


Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Norris Electric Cooperative

8543 N St Hwy 130
Newton, IL 62448

Phone: 618-783-8765
or **Toll-Free:**
1-877-783-8765

Report an Outage:
1-877-783-3221

Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday
7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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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.

Continued on 18B ►



Certified workers continued from 18A

- 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 power provider if you have any questions about line-clearance tree trimmers or tree trimming near power lines.

For information on electrical safety, visit safeelectricity.org.



FREE & EASY ways to save energy

(Spoiler Alert: Your clothes and dishes won't know the difference)

Major home appliances account for approximately 16% of an average home's energy consumption.

16%



1. Run full loads of laundry instead of several smaller ones.
2. Use cold water to wash your clothes.

3. Keep your refrigerator at 35° to 38°F and your freezer at 0°F.
4. Regularly defrost manual-defrost freezers and refrigerators.



5. Skip the heat-dry setting on your dishwasher.
6. Fully load your dishwasher before washing.

7. When buying new appliances, consider Energy Star versions.
8. Unplug appliances you're not using.



Time to replace that old appliance? Replacing older versions with energy-efficient models can save the average household more than \$500 per year.

Sources: National Resources Defense Council, U.S. Energy Information Administration

Safe Electricity.org®

Tornado safety and electrical hazards

Tornadoes can strike with little warning, leaving behind downed power lines, damaged electrical equipment and dangerous debris. Preparing before a tornado, and knowing how to stay safe afterward, can help prevent electrical shock, fire and injury. Make sure your emergency plan includes electrical safety steps so you and your family are ready to act quickly and safely.

Before a tornado

- Prepare an emergency kit with water, battery-powered flashlight, radio, extra batteries and portable phone charger.
- Keep your electric utility's phone number handy in case you need to report an outage or downed line.
- Fully charge cell phones and backup power banks before severe weather hits so you can use them in an emergency.

During a tornado

- Seek shelter immediately in a basement or a small, interior room with no windows, such as a bathroom or closet.
- Turn off and unplug appliances and electronics to protect them from power surges. Leave one light on so you'll know when power is restored.
- Do not stay inside a vehicle or try to outrun a tornado. Exit the vehicle and seek shelter in a sturdy building. If none are available, lie flat in a low-lying area away from the vehicle and power lines.

After a tornado

- Stay away from downed power lines and anything they could touch, such as trees, fences or debris. Always assume they are energized.
- If you see a downed line while driving, do not exit your vehicle. Call 911 and your utility, and warn others to stay away.
- Do not touch anyone who is in contact with a power line. Call 911 immediately and wait for emergency responders.
- Do not enter damaged buildings until electricity and gas are shut off by professionals. Never attempt to turn off power if you must stand in water to reach the breaker.

- Avoid flooded areas with electrical outlets, appliances or cords, and never touch electrical equipment when wet or standing in water.
- Have all water-damaged electrical systems, appliances and devices inspected by a licensed electrician before use.

Power outages and generator safety

- Never use a generator indoors or in partially enclosed spaces such as garages, porches, or near open windows and doors. Place it at least 20 feet away from your home to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep the generator dry by placing it on a tarp or under a canopy, and follow all manufacturer's instructions.
- Never plug a generator directly into a wall outlet. This can inadvertently energize power lines and pose a lethal risk to you, neighbors and utility workers.

Stay informed, stay alert, and share this information to help protect your family and community during severe weather events.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Scammers and cyber criminals look for weak points to exploit before software companies can fix them. Update software programs on your computer, tablet and mobile phone as soon as possible when a newer version becomes available. Software updates often contain critical patches and protections against security threats. Turn on automatic updates to automatically update your security software, internet browser, operating system and mobile apps.

Source: consumer.ftc.org



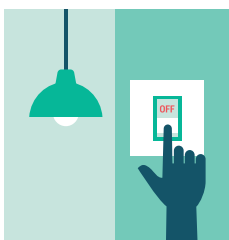
Thank you to our members, townships and homeowners for mowing and keeping rights-of-way clear in 2025 — your efforts keep our system looking great and help us provide safe, reliable service.

CHANGE YOUR HABITS

To Save Money on Your Energy Bill

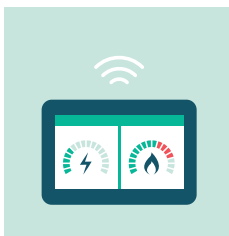


Whether you are looking for free or low-cost ways to save energy or need to make a major purchase that will help pay for itself over time due to energy savings, here are some ways to make a difference.



No-Cost

- Turn off lights when you leave a room.
- Program your programmable thermostat.
- Use sunlight for heat in the winter.
- Fully load dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers.
- Use window coverings to keep out cold or heat.
- Turn off electronics when not in use.



Low-Cost

- Use smart strips that turn off power to unused items
- Make sure your HVAC system is serviced regularly and filters are changed as often as recommended.
- Purchase an insulating blanket made for hot water heaters.
- Find and fill air leaks in your home.
- Caulk between window/door frames and walls.
- Install a smart thermostat.



Major Purchases

- Upgrade to a high-efficiency HVAC system.
- Purchase energy-efficient appliances.
- Insulate attics, exterior walls, basements and crawl spaces.
- Purchase a clothes dryer with a moisture sensor.
- Purchase a water-saving dishwasher or washing machine.
- Replace old windows with energy-efficient versions.

Learn more at:

