

# Eversource Rights-of-Way Guidelines

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### For More Information

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# Vegetation for Transmission Rights-of-Way

Eversource manages nearly 2,300 miles of transmission rights-of-way in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Building and maintaining a safe, reliable transmission system that has a minimal impact on the environment is one of our key goals. That's why we use best management practices when clearing and maintaining vegetation in these rights-of-way.

**As a property owner, you take great pride and enjoyment in your home. However, some plant species may not be compatible with the construction, operation and maintenance of Eversource's transmission system.**

Federal, regional and electric industry standards require minimum safety clearances to ensure that vegetation doesn't come into contact with high-voltage overhead transmission lines. If the vegetation located in the transmission rights-of-way is not compatible with the safe operation of the system, it can result in widespread electric power outages or unsafe conditions for electric system workers and the public.

This handout is designed to assist in the selection of the correct shrub and tree types that are acceptable to plant within or along a transmission right-of-way. Please remember that this information is only a guide; any vegetation located within, or along the immediate edge of the right-of-way is planted at your own risk. During emergencies it may be necessary to remove plantings that meet these guidelines so that Eversource can access the transmission system and make repairs.

There are numerous shrub and tree species that are acceptable for planting within the "Wire and Peripheral Zones" (see diagram on reverse page) of a transmission right-of-way. In general, low-growing shrubs, grasses, forbs (wildflowers), ferns and certain low-growing tree species are allowed within the established right-of-way, with minor restrictions. To allow for inspection and maintenance of the transmission facilities, new plantings should not be placed where they will obstruct existing access roads or be within 10 feet of a structure or supporting wires.

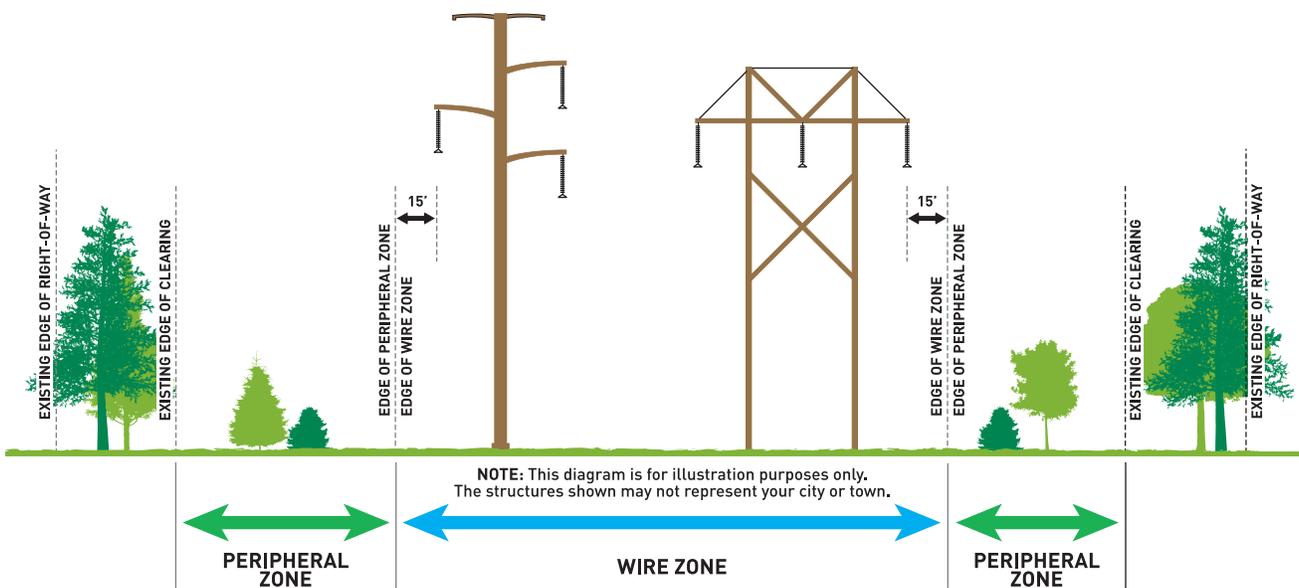
The potential mature height of the tree species will dictate whether or not a tree may be planted within the right-of-way. Generally, trees with mature heights in excess of 25 feet may not be planted anywhere within the right-of-way. Lower-growing tree species, with mature heights less than 25 feet, may be planted only within the Peripheral Zones, which are the areas beyond the outermost conductors where the heights of vegetation are less of an issue. Only plant species with mature heights of 8 feet or less are acceptable within the Wire Zone; low-growing shrubs, forbs, ferns and grasses may be planted in any zone. Note that each property is unique, and plantings may need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

When purchasing trees to plant on a transmission line right-of-way over your property, please review the description that comes with the plant or check with a knowledgeable person at the store for plant growth characteristics. Also, vegetation management specialists from Eversource are available to answer questions regarding planting within the right-of-way.

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## The Wire and Peripheral Zones

When evaluating whether or not a plant is suitable for the location, please refer to the diagram below. The “Wire Zone” (in blue) is the area under the transmission wires. The “Peripheral Zone” (in green) is the area between the outer edge of the Wire Zone and the edge of the clearing. (Note: In some cases, the edge of the clearing may also be the edge of the right-of-way.) Plantings inside and outside of the Peripheral Zones may need to be removed if they are considered to be hazardous and could become an issue for system reliability or safety.



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# Transmission Rights-of-Way Restoration

Eversource manages approximately 2,300 miles of transmission line rights-of-way (ROW) in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. During line maintenance and construction activities within these ROWs, we will make reasonable efforts to avoid or minimize disturbances to a landowner's property including damage to trees, shrubs, lawns, and gardens, as well as non-vegetation items such as walls and fences. However, despite such efforts during these activities, some damage to private property may be unavoidable. If this occurs, we will restore property to its pre-construction condition in a manner that is compatible with our operations and maintenance activities. This will take place as soon as is reasonably possible following construction completion.

## Restoring Vegetation Areas

When construction or maintenance is complete, disturbed ROW areas will be restored. Erosion controls will also be removed, although some may need to remain until the area is stabilized or until removal is directed by a regulating authority. In previously unlandscaped areas, native shrubs and ground cover will be allowed to grow. In areas that were previously covered with grass, we will restore the area to its pre-construction condition with topsoil and seed. In some areas where visual impacts are greatest, we will replant trees and shrubs with vegetation that is compatible with the future operation and maintenance of its transmission lines according to our guideline entitled, "Vegetation for Transmission Rights-of-Way" and as required by state law and/or regulatory directive.

## Restoring Access Roads and Work Areas

Construction and maintenance vehicles must be able to safely access each structure location. In the early stages of a new line's construction, gravel roads approximately 15 to 20 feet wide may be built to support the movement of large equipment and materials. Level gravel work areas ("crane pads") are also needed to stabilize equipment.

When construction is complete, access roads may remain for future maintenance of the transmission facilities within the ROW. Most crane pad areas will be removed and the area will be rehabilitated with topsoil and reseeded. Temporary erosion controls, such as hay bales and silt fences, may need to remain in some areas to prevent soil erosion until the grass or other vegetation regenerates.

## Addressing Damage to Property or Other Losses

Eversource will attempt to minimize property damage or other losses that may occur as a result of construction and maintenance activities. If a landowner believes that transmission system work has caused property damage or other losses, the owner should contact his or her Eversource project representative, account executive or customer service representative by calling 800-286-2000 in Connecticut, 800-662-7764 in New Hampshire, 877-659-6326 in western Massachusetts and 800-592-2000 in eastern Massachusetts. Eversource will investigate the claim, and the landowner will be advised as soon as practicable concerning the response to the claim.



## For More Information

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# Making Requests for Wood

Property owners whose land falls within the right-of-way to be cleared may retain all or a portion of the wood cleared on the property.

As part of any new transmission line construction project, Eversource must remove vegetation from the transmission line rights-of-way. This vegetation removal facilitates the use of line construction equipment and better ensures the safety of construction crews. Eversource is also required to comply with mandatory federal standards which dictate specific distances that vegetation must be kept from energized conductors for transmission system reliability.

The vegetation clearing process is typically a very noticeable activity associated with the construction of new transmission lines. Clearing in some areas may seem especially significant to public observers either because electric facilities presently may not be using the full width of a right-of-way, or because additional right-of-way widths may have been acquired.

During the vegetation removal process, property owners whose land includes the right-of-way being cleared are offered the opportunity to retain the cut wood for their personal use. Unless otherwise specified in the easement granting the transmission rights-of-way, this document outlines the process by which property owners can request the wood.

Property owners whose land is crossed by a transmission line right-of-way being cleared are eligible to retain all or a portion of the wood from the trees cleared from their property. Wood is provided only for the property owner. It will not be provided for renters, neighbors, friends, family or others who are not the property owner of record.

## How to Retain Wood

Eversource compiles a list of property owners whose trees will need to be removed. Prior to the start of clearing, project representatives will inform each property owner of the amount of clearing necessary and the potential for keeping wood. A Wood Information Form must be signed by the property owner at this point.

Before the actual clearing begins, Eversource will review the requests of property owners interested in keeping wood. Agreement will be reached with each owner on the quantity of wood to be left, and the location for that wood. Wood will be left in a mutually agreeable location on the parcel of land from which the trees were removed, within an agreed-upon time period. Please be aware that the wood will be in log lengths, typically 18-22 feet long, and can be placed only in areas not considered wetlands or near rare, threatened, and/or endangered species habitats. The quantity and location of wood cannot be guaranteed and is subject to change based on accessibility, permit requirements, project constructability and maintenance requirements.

If you are a property owner and interested in keeping the wood of the trees cleared from your property, please advise the Eversource project representatives during the initial briefing.

## For More Information

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# Transmission Right-of-Way Activities in Agricultural Lands

Eversource manages approximately 2,300 miles of transmission line rights-of-way in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Where transmission lines span agricultural lands, we work closely with property owners to protect their farmland while maintaining the right-of-way for utility transmission and distribution uses. On Eversource-owned property, we also consider licensing portions of our property to farmers for agricultural or other purposes.

As we improve our transmission system to better serve customers, we may need to temporarily work in croplands and pasturelands located within rights-of-way. In some instances, this may affect ongoing agricultural activities in and around the rights-of-way. While easement agreements typically grant us rights to clear vegetation that may interfere with construction, operation or maintenance of the transmission system, we are committed to being good neighbors and partners. As such, when we undertake transmission system improvements, we will work closely with landowners, licensees and stakeholders to minimize agricultural impacts.

Some of our routine practices include:

## Scheduling Considerations

Whenever possible, Eversource makes reasonable efforts to coordinate the schedule of construction-related activities around the growing and harvest seasons to minimize the impacts on agricultural operations. When this is not possible, we pursue reasonable measures to mitigate any impacts.

## Restoration of Disturbed or Compacted Soils

Eversource recognizes that disturbed soils, or soils compacted by heavy construction equipment, may affect the soil's ability to support certain agricultural activities. We take reasonable steps to avoid or minimize soil compaction, and will restore soils that are compacted by construction equipment. We also work with affected landowners to determine the appropriate method for restoring the soils, and are open to discussing and implementing the landowners' alternative restoration suggestions.

After a transmission system improvement is complete, Eversource removes all construction-related equipment and debris from the right-of-way.

## Soil Preservation and Erosion Controls

Eversource will implement all required and other reasonable efforts for soil preservation and erosion controls in compliance with all applicable permits and good utility practices. These practices are designed to minimize or eliminate potential adverse environmental effects that may result from construction activities. Examples of these mitigation measures include the use of hay bales and silt fences.

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## Excess Soil Removal

After the installation of a transmission system structure is complete, soil material that was excavated to enable the structure installation will be used as backfill. The remaining excavated sub-surface soils will be removed from the site unless otherwise requested by the landowner.

## Right-of-Way Restoration

After construction is complete, Eversource is responsible for importing clean fill to ensure that cropland or pastureland is restored. We work with landowners to determine an appropriate method for restoring the surface soils, including the appropriate seed mix, to restore pasturelands to their pre-construction condition.

## Addressing Damage to Property or Other Losses

Eversource works closely with landowners to develop and implement construction and maintenance methods that minimize or prevent property damage or other losses that may occur as a result of these activities. If a landowner believes that transmission system improvements have caused property damage or other losses, the owner should contact their Eversource project representative, account executive or customer service representative by calling 800-286-2000 in Connecticut, 800-662-7764 in New Hampshire, 877-659-6326 in western Massachusetts and 800-592-2000 in eastern Massachusetts. Eversource will investigate the claim and the landowner will be advised as soon as practical as to our position concerning the acceptance or denial of a claim.

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*Eversource is committed to working with landowners before, during and after transmission construction on transmission rights-of-way. Our intent is to minimize or avoid any adverse impacts or inconveniences during construction and/or maintenance activities.*

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### For More Information

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# Herbicide Use on Transmission Rights-of-Way

The vegetation management program for Eversource is focused on controlling vegetation within transmission rights-of-way to support the safe and reliable operation of the electric transmission system. Maintenance work under the program includes the use of federally approved, state-registered herbicides by state-licensed applicators in a carefully prescribed and targeted way specifically to control undesirable vegetation.

Eversource is a member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program," which is committed to the proper management of right-of-way vegetation programs and to reducing risks with pesticide applications.

Eversource's vegetation management strategies have been recognized by state agencies and the EPA, which in 2003 named the company as the first electric utility to receive its Champion Award under the "Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program."

## Maintenance

The safe and reliable operation of our electric transmission system requires Eversource to control and remove certain plant species from power line rights-of-way. To do this, Eversource uses herbicides as part of its ongoing maintenance programs.

Vegetation maintenance on rights-of-way is typically conducted once every four years, when targeted vegetation usually attains heights that require control.

Eversource adheres to all local, state and federal regulations pertaining to the use of herbicides for rights-of-way vegetation control. This may include the preparation and submission of a detailed vegetation

management plan, which is reviewed and approved by the respective state authority and followed by Eversource and its contractors. These regulations require maintaining specific distances around public and private wells, water supply areas, wetlands and sanding water where herbicide use is restricted or limited.

Eversource employs state certified and licensed contractors for herbicide applications. These contractors must undergo regular recertification testing and training covering many aspects of vegetation control including laws and regulations, safety with respect to the use of the materials, application methods/techniques and environmental concerns.

A low-volume, low-pressure application method is employed when herbicides are used, and application is made to the individual stems of the targeted plants. Eversource vegetation management experts select the herbicides to be used on power line rights-of-way. Both the products and the application methods are environmentally sound and provide the optimum level of control of targeted plant species, while protecting and preserving the natural habitats on the rights-of-way.

All herbicides currently selected for use by Eversource are registered and approved for utility brush control purposes by the U.S. EPA, as well as the Departments of Environmental Protection or Agricultural Resources in Connecticut and Massachusetts, respectively. The products have also been reviewed by veterinarians who have determined that, when used in accordance with label directions and by certified applicators, the selected herbicides pose no adverse health threat to wildlife or pets.

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Property owners and occupants of dwellings adjacent to rights-of-way are notified in advance of any scheduled right-of-way maintenance that includes herbicide applications. In addition, Eversource notifies municipal officials in our service territories annually about work planned for the upcoming year.

## Construction

Eversource strives to maintain the vegetation within transmission rights-of-way in the most environmentally sensitive, community friendly and economical way possible.

During construction clearing, herbicides are not used. Clearing is handled in stages to accommodate specific construction activities and with the ultimate aim of establishing a stable low-growing grass, shrubland and wildflower community that will provide the greatest potential for wildlife habitat, as well as the safe and reliable operation of the electric system.



### For More Information

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# Managing Access to Transmission Rights-of-Way

Eversource manages approximately 2,300 miles of transmission line rights-of-way in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. In the management of these rights-of-way, our priorities are public safety and maintaining the integrity of transmission system property and equipment, while respecting the rights of private property owners who have utility easements on their property. To support this effort, we will install entry barriers as requested by property owners in targeted access road locations to help deter unauthorized vehicle access to the utility rights-of-way.

The majority of the rights-of-way used for the Eversource electric transmission system were established through the purchase of easement rights by Eversource from owners of the underlying property. While we have rights to operate and maintain the electric transmission system through these easements, the underlying property is still owned by private parties. Their rights to use the property continue, subject to our easement rights.

Where transmission rights-of-way cross public roads and private property and are readily accessible to the public, Eversource will work with property owners to determine if entry barriers will help deter unauthorized access.

Where appropriate, we will offer to purchase and install entry barriers to help deter unauthorized vehicle access. Typically, the entry barrier is a gate.

Access gates located on private property are usually secured by dual locks, one of which is controlled by the utility company and the other by the owner of the property. Alternatively, a single company-issued combination lock may be used.

During periods of transmission line construction, Eversource or an authorized Eversource contractor may require an opening in an existing fence to gain access to the construction area. With the owner's permission, the company will install a gate in that opening to prevent unauthorized entry and, if needed, restrict the exit of livestock.

An agreement for the installation of the access gate will be provided to private property owners who request to have a gate installed. Gates will be permanently installed unless the property owner requests that the gate be removed after construction. The agreement will outline the ownership, company and landowner access, and maintenance of the gate. For gates being removed, the company will restore the area to a condition substantially the same as that which existed prior to construction, as long as each party is allowed to maintain authorized access.



## For More Information

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800-793-2202  
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# Permitted and Non-Permitted Use on Transmission Rights-of-Way

Eversource manages thousands of miles of transmission and distribution line rights-of-way throughout its service territories in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Making sure that these rights-of-way are free of obstructions is vital to public and employee safety, and ensures a reliable electric system for everyone. That's why inspecting and protecting these rights-of-way is a critical part of what we do.

## Transmission and Distribution Rights-of-Way

A right-of-way is the corridor of land that Eversource uses to access, construct, operate, and maintain electric and other utility facilities. Rights-of-way typically contain wood or metal structures with high-voltage electric lines. The majority of the rights-of-way used for our electric system were established through the purchase of easement rights by Eversource from owners of the underlying property. While Eversource has rights to operate and maintain the electric system through these easements, the underlying property is still owned by private parties. Their rights to use the property continue, subject to Eversource's easement rights. Government requirements mandate that safe distances be maintained from power lines to prevent contact accidents and ensure electric system reliability. As a result, some uses of property within the right-of-way are not permitted.

## Uses that affect right-of-way access or safety (Non-Permitted Use)

Non-permitted uses by a landowner of property in the rights-of-way can create hazards that may not be obvious, but which could result in power outages or tragedy. Non-permitted use is any use of the property within the rights-of-way that restricts Eversource's ability to construct, maintain and operate power lines and electrical facilities. Common examples include: buildings, swimming pools, fuel tanks, sheds, fences, decks, and flag poles. Also included are underground items such as septic systems, utilities, drainage systems, wells, sprinkler or irrigation systems and invisible fencing for pets.

## Permitted Use Application

We want to work with landowners to evaluate any proposed use of the easement area to make sure it is safe and does not interfere with system reliability. By submitting a "Permitted

Use Application," landowners can ensure that any planned use of the rights-of-way on their property adheres to mandated government standards and Eversource's guidelines. A Permitted Use Application Package is available from Eversource and provides details on what information should be provided in the application. To request a package from Eversource, please contact: Manager of T&D ROW's and Surveying, 107 Selden Street, Berlin, CT 06037.

Eversource will review the proposed use to see that it does not compromise public safety; introduce environmental hazards; or interfere with the operation, maintenance, repair, replacement or upgrade of its facilities.

The evaluation process is a careful evaluation of proposed changes to the rights-of-way and requires a minimum of 60 days. The length of the evaluation period depends on the complexity, accuracy and completeness of the application. Eversource will look to see that the proposed use does not compromise public safety; introduce environmental hazards; or interfere with the operation, maintenance, repair, replacement or upgrade of its facilities. During the evaluation, Eversource may request revisions to the application and additional information or documents. The results of the evaluation will determine if the intended use is permitted. If approved, Eversource will provide the terms and conditions associated with the approval. Alternatively, if denied, Eversource will provide the reasons for the denial.

## For More Information:

Connecticut and Massachusetts  
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# Restrictions on ATVs and Snowmobiles in Transmission Rights-of-Way

Eversource's general policy is not to grant permission, written or verbal, for use of all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles on transmission rights-of-way.

Laws in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire generally provide that no person may operate an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or snowmobile on private property for recreational purposes without the written permission of the landowner.

Eversource manages approximately 2,300 miles of transmission rights-of-way throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The overwhelming majority of these rights-of-way are established through easement rights purchased from owners of the underlying land.

Our general policy in Connecticut and Massachusetts is not to grant permission, written or verbal, for use of transmission rights-of-way by persons on ATVs and snowmobiles. Our rights-of-way are marked and, where practicable, gates, fences and barricades are maintained to prevent access.

Our general policy in New Hampshire is not to grant permission for use of ATVs on transmission rights-of-way on land it owns. However, where Eversource owns only an easement and is not the underlying landowner, it may enter into agreements or relationships with the landowner who may allow use by organized ATV clubs, or trails designated as ATV trails by the New Hampshire Bureau of Trails.

As part of New Hampshire's statewide snowmobile trail system, we have entered into an agreement with the New Hampshire Bureau of Trails to generally allow snowmobile use where Eversource is the landowner. Use of the property by persons on snowmobiles is only granted under the terms of this agreement and renewed on an annual basis.

## For More Information:

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