



TREES AND YOUR POWER SUPPLY

An Introduction to the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003

Keeping your lights on and our communities of Hawkes Bay, Taupō and Rotorua safe is our top priority at Unison Networks, but there's a hidden danger you might not be aware of: **trees near power lines.**

Over 20% of unexpected power cuts stem from trees making contact with lines or debris flying in high winds.

To prevent these disruptions and ensure everyone's safety, **you, the tree owner**, play a crucial role.

TAKE ACTION!

Learn about the dangers of trees near power lines and **understand your responsibilities for trimming and maintaining them.**

BEWARE THE HIDDEN DANGER: TREES AND POWER LINES!

Trees near power lines pose a serious threat, even without direct contact. Here's why:

- **Electricity can arc:** High voltage can jump from the power line to a nearby tree, creating a dangerous pathway for electricity to travel to the ground.
- **Electrocution risk:** Anyone coming into contact with this electrified path, through touching, trimming, or even being near the tree in certain situations, faces a high risk of severe electric shock or death.
- **Fire hazard:** Dry trees close to power lines can ignite if branches touch the live wires, potentially causing wildfires.

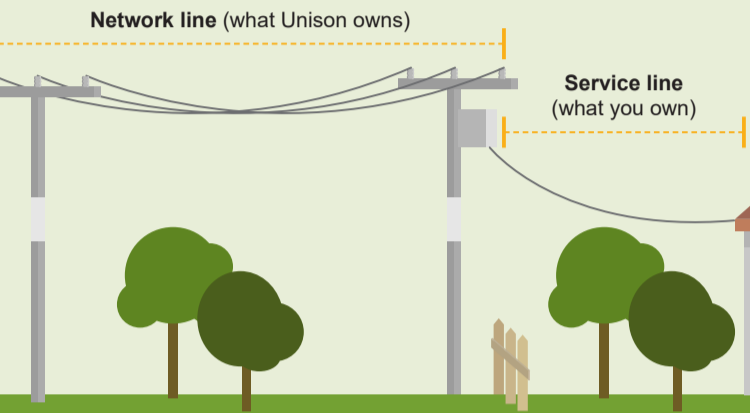
Remember: Always prioritise safety. Never attempt to trim or handle trees near power lines yourself, contact your local arborist or Unison in an emergency.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Cutting and trimming trees in the vicinity of power lines is dangerous. Touching a live power line or a tree close to the line can result in serious injury, or even death by electrocution.

Responsibility

According to the Regulations, the tree owner is responsible for **all aspects of maintaining trees**, to ensure they do not encroach on either Unison-owned power lines or private service lines.



Private service lines are **your responsibility**. Property owners are responsible for ensuring that trees do not encroach on their private service lines, which will usually be low voltage (400V or 230V). Unison will not issue any notices for trees encroaching on private service lines.

THE BEST ACTION YOU CAN TAKE IS TO REMOVE ANY TREES OR VEGETATION GROWING UNDER OR ADJACENT TO ANY POWER LINE BEFORE IT GETS TOO CLOSE.

CUTTING AROUND POWER LINES

Cutting Trees Near Power Lines

Under the Regulations, no person is permitted within four metres of a power line without prior approval from Unison.

If your tree grows too close to power lines, to stay safe you must contact a professional tree trimming service to carry out any tree cutting or tree pruning on your property. Contact your local arborist to trim trees if they're within 4m of the line.

If you wish to cut or remove trees on your property near a service line, you can request a safety disconnection from Unison so you can do so safely (some conditions may apply). More details on safety disconnections can be found at:

www.unison.co.nz/safety-disconnections

Felling Trees Near Power Lines

Check there is a distance of at least twice the height of the trees, between the tree and any nearby power lines. If it is within this distance you will need to use a Unison-approved contractor, or you could be liable for the cost of any damage to our network if the tree lands on our lines - not to mention the potential safety risk of coming into contact with live lines! Your arborist contractor will be required to submit a Felling Application which can be found at:

www.unison.co.nz/felling-application-permit

WHEN YOU RECEIVE A NOTICE

Unison monitors trees growing close to our network lines and will send you either a **Hazard Warning Notice, a First Cut or Trim Notice** or a **Cut or Trim Notice**.

On receipt of a First Cut or Trim Notice, you can help us by **acting quickly** and granting consent. You can do this at: www.unison.co.nz/first-cut-consent

If you've previously had your tree trimmed and this is another 'Cut or Trim Notice' from us, you must arrange a contractor to carry out the work at your cost within the timeframe on the notice.

Further information on First Cut or Trim Notices and Cut or Trim Notices can be found on Unison's website at: www.unison.co.nz/tree-notices

Keeping trees clear of lines keeps us all safe. That's why it's important for you to cut or remove your trees when Unison asks you to. If you don't act on a 'Cut or Trim Notice' within the timeframe given, you can be fined up to \$10,000 and a further \$500 per day until the work is done. You may also be liable for significant costs associated with damaged power lines or equipment caused by your tree, so please work with Unison to keep the network safe.

RIGHT TREE, RIGHT PLACE

Prevent Future Tree Issues by Choosing your Tree Carefully Before Planting

Unison strongly recommends that you **DO NOT PLANT ANY TREES OR FAST AND/OR HIGH GROWING VEGETATION NEAR POWER LINES.**

We also encourage all tree owners to **permanently** remove any trees or vegetation growing under or adjacent to any power line before it gets too close.

As a tree owner, you are responsible for the costs of keeping trees near power lines trimmed and outside of the Growth Limit Zone. As outlined in the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003, tree owners could face penalties for failing to keep trees clear of power lines and may be responsible for the costs of damage to power lines or equipment, caused by a tree.

Check out our website for a full list of trees suitable for planting near power lines at: www.unison.co.nz/tree-planting-guide

DECLARING NO INTEREST

If a tree on your property is near power lines, and is either:

- Self-seeded or
- At the time of planting, you reasonably believed it wouldn't interfere with power lines when fully grown

Then you can declare 'no interest' in the tree. This means it will be removed at Unison's discretion (or may not be worked on at all).

WHEN TO CUT OR REMOVE TREES: ZONES EXPLAINED

The Regulations state exactly how close trees may come to power lines before cutting or trimming is required. These zones are known as the Growth Limit Zone and the Notice Zone.

Growth Limit Zone

This zone is the space around the power line (measured in metres) where trees must not encroach, even in windy or stormy conditions.

The Notice Zone

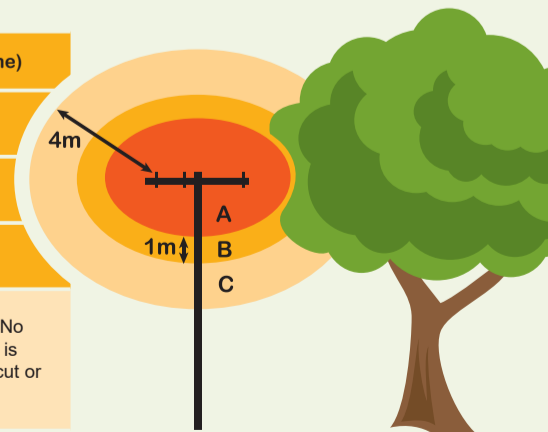
This zone is one metre beyond the Growth Limit Zone.

If your trees are encroaching on the Notice Zone, you may receive a Hazard Warning Notice.

If your trees are encroaching Growth Limit Zone, you will be issued with one of two notices, either a **First Cut or Trim Notice** or a **Cut or Trim Notice**.

OVERHEAD LINE	A (Growth Limit Zone)	B (Notice Zone)
33kV - High Voltage	2.5 metres	3.5 metres
11kV - High Voltage	1.6 metres	2.6 metres
400V/230V - Low Voltage	0.5 metres	1.5 metres

The Controlled Access Zone is four metres from any conductor. No unapproved person may enter this zone and if any part of a tree is within this zone a Unison-approved contractor must be used to cut or trim that tree.



For more information about trees and your power supply, or to read the full Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations 2003, visit:

www.unison.co.nz or call 0800 286 476

