

## **TREE TRIMMERS WILL BE CLEARING UTILITY LINES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

Tree-trimming crews will be clearing the right-of-way for utility lines in this neighborhood on or about

\_\_\_\_\_ (approximate dates)

To ensure public safety and the reliability of the electric system, some trees on this property will be affected by this work.

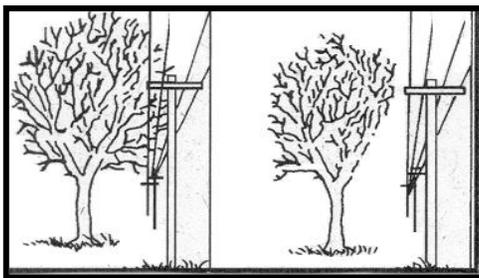
Tree crews have assessed the work needed to clear the right of way on this property and determined that (approximately) \_\_\_\_\_ trees should be removed, and (approximately) \_\_\_\_\_ additional trees will require trimming.

The Utilities Department makes every effort to contact each property owner to explain the tree work before it is performed. If you would like a walk-through to discuss the necessary tree work, please contact us so that we may provide this service as soon as possible.

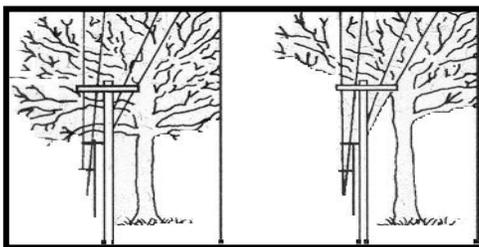
\_\_\_\_\_ (contact person and phone number)

As a rule, the only trees affected by this work are those that grow tall enough to interfere with the lines, such as pines, oaks, and maples. Small trees like dogwoods, Japanese maples, and crape myrtles rarely interfere with electric lines.

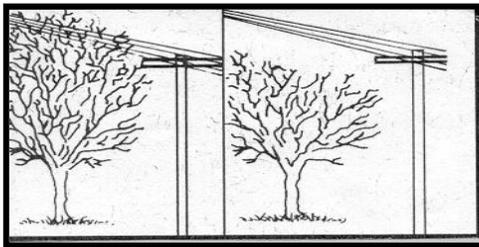
### **TYPES OF TRIMMING**



before **SIDE TRIM** after



before **UNDER TRIM** after



before **HEIGHT REDUCTION** after

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY**

The City of Shelby Utilities Department has right-of-way to maintain safe clearance around primary and secondary electric distribution lines. In most cases the right-of-way extends 10 feet on either side of these high-voltage electric lines.

#### **What does “right-of-way” mean?**

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines “right-of-way” as “the right to pass over property owned by another”. It is generally thought of as an agreement between two parties.

“Right-of-way” also refers to the actual strip of land defined under the agreement. Right-of-way agreements are usually recorded on property deeds, which are maintained at the county courthouse.

Right-of-way agreements are often overlooked or forgotten when owners consider changes to their property such as landscaping, storage buildings, fences or privacy screens. That’s because there’s often a three to five year gap between tree trimmings. Also, these lines often exist along rear and side property lines where they are out of sight from the street, but difficult for tree crews or line crews to access.

This creates a very difficult situation for both the City and for property owners when line clearance becomes necessary – the property owners feel that the City is “taking” from them (trees they planted, or that came with the property), yet the City has a legal agreement with the owners to maintain safe clearance near its electric lines. We understand this, and hope that this brochure helps property owners better understand tree maintenance and line clearance pruning.

## ***PRUNING SPECIFICATIONS***

The City Utilities Department contracts with professional tree crews to maintain the electric distribution lines in our system. The crews you may see from time to time in your neighborhood are trained in proper pruning techniques, and follow pruning guidelines developed by nationally known experts in the tree care industry and adopted by the National Arborist Association and the American National Standards Institute.

These pruning guidelines are based on trees' natural structure, particularly their defense systems and life-support systems. Most pruning cuts are made at branch collars without damaging the trunk or leaving branch stubs (Figure 1).

Some pruning cuts remove main branches or trunks back to lateral branches growing away from the lines (Figure 2).

The outdated practice of topping or rounding trees over is no longer performed because it seriously impairs tree health and causes severe structural defects (Figure 3).

***City of Shelby, North Carolina***

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# ***ADVANCE NOTICE OF LINE CLEARANCE PRUNING***

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