

Logging Near Power Lines?

With an improved market for logs, we have recently seen more logging on private timberlands in Douglas County. For that reason, it's time to remind everyone that safe logging saves lives.

If Douglas Electric Cooperative power lines are near your harvest area, please call our certified arborist, Don Utley, for a consultation before you begin logging. Don is Douglas Electric's forester, and can meet with you on site to help develop a safety plan that includes removal of timber near the powerlines. Options are available to help you work safely, and help us keep the lights on at the same time.



For the safety of everyone involved, only people qualified to work near energized conductors should work around power lines. Slash should not be piled and burned on power line rights of way. And when replanting, observe dedicated easements and rights of way on the property. Please don't plant in these areas as tall growing trees will be cut down in the next maintenance cycle.

To save time, money and potential injuries or even fatalities, I strongly urge you to contact Don at 541-673-6616, before you log.

Best Regards,



Paul Leonard
General Manager



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

811 is a federally-mandated FCC designated N-11 number

The 811 number is a national "Call Before You Dig" and "Call Before You Fall" phone number. It is designated by the FCC to eliminate the confusion of multiple "Call Before You Dig/Call Before You Fall" numbers, and help save lives by minimizing damages to underground utilities. One easy phone call to 811 quickly begins the process of getting underground utility lines marked. Local One Call Center personnel will then notify affected utility companies, who will send crews to mark underground lines for free.

811 will help save lives and protect infrastructure

Knowing where underground utility lines are buried before each digging project begins, helps to prevent injury, expense and penalties. The depth of utility lines may vary and multiple utility lines may exist in one area. Simple digging jobs can damage utility lines and can disrupt vital services to an entire neighborhood, harm those who dig, and result in expensive fines and repair costs. Marked lines show those who dig the approximate location of underground lines and help prevent undesired consequences.

Call Before You Fall



Practice Safe Logging Around Power Lines

DOUGLAS
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Landowner Liability

Under Oregon Law, unlike other states, forest landowners are responsible to control and extinguish wildfires that occur on their land. The basic laws, paraphrased, include:

Uncontrolled fire declared nuisance -

When a fire on forestland burns uncontrolled and threatens life, forest resources or property, and the proper action is not taken to prevent its spread, then the fire is considered a public nuisance, which is commonly defined as “unreasonable interference with the health, safety, peace or comfort of the community.”

Landowner/operator responsible to put out the fire -

A forest landowner or operator has the duty to control and extinguish a wildfire on the landowner’s land. If the landowner or operator hasn’t sufficient personnel or equipment to provide fire protection, then the Oregon Department of Forestry or a forest protective association must step in and extinguish it.

The landowner’s fire protection responsibility is usually met by paying a forest patrol assessment to the local forest protection district (most commonly this is included in the landowner’s annual property tax statement).

But the landowner responsibility doesn’t end there. In order to limit your exposure to resource loss and financial liability, it is important to understand landowner responsibilities within Oregon’s fire protection system and laws.

A complete copy of “Landowner Fire Liability” can be obtained at the Douglas Forest Protective Association.

For more information, contact the Oregon Department of Forestry, or go to www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/fire.shtml

Safety Is Always In Season

Safety around electricity is always good practice, not only all year long, but especially the summertime when everyone starts spending more time outdoors. It’s essential to revisit some of the dos and don’ts. All it takes for electricity to find its way to the ground is a good conductor. That can be almost anything - even you.

A tall piece of machinery, a television antenna, a metal ladder, an irrigation pipe, a wooden pole or a human body part that touches both the wire and ground will complete the circuit and conduct electricity. It’s crucial you look before you lift, and call before you dig.

To prevent yourself or a loved one from becoming a victim of an electrical accident, follow these other electrical safety tips:

- Never go near any downed line, whether you think it’s energized or not. Never place a ladder or antenna where it can fall into a power line. Carry equipment low enough to avoid coming near power lines. Never attach any signs or items to a power pole.
- Before digging into the ground, be sure to call “811” before you dig! They will mark underground utilities to make sure you don’t come in contact with power lines, gas lines or any other utilities. One wrong move can result in death or injury from electric shock or an explosion.
- Don’t plant tall-growing trees under lines. If a tree has lines running through it, don’t climb it or build anything in it.
- Stay away from downed power lines. If someone comes in contact with a live outdoor power line, call Douglas Electric immediately so the power can be turned off.

Logging, Powerlines and Liability

Similar to the Oregon Department of Forestry rules of liability, individuals causing damage by falling trees into powerlines are also subject to the cost of repairs associated with damaged caused. In addition to that, consequential damages from voltage fluctuations that cause damage to consumer electronics, is also the responsibility of the tree fallers.

Options are available to help loggers work safely and limit their potential liability. At no cost to the individual or company doing the logging, our certified arborist will meet them on site to coordinate a safe logging plan. While there is no charge for this service, taking a chance and logging without a consultation could be costly.



Right-of-Way Maintenance

Related to liability surrounding fires caused and falling trees into powerlines, is vegetation management. Douglas Electric Cooperative Policy 30-5 states, “In the event a member refuses to permit the Cooperative to perform its legal right to clear vegetation to its standard specifications on the member’s property, resulting in vegetation growth that must be cleared outside the Cooperative’s scheduled maintenance cycle, the member shall be responsible for any additional costs incurred.”

The same thing applies when a member refuses to allow the Cooperative to trim or remove trees, and those trees, making contact with the powerlines, cause a fire that must be extinguished. The entire costs associated with putting out the fire rests on the landowner.

Why take a chance, call 541-673-6616, and let Douglas Electric Cooperative help you work safely.