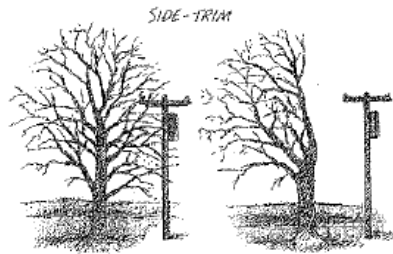
Lateral pruning leaves the overall structure of the tree stronger and more resistant to high winds and heavy ice, while directing future growth away from power lines. **PPEC no longer uses the tree-topping or “rounding” method.** This process is discouraged by the National Arbor Day Foundation because “topping” leaves the tree weakened and susceptible to insects and disease.

HOW PPEC TRIMS TREES



“V” PRUNING

When utility wires run through a tree, a v-cut is made around the wire allowing branches or stems on either side to grow naturally.



SIDE PRUNING

For trees that grow under and adjacent to power lines, we remove overhanging and interfering side branches to gain necessary clearance.

For large trees with branches hanging over power lines, we require at least 15 feet of clearance above lower voltage transmission lines. With higher voltage lines, no overhang is allowed.

For safety reasons, PPEC maintains a minimum clearance around our poles of 10 feet for trees and 3 feet for shrubs.

Power lines located at the side and, in the rear of a customer’s property require special clearances if they are not accessible from a paved or gravel surface. PPEC requires clearances that contain no shrubs or trees of 5 to 10 feet (depending on line construction) on each side of the pole line.

In unmaintained areas, all vegetation with the required clearance distances will be removed. In some cases, it may be necessary to remove vegetation outside the clearance area, depending on the species and the amount of trimming necessary to keep the area clear. In maintained areas, PPEC will work with homeowners to maintain clearance in landscaped areas. PPEC retains the right to remove landscaped trees and shrubs within the clearance areas.

Additionally, no vines will be allowed to grow on PPEC poles, on guy wires or on any utility equipment at any time.

TOPPING HURTS TREES

According to the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), topping is perhaps the most harmful tree pruning practice known.

What is topping? Topping is the indiscriminate cutting of tree branches to stubs or lateral branches that are not large enough to assume the terminal role. Other names for topping include “heading,” “tipping,” “hat-racking,” and “rounding over.”

The most common reason given for topping is to reduce the size of a tree. Home owners often feel that their trees have become too large for their property. People fear that tall trees may pose a hazard. Topping, however, is not a viable method of height reduction and certainly does not reduce the hazard. In fact, topping will make a tree more hazardous in the long term.

Topping stresses trees. Topping often removes 50 to 100 percent of the leaf-bearing crown of a tree. Because leaves are the food factories of a tree, removing them can temporarily starve a tree. The severity of the pruning triggers a sort of survival mechanism. The tree activates latent buds, forcing the rapid growth of

multiple shoots below each cut. The tree needs to put out a new crop of leaves as soon as possible. If a tree does not have the stored energy reserves to do so, it will be seriously weakened and may die.

A stressed tree is more vulnerable to insect and disease infestations. Large, open pruning wounds expose the sapwood and heartwood to attacks. The tree may lack sufficient energy to chemically defend the wounds against invasion, and some insects are actually attracted to the chemical signals trees release.

Topping causes decay. The preferred location to make a pruning cut is just beyond the branch collar at the branch’s point of attachment. The tree is biologically equipped to close such a wound, provided the tree is healthy enough and the wound is not too large. Cuts made along a limb between lateral branches create stubs with wounds that the tree may not be able to close. The exposed wood tissues begin to decay. Normally, a tree will “wall off”, or compartmentalize, the decaying tissues, but few trees can defend the multiple severe wounds caused by topping. The decay organisms are given a free path to move down through the branches.

Alternatives to topping. Sometimes a tree must be reduced in height or spread. Providing clearance for utility lines is an example. There are recommended techniques for doing so. If practical, branches should be removed back to their point of origin. If a branch must be shortened, it should be cut back to a lateral that is large enough to assume the terminal role. A rule of thumb is to cut back to a lateral that is at least one-third the diameter of the limb being removed.

This method of branch reduction helps to preserve the natural form of the tree. However, if large cuts are involved, the tree may not be able to close over and compartmentalize the wounds. Sometimes the best solution is to remove the tree and replace it with a species that is more appropriate for the site.