



# Vegetation, Power Lines, and Utility Rights-of-Way



# Vegetation along utility right-of-ways



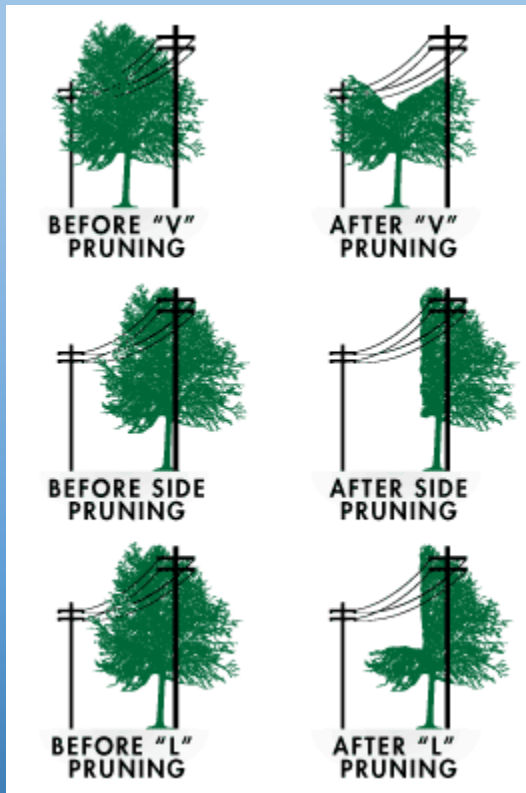
# Why must utilities trim trees?

- Safe, reliable power
- Preventing potential conflicts and hazards



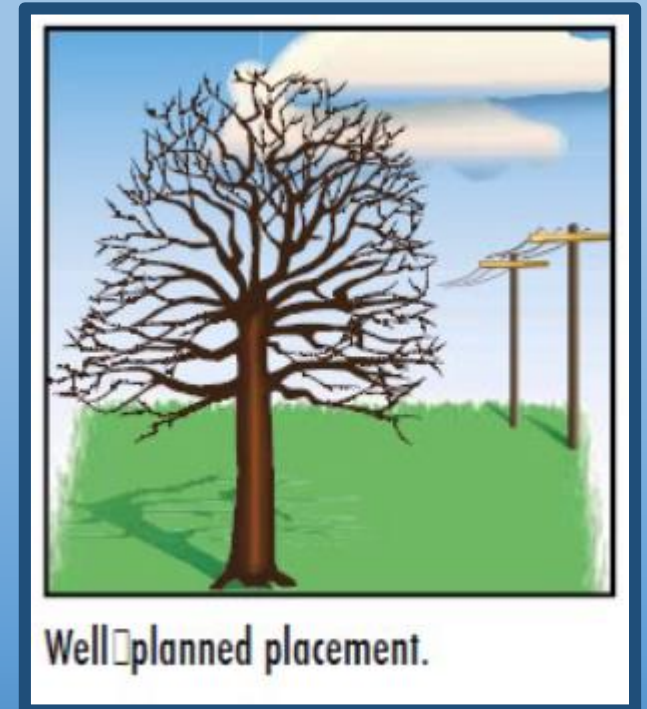
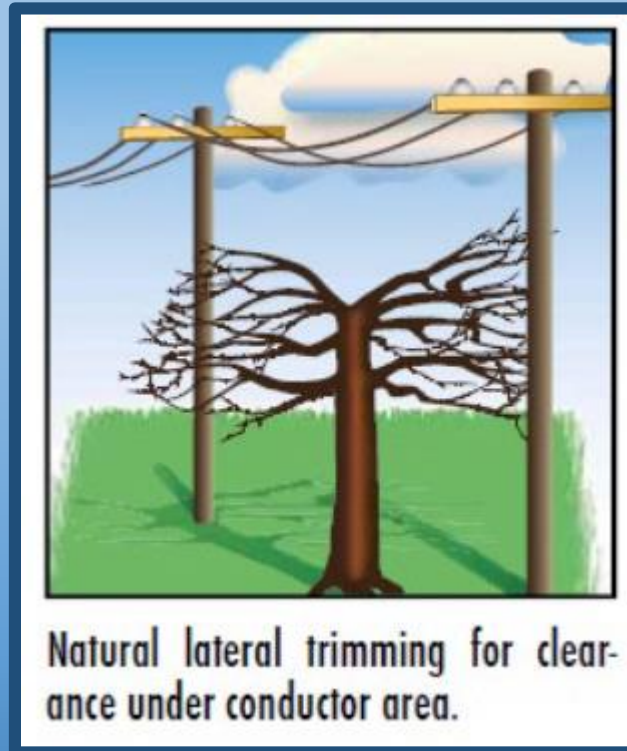
# Does tree trimming really make a difference?

- Yes – trees are the most frequent cause of power outages

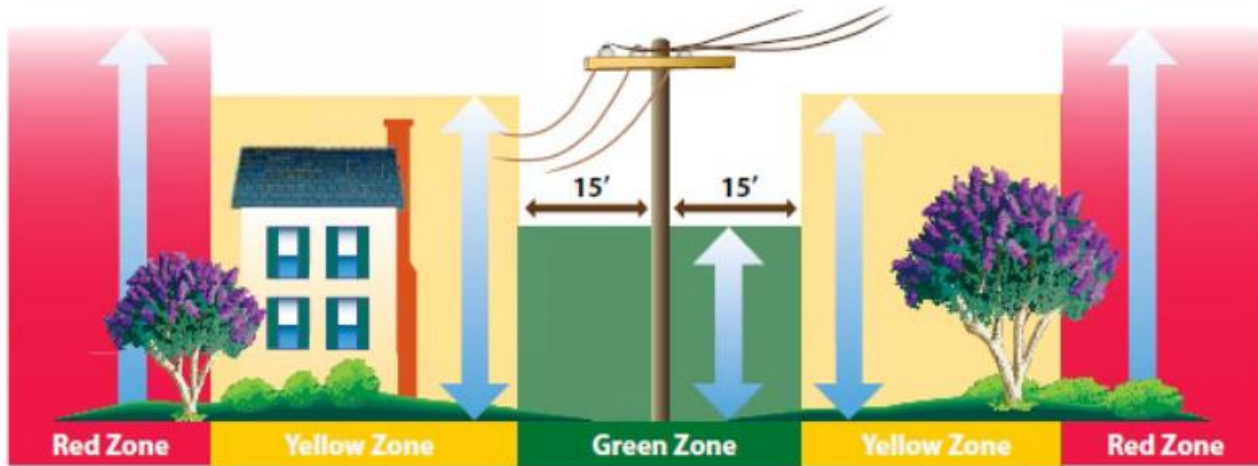


# How do they trim and are they monitored?

- Utilities in Virginia adhere to guidelines issued by the SCC (State Corporation Commission) and trim to ANSI Standards.
- Utility arborists on staff ensure tree trimmers make appropriate cuts and use risk assessments on trees within the ROWs before any removals.

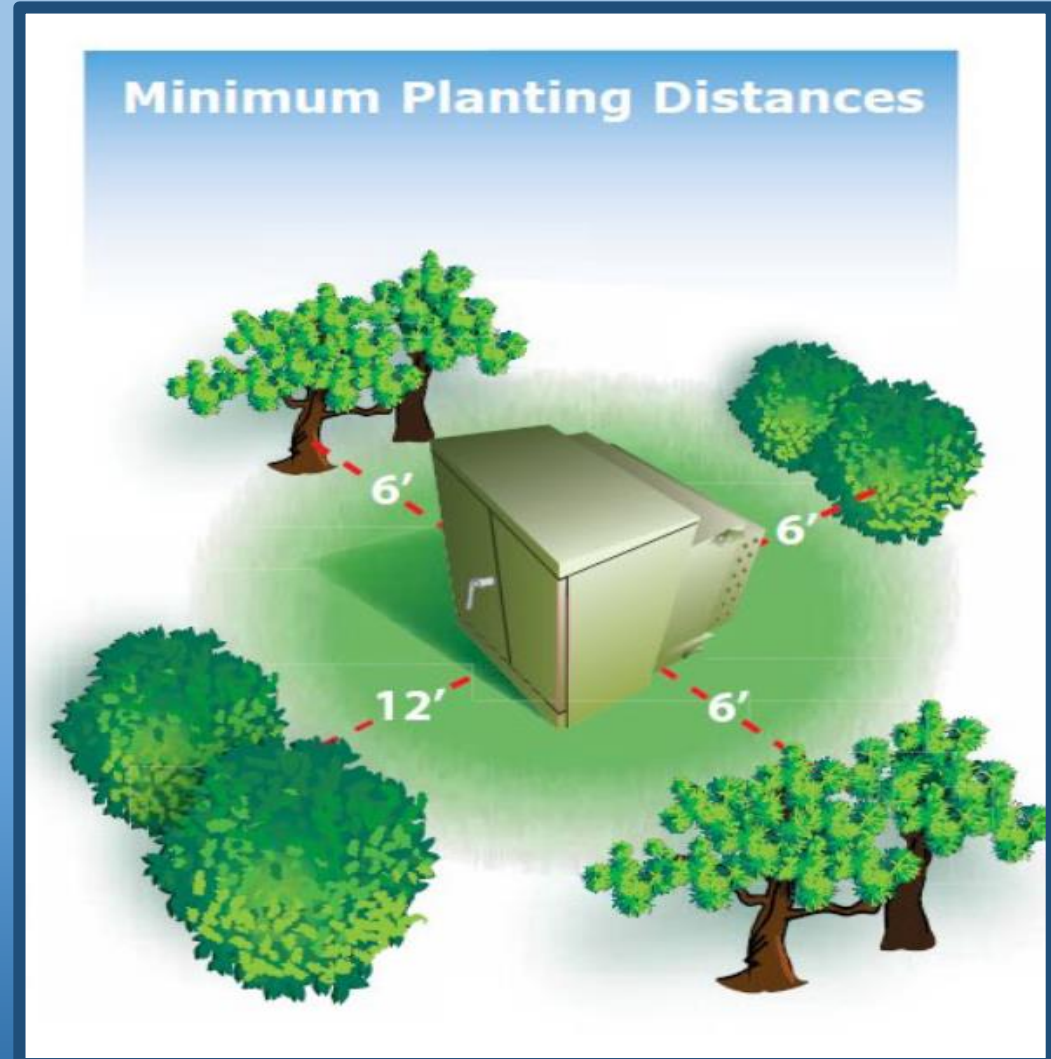


# Minimum Planting Distances



Over 45 Ft. Medium to Large Trees	20–45 Ft. Small to Medium Trees	Less than 20 Ft. Shrubs	20–45 Ft. Small to Medium Trees	Over 45 Ft. Medium to Large Trees
---	---------------------------------------	----------------------------	---------------------------------------	---

- Red Zone:** For trees that grow more than 45 feet tall. *Do not plant near power lines.*
- Yellow Zone:** For trees that grow 20 to 45 feet tall. *Do not plant these trees under power lines.*
- Green Zone:** For shrubs that grow less than 20 feet tall. *These plants are appropriate for planting near power lines.*



# Approved tree species around power lines

Approved Tree Species	
Small and medium trees should be planted a minimum of 15 to 45 feet from power lines; larger trees, a minimum of 45 feet. Some small species with ornamental characteristics that are suitable for planting in our area are listed below. Check with a nursery or arboretum to learn more before selecting the tree.	
Amur Maple .....	AcerGinnala
Japanese Maple .....	AcerPalmatum
Doublefile Viburnum/Japanese Snowball .....	Viburnum plicatum var. tomentosum
Crepe Myrtle .....	Lagerstroemia indica
Purpleleaf Plum .....	Prunus cerasifera
Smoketree .....	Cotinus coggygria
Fringe Tree .....	Chionanthus virginicus
Chaste Tree .....	Vitex agnus-castus
Kousa Dogwood .....	Cornus kousa
Flowering Dogwood .....	Cornus florida
Redbud .....	Cercis canadensis
Washington Hawthorn .....	Crataegus phaenopyrum
Star Magnolia .....	Magnolia stellata
Crabapple .....	Malus sp.



# Approved shrub species around power lines

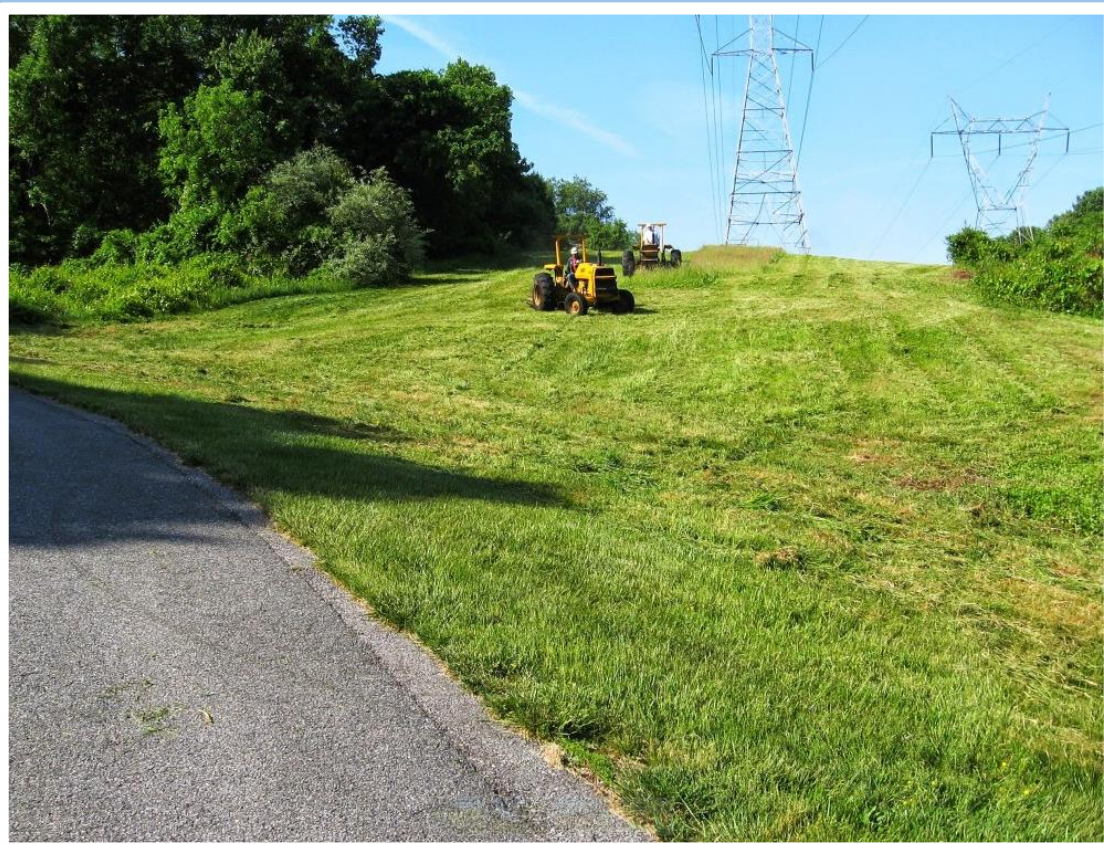
## Approved Shrub Species

Ideal shrubs for screening or planting under or within 15 feet of power lines:

Glossy abelia .....	Abelia grandiflora
Wintergreen barberry.....	Berberis julianae
Japanese barberry .....	Berberis thunbergii
Butterfly bush.....	Buddleia Davidii
Flowering quince .....	Chaenomeles speciosa
Redtwig osier dogwood.....	Cornus sericea
Dwarf winged euonymous.....	Euonymous alatus 'compacta'
Forsythia.....	Forsythia X intermedia
Japanese holly.....	Ilex crenata
Inkberry holly .....	Ilex glabra
Pfitzer juniper .....	Juniperus chinensis 'pfitzeriana
Leatherleaf mahonia .....	Mahonia bealei
Nandina.....	Nandina domestica
Dwarf mugo pine.....	Pinus mugo var. mugo
Bridalwreath spirea.....	Spiraea prunifolia
Vanhoutte spirea .....	Spiraea X vanhouttei
Burkwood viburnum.....	Viburnum X burkwoodii
Korean spicebush.....	Viburnum carlesi
Old fashioned weigela .....	Wiegela florida

# What to do within the right-of-way?

- Mowing increases invasive plant dominance



# Integrated Vegetation Management



# IVM, continued...





# Reclaiming ROW's with native species





# Additional partnerships

- *Project Plant It* - Dominion's environmental education program: coordinates with school systems and municipalities to donate trees and teach children and communities about the importance of trees.





# Relationship with Dominion Virginia Power

- Advocating good tree care and best management practices with the Dominion Foresters and their tree trimming contractors
- Working with Dominion during major storm events
- Coordinate County tree removals where they are in conflict with the utilities
- Assist Dominion, when requested, with residential concerns regarding tree trimming
- Partnered with Dominion on invasives management (Cooperative Weed Management Area)

# Questions



**Adam Lipera**  
**Arlington County Urban Forester**  
**ISA Certified Arborist, MA-5383A**

**Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation**  
**Parks and Natural Resources Division**  
**2700 S Taylor Street, Arlington, VA 22206**  
**[alipera@arlingtonva.us](mailto:alipera@arlingtonva.us)**