



It isn't pretty but . . .
Tree trimming is a necessary part of right-of-way maintenance. When planting trees or shrubs, consider the location of WFEC's powerlines.

Fit and trimmed

WFEC clears the way for reliable service

West Florida Electric Cooperative's largest operating expenses in providing electric service aren't just the machinery or equipment, or even the labor, involved. WFEC also must wage a constant — and costly — battle against Mother Nature to keep powerlines clear of limbs and foliage.

Because WFEC serves rural customers, its lines often run through wooded areas that require regular trimming. WFEC's entire right-of-way is trimmed in continuous four- to five-year cycles. In comparison, utilities that serve municipal areas bear a much lighter financial load for right-of-way maintenance because they have far less right-of-way to clear.

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.

More important, trees touching lines create a hazard for people and livestock. A person or animal in contact with a tree that is touching a powerline may become a conduit for the electricity to ground, causing injury or even death. Even trees that are near, but not touching, an energized line are potentially hazardous. For instance, a child climbing the tree might touch the line or might cause the tree to sway and make contact with the line.

To reduce the need for right-of-way maintenance, WFEC urges customers to consider the location of nearby power lines before planting trees and shrubs, whether for landscaping or timber purposes. Although shrubs planted within the right-of-way will never grow into the lines, you should plant them elsewhere, since WFEC's maintenance equipment could damage them. By considering the right-of-way before you plant, you'll save the Co-op the expense of removal and avoid the disappointment of losing a tree when it grows large enough to interfere with the lines.

As WFEC performs the right-of-way maintenance necessary for providing reliable electric service, your cooperation and input are most appreciated.



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Trustee talk: Meet District 2's Eugene Alford
Co-op members will cast first mail ballots
Board names nominating committee

September 2000 CLF



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Opportunity
Florida counties
begin the journey

Trustee talk

Meet Eugene Alford
of District 2

Co-op members will cast first- ever mail ballots

Board names nominating committee

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