

White River Valley Electric Cooperative has a robust Integrated Vegetation Management Program that helps balance the need for safe, reliable service by keeping our right-of-ways clear of trees and overgrown vegetation with respect for the natural environment. WRVEC has again achieved Tree Line USA Utility status with the Arbor Day Foundation. The Tree Line USA program exists to recognize best practices in public and private utility arboriculture, demonstrating how trees and utilities can co-exist for the benefit of communities and citizens. The following standards are met as promotion of industry best-practices.

Standard 1: Quality Tree Care

Utility Pruning: Work practices are formally adopted for line clearance tree pruning that are consistent with current ANSI A300 Part 1 and as explained in *ISA Utility Pruning Best Management Practices*.

- These practices avoid topping, tipping, removing branch collars and leaving long stubs. Each worker who performs line clearance, including contractor workers, has read and understands *ISA Utility Pruning Best Management Practices* (or equivalent approved by your State Forester and the Foundation), follows its recommendations, and has a copy available for quick reference.
- Attach Evidence: Indicate resource(s) utilized and include evidence of formal work practices

Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM): Work practices are formally adopted for management of right-of-way vegetation that are consistent with current ANSI A300 Part 7 and as explained in *ISA Integrated Vegetation Management Best Management Practices*.

- These practices include setting objectives, evaluating sites, defining action thresholds, evaluating and selecting control methods, implementing IVM and monitoring treatment and quality assurance. Each worker who plans IVM work has read and understands the *ISA IVM Best Management Practices* (or equivalent approved by the State Forester and the Foundation), follows its recommendations, and has a copy available for quick reference.
- Attach Evidence: Indicate resource(s) utilized

Underground Utility Construction: Work practices are recommended for utility trenching and tunneling construction activities near trees, similar to methods described in *Trees and Development*, a publication from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).

- These practices reduce damage to roots and injury to trees. The utility has provided educational information on proper trenching and tunneling to its underground

workers, such as “Trenching and Tunneling Near Trees: A Field Pocket Guide for Qualified Workers” by Dr. James R. Fazio, the ISA’s trenching and tunneling training video, or equivalent, as approved by the State Forester and the Foundation.

- Attach Evidence: Indicate resources utilized

Compliance: The utility’s vegetation management standards and work practices comply with all Federal, state, and local tree care statutes, regulations and ordinances.

- Attach Evidence: Name of compliance manager or equivalent

Quality Assurance: The utility has a quality control program and quality assurance process in place to confirm that the vegetation management work is completed in a manner consistent with the provisions for Quality Tree Care, items 1A & B above.

- Attach Evidence: Summary of quality assurance program and name and title of manager or equivalent

Impact on the Urban Forest and Community Trees: The utility vegetation management program includes collaboration with other urban forest advocates and managers and strives to enhance the positive impact of its vegetation management program on both the natural and urban forests.

- Attach Evidence: Summary of actions and efforts that support the utility’s positive impact on the urban forest (i.e. letters of collaboration from municipalities or nonprofit tree planting groups, samples of print material highlighting steps taken by the utility.

Standard 2: Annual Worker Training

Employees, contractor workers and supervisors who perform pruning and right of way vegetation maintenance work for the utility complete annual formal training. The focus of the training is comprehension of and compliance with Utility Pruning and Integrated Vegetation Management practices (Requirement 1A and 1B), as well as safe work practices per current ANSI Z133.1.

- Attach Evidence: Training summary, including dates and topics

The utility ensures that training takes place and maintains documentation. A utility designee ensures that worker training takes place and is documented.

- Attach Evidence: Name of utility designee responsible for documentation and name of person responsible for field compliance.

Standard 3: Community Tree Planting and Public Education

The utility allocates an annual expenditure of at least 10 cents per customer for use in community tree planting programs throughout the service area.

Community Tree Planting expenditures can be combined with Public Education and Energy Conservation Program expenditures (sections 4 and 5) to meet the 10 cents/customer threshold. Qualifying expenses can include trees planted by the utility company or funding provided to municipal or other tree planting organizations. Examples of community tree planting may include:

- A utility tree planting program in utility right-of-way or on public property
- A commercial building shade tree program promoting energy savings through strategically planted shade trees around businesses
- Establishment of a “Right Tree-Right Place” demonstration garden or park
- Documented tree planting programs for the purpose of offsetting the utility’s carbon footprint, enhancing storm water management or improving air and water quality
- Transmission and hybrid utilities which are unable to calculate a per-customer expenditure due to no identifiable customer base are still required to document activities and expenditures in meeting standards 3 and 4.
- Attach Evidence: Summary of tree planting events/program with sample material and/or photos; Include expenditures on application page

The utility makes annual contact with all homeowners and customers for the purpose of providing educational information regarding treerelated utility issues. Public Education expenditures can be combined with Community Tree Planting and Energy Conservation Program expenditures (sections 3 and 5) to meet the 10 cents/customer threshold. Examples of relevant public education communications may include:

- Information regarding identification of tree-related hazards
- Tips on how to prune trees safely
- Information on Right Tree-Right Place and appropriate site selection
- Education regarding trees, power lines, and the danger of wildfire
- Information on the vegetation management program available through the utility’s Web site
- School-based tree/utility safety programs and presentations
- Active support/recruitment of Tree City USA communities with their service area

- Attach Evidence: Samples of print material, summary of public education events/trainings/programs with dates; Include expenditures on supplemental page

Standard 4: Tree-Based Energy Conservation Program

The utility has a tree-based energy conservation program which makes special consideration of the benefits of trees in energy conservation. Energy Conservation Program expenditures may be combined with Community Tree-Planting and Public Education expenditures (sections 3 and 4) to meet the 10 cents/customer threshold. Examples of a tree-based energy conservation program may include:

- The utility provides energy-efficient landscape information directly to customers.
- The utility partners with local retailers to promote the benefits of trees planted around the home.
- A utility tree planting program on private property for energy conservation purposes.
- The utility provides web-based information on the benefits of trees in energy conservation or specific details on its energy conservation program.
- Attach Evidence: Summary of tree-based energy conservation program; Include expenditures on supplemental page

Standard 5: Arbor Day Observance

Annual Arbor Day events are sponsored by or participated in by the utility. Utilities are encouraged to collaborate with other urban forest advocates, such as a municipality, school, or community tree-planting group to promote Arbor Day events.

- Attach Evidence: Summary of Arbor Day observance with documentation