

Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Norris Electric Cooperative

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Meet our newest team member!

Norris Electric is pleased to announce the newest addition to our coop family, Jodi Locey. Jodi joined our team on Jan. 22, 2024, taking on the role of member service representative.

Residing in Effingham County with her husband and two children, Jodi brings a wealth of knowledge to the co-op world with 10 years of experience. In her free time, she enjoys side-by-side and horseback riding, doing the mentoring program at Dieterich Schools and volunteering with Meals on Wheels.

We warmly welcome Jodi and believe she will be an asset to our team. We wish Jodi a long and fulfilling career at Norris Electric Cooperative!



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning. Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety. Check the lint trap opening and use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening.

If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue buildup. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.

Only certified workers can trim trees near power lines

Can anyone trim trees near power lines? The answer is no. Specialized tree trimmers, certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in utility clearance, are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

OSHA requires this certification because electricity is a serious and widespread hazard to tree workers. According to the Tree Care Industry Association, electricity is the leading cause of death in the tree care industry, causing about 15 percent of all industry fatalities. Tree care industry workers do not have to directly contact a power line to be electrocuted; about half of all electrocution fatalities are the result of indirect contact.

Qualified line-clearance trimmers must be specially trained in how to safely work in proximity to energized lines. They must understand how an electrical grid functions, the effects of tree growth patterns and tree damage and how to implement directional pruning, as required by the American National Standard for Arboricultural Operations' safety standards.

According to OSHA, the duties of line-clearance certified tree trimmers typically include the following:

- Undergoing annual evaluations by licensed professionals to ensure continuous adherence to industry best practices.
- Requesting job briefings from employers and other crew members before starting a job or when environmental conditions change.
- Properly wearing approved personal protective equipment, including fall protection equipment when needed.
- Complying with material handling and mechanical equipment requirements.
- Working with a second line-clearance tree trimmer within voice range.
- Determining the voltages of lines before work begins or assuming that the line is operating at the highest possible voltage if it is not possible to determine voltage.
- Ensuring body parts and any ladders, platforms or aerial devices being used remain outside the minimum approach distance from any energized equipment.
- Using only insulated tools and equipment to remove branches and limbs that are in contact with, or are within the minimum approach distance of, energized lines or equipment.
- Determining if weather conditions are no longer safe to work in, such as the presence of high winds, ice, thunder or lightning that would make the work hazardous.
- Beginning work on storm restoration efforts in the aftermath of a storm if they have been trained in the special hazards involved with this type of work.

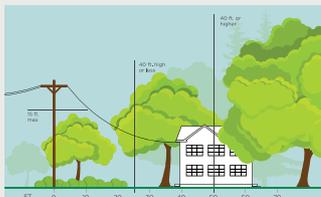
Please contact your Norris Electric if you have any questions about line-clearance tree trimmers or tree trimming near power lines.

For information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

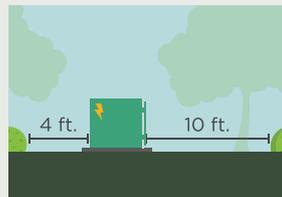
3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

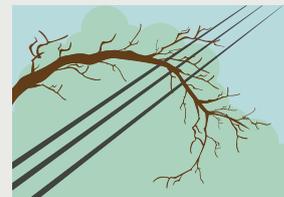
1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



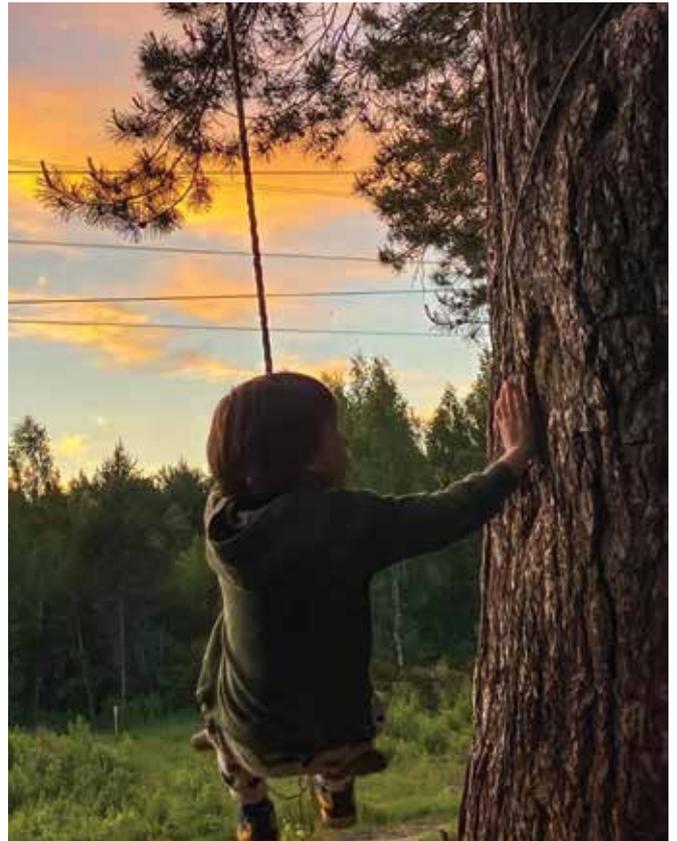
**Trimming improves safety for all.
Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.**

KEEP KIDS SAFE AROUND

Trees and Power Lines

When kids take a break from gaming or other devices, they may head outdoors to play. If they will be climbing trees, scope out the area first to ensure that the treetops do not have power lines running through them.

Not realizing power lines are energized, children may reach up to grab a line or accidentally come too close to it when they are playing or sitting high up in a tree.



Even if the power lines are not touching the tree, contact could happen once weight is added to the branch.

In addition, teach kids to fly kites, drones and remote control planes or toys in open areas free from power lines.

If a toy or other object lands in a substation, please call your electric utility to retrieve the item. Never approach the fence or try to enter the area.

Take time to teach children and teens how to respect and identify potential electrical hazards.



Learn more at SafeElectricity.org



PHOTO COURTESY OF HONDA

10 do's and don'ts when using portable generators

Storm season is upon us, which means greater potential for power outages. If you're planning to use a portable generator in the event of an outage, Norris Electric Cooperative reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

- 1. DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
- 2. DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- 3. DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- 4. DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
- 5. DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
- 6. DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially-enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.
- 7. DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
- 8. DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
- 9. DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
- 10. DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous — even deadly — if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.