

# CITY OF KINGS MOUNTAIN

## Electric Utility Easement and Right-of-Way

### Maintenance Policy

Updated February 2024

#### **SECTION 1. – General Provisions**

Tree trimming along electric transmission and electric distribution lines is a Federal and State mandated requirement in order to maintain adequate distribution right-of-ways, service reliability, safety to our linemen and the public. In meeting this requirement the City will make every reasonable effort to maintain proper respect for our customer's property. The City encourages property owners to avoid planting trees and large shrubs near power lines to help mitigate the need for trimming. The following basic operating practices should be followed.

##### **1.1 Primary Circuits**

Right-of-way for primary circuits is generally 30 feet wide, 15 feet on either side of the centerline of the primary circuit, except as may be otherwise defined by a documented easement of right-of-way that may include other city utilities and designated footages. All vegetation on the right-of-way should be cut except occasional low-growing species which may be left for aesthetics, provided simple clearance is assured and access is in no way impaired. A safe distance must be maintained.

##### **1.2 Secondary Circuits (Main Line)**

Vegetation will be cut or trimmed back approximately 15 feet from electric lines. Effort should be made to obtain 10 – 15 foot radial clearance path around electric lines. Good judgement will be used by our tree trimming contractor to the best extent possible, taking into consideration anticipated growth rates and the aesthetics of the area. A safe distance must be maintained.

##### **1.3 Secondary Circuits (House Services)**

The City does not maintain clearance on any secondary house services, nor does the City maintain secondary clearance on lines to outside security rental lights. The City will remove any vegetation that is causing excessive pressure on the line, taking into consideration any potential liability that the City would encounter while removing such vegetation. Professional and aesthetic consideration is to be observed when at all possible. The City may refuse to remove this vegetation for liability purposes. The City may "drop" and make the area electrically safe so that a property owner may remove limbs or trees, with a 24 hour notice. Unless, under an approved emergency by the Director of Energy Services or his/her designee, all lines will be "dropped" and reconnected during the Electric Division's regular working hours.

## SECTION 2. – Maintenance of Easement and Right-of-Way Clearances

### 2.1 Maintenance

Maintenance of easements shall be performed yearly. Maintenance shall be done by one or more of the following:

- Bush Hogging or mowing
- Spraying of herbicide
- Tree trimming/cutting

### 2.2 Tree Trimming Specifics

Trees shall be trimmed in accordance with Section 1 on a yearly basis. Tree trimming will begin in July of each year. The City does not allow for work to be performed during weekends or City observed holidays unless it is deemed necessary by the Energy Services Director. Work will be performed between the hours of 7:00AM and 3:30PM.

When trees have been “rounded over” or side trimmed, it may be in the best interest of the property owner to remove such tree(s). This process will be at the customer’s expense.

### 2.3 Special Clearances

Electric utility poles, down spans and guys shall be free of weight, strain or pressure from trees and vegetation. These issues will be addressed either through trimming or spraying.

## SECTION 3. – Reviewing Danger Trees

### 3.1 Danger trees within the right-of-way

Trees within the designated right-of-way and considered by the City or the City’s tree trimming contractor to be endangering the electric lines due to potential falling, will be removed by the City. The tree will either be cut off to a height that will not endanger the lines, or to a height right above the ground. This will be determined by City and/or the City’s tree trimming contractor. All tree debris will be removed by the City, unless property owner asks to keep the wood. The stump of any tree that is cut off right above ground will be left. It will be the property owner’s responsibility to have the stump removed if he or she wishes.

### 3.2 Danger trees outside of the right-of-way

Trees outside the right-of-way and **not considered** by the City or the City’s tree trimming contractor an endangerment to the City’s electric utility lines will not be removed. Trees in this case are the full responsibility of the property owners.

Trees outside of the right-of-way and **considered** by the City or the City’s tree trimming contractor an endangerment to the City’s electric utility lines shall be the full responsibility of the property owner to remove the tree. If notified by the City of a danger tree, it will be the property owner’s responsibility and

liability of any damages if the designated tree were to fall and cause damage to the City's electric utility infrastructure. All costs associated with the restoration of power will be the sole responsibility of the property owner.

## **SECTION 4. – Customer Notification**

### **4.1 Yearly Media Notification**

The City will make effort to publish in the local paper, the City website and the City's Facebook page each year prior to the July start date. The City asked for understanding from our customers that tree trimming is a mandated requirement to ensure the City is eligible for FEMA reimbursement should the City experience a natural disaster deemed eligible for FEMA reimbursement. The City's contractor may at times request vehicles or items to be removed temporarily to allow for work.

### **4.2 Emergency Notification**

During emergency situations where the City must immediately remove any tree or vegetation from the City's electric utility lines in order to restore or prevent an immediate disruption of power, it may not be feasible to notify property owners.

## **SECTION 5. – Customer Objections**

### **5.1 City Right of Entry**

It is the City's right to enter upon private property in order to ensure that proper clearance is maintained from our electric lines and infrastructure as outlined in Section 1. Should any property owner attempt to hinder the tree trimming; then the City may then have to take legal steps to ensure that the necessary trimming is completed. The City has a responsibility to all customers to obtain proper line clearance in order maintain adequate distribution right-of-ways, service reliability, safety to our lineman and the public.

## **SECTION 6. – Reserved Rights to Protect Equipment**

### **6.1 Maintaining Proper Clearances**

The City has the right to ensure proper clearance is maintained from electrical lines and equipment. Please do not plant tall-growing trees under or near power lines. Inappropriately planted trees that interfere with overhead power lines or electrical equipment may be removed by qualified line clearance professionals or, at a minimum, will require future pruning and have the potential for disfigurement. Do not plant trees, nor shrubs near any energized equipment. A minimum of 10 feet of clearance must be maintained in all directions in order to gain proper access during outages, and to perform routine

maintenance to equipment. The City has the right to remove any vegetation such as trees, shrubs, flowers, etc., that may impede within ten feet of electrical equipment.