

## Clearing the way for dependable service

**Keeping trees  
away from  
WFEC's lines  
helps keep the  
lights on**

An ongoing program to clear limbs from West Florida Electric Cooperative's lines is helping the Co-op maintain reliable electric service for its customers.

Right-of-way clearing plays an essential role in preventing outages and power drainage on WFEC's lines. The Co-op strives to maintain a 20- to 30-foot clearance between its power lines and the surrounding trees because fallen limbs cause a significant share of the outages on its system. Contact with limbs also can drain power from lines, causing blinking clocks, flickering lights and even low voltage. Trees touching lines creates a hazard for people and livestock, as well.

Because WFEC serves rural customers, right-of-way maintenance is an ongoing effort and expense. WFEC's lines often run through wooded areas that require regular trimming, whereas other utilities nearby serve municipal areas, where they have far less right-of-way to clear.

WFEC's entire right-of-way is trimmed in continuous four-year cycles, with approximately one-fourth of the area being cut per year. Contract crews will complete the cycle this year when they finish trimming in WFEC's Graceville district. Covering about 25 miles per week, they trimmed over 500 miles last year and are expected to clear about 700 this year.

Contractors are now trimming in the vicinity of the substation feeding WFEC's lines in Alford. They recently cut around Lake McCormick and the north edge of Sand Hill and will soon cover the areas surrounding Silver Lake, Compass Lake and Tumble Creek before moving on to the area north of the substation.

To reduce the need for right-of-way maintenance, WFEC urges customers to consider the location of nearby power lines before planting trees, whether for landscaping or timber purposes. WFEC also extends appreciation to customers for their patience and cooperation as the crews complete the necessary work.



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**Reader's  
Recipe  
Sweet potato  
biscuits**

**Power  
Profile  
Featuring  
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**Consumer  
Ads**

**Main Menu**

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**Reader's Recipe • Main Menu**