

GALLATIN DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICITY

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Tree Trimming Guidelines and Specifications

Our main objectives for tree trimming are safety for our customers and our employees, and service reliability to our customers while keeping the trees healthy. The amount of trimming needed depends on the type of tree, the voltage of the surrounding power lines, and proximity of the tree branches to the power lines.

GDE uses a lateral trimming method that was developed by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Lateral trimming is the best practice to keep the tree healthy and more resistant to high winds and heavy ice while at the same time directing growth away from the power lines. For trees that are growing directly under power lines, GDE will use the “V” trimming method which allows the branches to grow naturally on either side of the primary lines. GDE does not “top” or “round” trees.

GDE requires a minimum clearance of 10 feet for trees and 3 feet for shrubs on either side of the power line poles and up to the primary lines. There shall be no limbs hanging over the primary lines regardless of how far away they are from the primary lines. GDE maintains all primary and secondary power lines. The customer is responsible for any tree trimming desired for their house service, or any security light that the customer may have. GDE will come out free of charge and disconnect the house service so trimming can be done by the customer in a safe manner and will come back to hook service up when trimming is finished, as long as it is done during regular business hours. For padmount transformers, primary vaults, and secondary vaults GDE requires a minimum clearance of 6 feet on the side with the door/padlock and bolt, and a minimum clearance of 3 feet on the other three sides.

During routine tree trimming, GDE’s contractors will remove and/or chip the tree limbs and debris from the customer’s property. During emergency tree trimming for storms or other “acts of god”, the customer is responsible for any cleanup of tree debris.