

Trees and the electricity network

FACT SHEET



Trees and powerlines

Ausgrid understands the important role trees play in our communities. They make our neighbourhoods nice places to live and provide habitat and food for wildlife.

However, trees growing too close to powerlines can create hidden risks. Tree branches can interrupt the electricity supply to local homes and businesses and bring powerlines down causing safety issues for the community. Trees near powerlines can start bushfires and branches which hide powerlines put children climbing trees in danger.

Ausgrid trims trees around the electricity network to keep the community and our staff safe and to help provide a reliable electricity supply to your homes and businesses.

How we trim trees

The distances required between powerlines and poles and tree branches are governed by statewide industry guidelines.

The amount trimmed depends on:

- location of the tree
- species
- whether it's in a bushfire prone area; and
- voltage of the nearby powerlines and power poles.

Trees are trimmed to the required safety clearance distance plus an allowance for annual regrowth. Generally, in residential areas the clearance around low voltage powerlines is one metre. Regrowth allowances are defined in the industry guideline ISSC3, which is available at ausgrid.com.au.

To prevent infection and disease, the branches are then trimmed at the nearest growth point or collar. This is in line with the Australian Standard for amenity pruning AS4373.

Depending on where you live, clippings are required to be removed from site within three days of the work being carried out.

Who does our trimming

Working around electricity can be dangerous. Tree trimmers are contractors who are trained to work in close proximity to the network. The contractors and Ausgrid each employ a horticulturalist and arborist to inspect the health of the trees and ensure the trimming is completed to standard.

For your own safety it is very important that you do not attempt to trim trees on your property that are growing near powerlines, make sure you engage a qualified contractor.

Tree removals

In some cases trimming may not be enough to make the network safe. At times, a tree may need to be removed. If this is a street tree the local council may agree to replace it with a more appropriate species.

A tree may need to be removed because:

- it's a tall/fast growing species planted directly under powerlines.
- the tree cannot be maintained away from the clearance zone and still comply with Australian standards.
- Palm trees directly under powerlines can not be pruned.

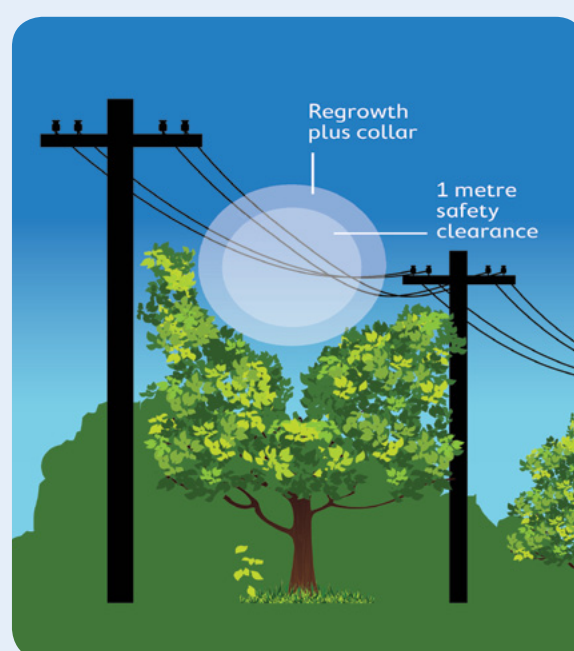
Planting near powerlines

Try to avoid planting trees directly under powerlines to reduce the need for trimming. Plant trees at least five metres away from powerlines or a distance equal to its mature height. We have a list of species appropriate for planting near the network available at ausgrid.com.au/planting.

If you are planting on nature strips, you must first get approval from your local council.

Request tree trimming

If you see trees growing too close to powerlines let us know. You can request an inspection at ausgrid.com.au/trees or by calling 13 13 65.



Clearance distances vary. Regrowth allowance varies from 0.5 - 6 metres depending on species, location and bushfire risk.