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Clearing, Maintaining Right-of-Way Insures Reliable Electric Service

There are many ways VVEC provides you with safe, reliable electric service. One of the most common – and crucial – ways is referred to as right-of-way clearing (or vegetation management).

A right-of-way (ROW) refers to a strip of land underneath or around power lines that your electric cooperative has the right and responsibility to maintain and clear. Trees must grow at a distance far enough from power lines and conductors where they will not cause harm to individuals or disruption to electrical service.

A general guideline to maintaining a safe ROW is a total of 30 feet of clearance (15 feet on either side) of a three-phase line and 20 feet (10 feet on either side) of a single-phase line.

Clearing the ROW is critical to keeping our members' lights on. An average of 15 percent of power interruptions occur when trees, shrubs or bushes grow too close to power lines.


If a tree encroaches on this safe distance, our vegetation management team will trim back branches and brush using chain saws, bucket trucks, tree climbers, brush chippers and mowers.

Chemical control methods are also used as a way to prevent the growth of trees such as hackberry, oak, elm, and cedar before they get tall enough to

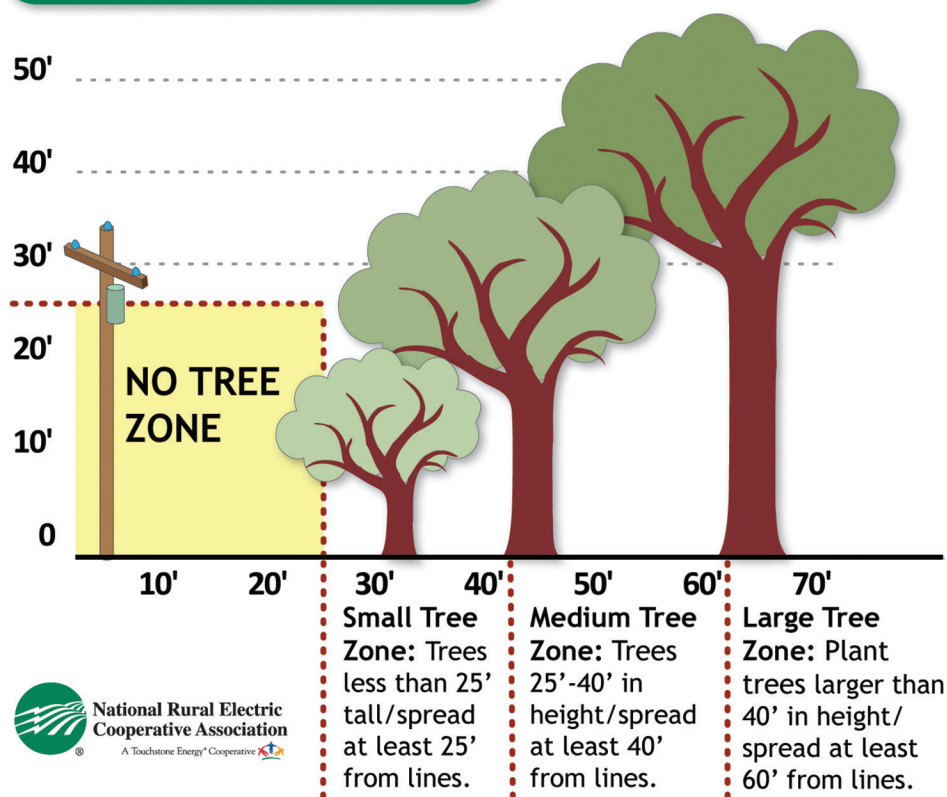
interrupt electric service, and are more costly to remove.

ROW clearing keeps your family safe by ensuring tree branches do not become energized due to close contact with a downed power line. Power lines can carry up to 14,400 volts, and an energized tree branch is incredibly dangerous – even deadly. Be mindful when around trees close to power lines, and make sure your children know that climbing trees near power

lines is extremely dangerous.

ROW clearing is also critical to ensuring we provide members with affordable electricity. Staying ahead of the game keeps us from having to come out after a storm to restore power due to fallen trees. Remember to contact us if you decide to trim or remove trees near any power service or line. And never trim a tree in the right-of-way zone on your own. 

Tree Planting Guide



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Monday through Friday

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Winter Residential Rates

October through March usage,
November through April billing

Customer Charge \$25.00

Energy Charge

1st 1,000 kWh \$0.0738/kWh

Over 1,000 kWh \$0.0678/kWh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 55.993 mills per kWh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2% of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes if applicable.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Take Me Out to the Greater Tulsa


Home & Garden Show!

While visiting the Greater Tulsa Home & Garden Show be sure to drop by the Green Country Electric Co-ops booth. Representatives from four Green Country electric co-ops, including VVEC, will be on hand to visit with you about energy efficient practices and appliances, co-op services such as energy audits and rebates, and to answer your questions.

While you're there, be sure to register to win a Mecco electric smoker. The winner's name will be drawn at the conclusion of the show.

The Greater Tulsa Home & Garden Show is Oklahoma's largest show of its kind. The show is at the River Spirit Expo Center on the Tulsa Fairgrounds. It opens Thursday, March 12 and runs through Sunday, March 15. Admission is \$8 for adults, and kids 12 and under are free with a paid adult. You can get \$1 off your admission with a coupon from the Home & Garden Show guide found in the March 11 Tulsa World.

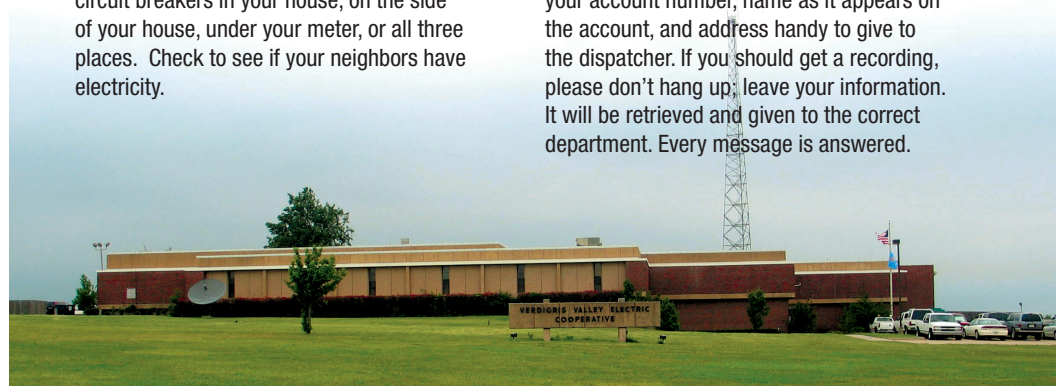
VVEC Member Service Representative Chub Brewer and Communications Specialist Kay Rabbitt-Brower will be manning the booth Friday night, March 13. It's booth 709 and can be found on Pine Street between Guthrie and Frisco Streets on the upper level.

Come on by and register to win the electric smoker! 



What to do if Your Power Goes Off

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
2. Call the Co-op at 371-2584, or 1-800-870-5948 if the call is long distance for you. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, please don't hang up; leave your information. It will be retrieved and given to the correct department. Every message is answered.



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VVEC Employee Honored for Commitment to Community

Don Hutchinson, VVEC Right-of Way Coordinator, was recognized during the annual Collinsville Chamber of Commerce banquet for commitment to his community.


Chamber President Teresa Brown says Hutch was selected for several reasons. “He has served on the Chamber board for a number of years, where he is an active

member, and has always been willing to volunteer for our events. He cooks the hamburgers and hot dogs at the Chamber’s City Appreciation Luncheon in the park for several years now, and it has been hot, but he never complains! He is very recognized in the community and also represents VVEC very well.” 

Dates to Remember.....

Youth Tour and Energy Camp essays are due by 4 p.m., Friday March 6. *(If taking the Youth Tour test, please contact program coordinator Kay Rabbitt-Brower to schedule a time for the test to be administered.)*

Adopt-A-School and Rural Fire Department grant applications are due Wednesday, April 15.

To download an application or entry form, visit our Web site - www.vvec.com - and select the Community Programs tab. 




What is the Customer Charge?

When you look at your monthly electric bill you see the cost of the electricity you used during that billing period. There is also another amount that doesn’t change from month to month as your usage does. That is the customer charge. But exactly what is the customer charge?

There are costs associated with being able to deliver electric service to a location before even one kiloWatt-hour of electricity is used. This is what is covered by the customer charge.

Those include the cost of the meter, wire, poles, and other equipment used to deliver electricity. There are also costs involved with maintaining that location’s equipment, and repairing or replacing it when necessary, and the customer charge covers those.

If you have questions about any charges on your electric bill, please call VVEC’s consumer services representatives at (918) 371-2584. They are available from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. 

Five Tips for Space Heater Safety

Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area of their home without turning up the thermostat on the central heating system. However, space heaters are also responsible for 32-percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. If you use a space heater, review these tips to keep you, your family and your property safe.

Materials – What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close. Make sure you purchase a heater that is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils just in case little fingers get too close.

Placement - While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way

of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level floor on a nonflammable surface. Keeping the space heater on the floor can keep it from falling over, preventing fire hazards. Also, remember space heaters and bathrooms are not a good combination, unless the heater is designed for bathroom use. Moisture can damage the heater.

The most important rule about space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept three feet away from flammable materials and out of the way of children and pets.

Special Features – Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. If you cur-

rently own a space heater without auto shutoff, consider purchasing a heater with this important safety feature.

Cords – You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet. Also make sure cords aren't in a high-traffic area so they are not a tripping hazard.

Use – Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, make sure to unplug the heater.

Following these tips and making sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions can keep you safe when using a space heater.



RECIPE

Vinegar Pie

- 1/2 cup butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 & 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 Tbsp. cornmeal
- 1 Tbsp. white distilled vinegar
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Melt butter over medium heat. Add eggs, sugar, and cornmeal. Cook 1 minute, stirring constantly.

Pour mixture into unbaked pie shell. Cook at 350° for 15 minutes, raise temperature to 375° and cook for 20 minutes.

Remove from oven and let pie cool, then refrigerate.