



Cost Factor & Affordability

Vegetation management with trimming and spraying is one of the most expensive things we do at Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative. But, left unattended, safety, reliability, and controlling costs are at risk.

The safety factor of trees near powerlines causing a threat to people and pets, or a tree taking down a powerline in a storm are easy enough to explain. But, vegetation management as a cost savings? Yes, even though we spend millions of dollars each year trimming trees, it is actually cheaper to trim trees than not. Here's why.

- **Falling trees not only break expensive wires, but they also take down power poles as well.** If the pole has a transformer, security light or expensive monitoring equipment attached, the repair costs climb even higher. The expense of trimming the tree is far less than repairing or replacing equipment.
- **Cost-wise use of personnel also factors in. MLEC's line crews work very hard for about eight to 10 hours each weekday.** Statistically, tree damage and storms are far more likely to occur when crews are not "on the clock." By keeping vegetation and powerline equipment a safe distance apart, emergency, after-hour repairs are avoided, and your outage time is shorter.
- **Let's not forget line-loss.** Ever been driving and seen the tips of trees burned by power lines? Not only is this a serious safety hazard, it is also an indication of power flowing out of the lines and into the surrounding trees. This "leakage" is called line-loss, and it can add up to serious money for the cooperative. We buy energy from TVA to sell to our members, and losing power during distribution is a very inefficient way to operate the electric system.

Let's communicate and work together. To learn more about MLEC's vegetation management program, visit www.mlec.com or email us at power@mlec.com.

Keeping a safe distance between vegetation and power equipment improves helps keep the lights on, prevents accidents and saves money.

**DON'T
DIG UP A
HEAP OF
TROUBLE!**



Contact MLEC before you do any digging, pushing pipe, trenching or plowing. Your safety depends on it.



“ *Josh McDonald, MLEC System Vegetation Manager* ”

Effective vegetation management is a process that can take a few years to come together. When an area is first treated it can look unappealing, but given a season or two, the outcome is native grasses, flowering plants and safe, reliable power.



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