RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

Electric utility workers need year-round access to power lines and towers at all hours of the day for maintenance and repair. That is the purpose of corridors or clearings around electric transmission lines called rights of way. Tall-growing vegetation under lines can pose safety hazards for workers, cause power outages and increase maintenance costs. Plants that grow taller than 15 feet are unacceptable in the right-of-way area and will be removed. However, some smaller plants are acceptable and even desired. Putting the right plants in the right place helps ensure utilities will be able to keep the lights on.
IT’S ALL IN THE PLANNING

If planting close to power lines or within the easement area, follow guidelines described in this brochure.

Below Wire Area
Underneath the wires, low-growing grasses and perennials work well. Personal gardens are permitted but must allow utility trucks to travel down the right of way so workers may perform maintenance on a routine basis.

Planting Suggestions
The area below the tower/pole presents a unique opportunity to naturalize the power line rights of way using native grass species. Native warm season grasses once inhabited open areas known as barrens in the Southern region of the United States. Today, due to development and urbanization, only a fraction of this grassland remains. Grasses and perennials provide wildlife habitat, promote biodiversity of plant and animal species, prevent erosion, ensure safe access to the power line and minimize maintenance, which reduces cost and the need for frequent intrusion. In addition, ground covers and annual vegetable gardens also are allowed in this area.

Remaining Right-of-Way Area
Shrubs up to a maximum height of 15 feet are allowed in the remaining area of the right of way. Plants that exceed 15 feet will be removed.

Planting Suggestions
This area allows for a mosaic of vegetation up to 15 feet in height. The taller plants provide screening, seasonal interest and privacy along the right of way. Smaller ornamental shrubs and perennial edible plants such as blueberries and blackberries also are permitted.

Right-of-Way Vegetation Areas (Transmission)

To Edge of ROW

Transmission Line Right of Way Maximum Shrub Height 15'

REMEMBER: CALL BEFORE YOU DIG, IT’S THE LAW – DIAL 811 or 1-800-282-7411
Notify the Utilities Protection Center at least two days before work begins. On a right of way, near a power line or even in your own yard, always “Call before you Dig, It’s the Law.” Even small jobs like planting a shrub or hedge can pose serious risks. One easy phone call to 811 gets your utility lines marked for free.
GRASSES
*Andropogon gerardii – Big Bluestem
*Andropogon virginicus – Broomsedge
*Aristida stricta – Southern Wiregrass
Bouteloua curtipendula – Sideoats grama
Chasmanthium latifolium – River Oats
Elymus virginicus – Virginia Wildrye
*Erianthus giganteus – Plume grass
*Muhlenbergia capillaris – Pink Muhly Grass
*Panicum virgatum – Switchgrass
Pennisetum alopecuroides – Dwarf Fountain Grass
Pennisetum villosum – Feathertop Grass
*Schizachyrium scoparium – Little bluestem
*Sorghastrum nutans – Indian grass

GROUNDCOVERS
*Gelsemium sempervirens – Carolina Yellow Jessamine
Hemerocallis spp. – Daylily
Hypericum calycinum – St. John wort
Liriope muscari – Lily turf
Liriope spicata – Creeping Lily turf
Phlox subulata – Thrift
Rosemarinus officinalis – Rosemary
Santolina chamaecyparissus – Lavender Cotton
Sedum – various

Plants 6-10 Feet Tall
Abelia grandiflora – Glossy abelia
*Aesculus parviflora – Bottlebrush buckeye
Agarista populifolia – Florida Leucothoe
Aronia arbutifolia – Red Chokeberry
Aucuba japonica – Aucuba
Berberis julianae – Barberry
Berberis thunbergii – Japanese Barberry
Buddleia davidii – Butterfly Bush
Buxus microphylla – Japanese Boxwood
Buxus sempervirens – Boxwood
Callicarpa – various – Beautyberry
Calycanthus floridus – Sweetshrub
Camellia sasanqua – Camellia
Camellia sinensis – Tea Plant
*Cephalanthus occidentalis – Buttonbush
Chaenomeles speciosa – Quince
Clethra alnifolia – Summersweet
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Cleyera japonica – Cleyera Ternstroemia
*Corylopsis species – False Witch hazel
Cyrtisus scoparius – Scotch Broom
Deutzia scabra – Fuzzy Deutzia
Distylium myricoides – Blue Leaf Isa
Edgeworthia papyrifera – Paperbush
*Euonymus americanus – Hearts-a-bustin
Euonymus alatus – Winged Euonymus
Forsythia x intermedia – Border Forsythia
Forsythia suspensa – Weeping Forsythia
*Fothergilla major – Large Fothergilla
Gardenia jasminoides – Gardenia
Hibiscus syriacus – Rose of Sharon
Hydrangea paniculata – Panicle Hydrangea
*Hydrangea quercifolia – Oakleaf Hydrangea
Ilex crenata – species
Ilex cornuta – Burfordi nana
*Ilex glabra – Inkberry Holly

Ilex verticillata – Winterberry
Illicium spp. – Anise tree
Indigofera amblyantha – Indigo
*Itea virginica – Virginia sweetsprie
Kolkwitzia amabilis – Beautybush
*Lindera benzoin–Spicebush
Lonicera fragrantissima – Winter Honeysuckle
Leucothoe axillaris – Coastal Leucothoe
Leucothoe populifolia – Leucothoe
Mahonia aquifolium – Oregon Grape Holly
Michelia figo – Banana Shrub
Pyracantha coccinea – Firethorn
*Pieris japonica – Japanese Pieris
Pittosporum tobira – Japanese Pittosporum
Prunus triloba var. multiplex – Flowering Almond
Pyracantha coccinea – Scarlet Firethorn
Rhamnus indicus – Indian Hawthorn
*Sabal minor – Dwarf Palmetto
Spiraea cantoniensis – Reeves’ Spirea
Spiraea prunifolia – Bridalwreath Spirea
Spiraea x vanhouteei – Vanhoutte Spirea
Stachyurus praecox
Syringa vulgaris – Common Lilac
Ternstroemia gymnanthera – Japanese Cleyera
Vaccinium – Blueberry
Viburnum opulus – European Cranberry
Viburnum nudum – Winterthur
*Viburnum rafinesquinum
Weigela florida – Weigela

*Denotes Native