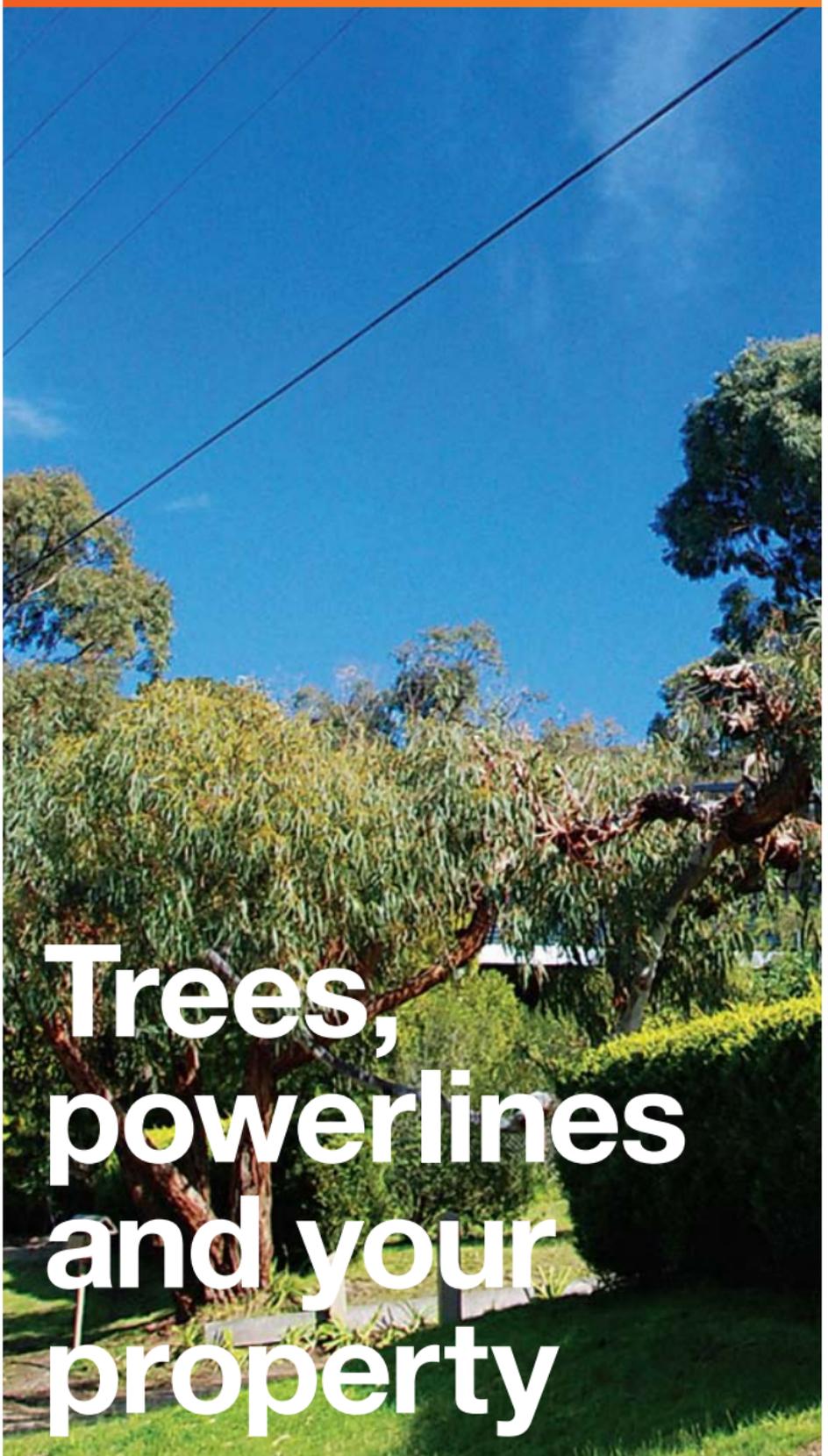




**Your safety and
responsibility**



**Trees,
powerlines
and your
property**

Tree clearing

Victoria has well earned the reputation as the *Garden State*. It's in everyone's interest to help manage the growth and health of our trees. Trees growing too close to powerlines can cause fires, blackouts and power surges. They also present a safety risk to people.

The Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2010 set out the minimum clearances required between powerlines and trees. It also outlines the division of responsibilities between councils, power companies and residents in relation to trees and powerlines.

Legislation

Legislation that underpins the information contained within this brochure include:

- Electricity Safety Act 1998
- Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2010, that incorporates the Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance
- Electricity Safety (Installation) Regulations 2009.

These publications can be accessed via the "Victorian Law Today" section at: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>.

About United Energy

United Energy (UE) is licensed by the Victorian Government to distribute electricity across Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs and the Mornington Peninsula. We serve some 640,000 customers and own and manage more than 210,000 poles along with about 13,000 kilometres of wires.

We are proud to be your local electricity distributor.

Trees in your street

In urban areas, local councils generally have the responsibility for maintaining vegetation that interfere with powerlines on road reserves. UE is responsible for trees on road reserves in rural areas within its distribution area.

Our commitment to you

- We will give at least 14 days notification when trees are to be pruned (except in the case of emergencies)
- Within this time frame we will provide an opportunity for consultation to address any concerns with the vegetation maintenance program.

Planting wisely

It is recommended that only appropriate tree species be planted near powerlines. For more information on trees that are deemed safe to plant near powerlines, contact our Customer Service Desk on 1300 131 689.

Alternatively, visit our website at www.ue.com.au, where our tree planting guide is available to be downloaded.

Appearance of the trees

Vegetation must be kept well clear of powerlines at all times.

It is not always possible to achieve an aesthetically pleasing result from tree pruning around powerlines due to:

- the type of tree that is planted
- the position of the tree. It may have either been planted too close to the lines, or even planted directly underneath
- poor quality of previous maintenance. In some instances, large amounts of the tree may be removed if the tree has not been maintained to appropriate standards in the past.

We only use vegetation contractors who are trained to prune trees using arboriculturally sound methods.

Trees on your property must be kept clear of powerlines

- You are responsible for the cutting of trees on your property that may interfere with your own electric service line or private electric line, or a private electric line on an adjoining property
- Trees near other electric lines that cross your boundary or trees within your property near the electric lines in the street are the responsibility of UE (refer to the diagrams A and B which depict a number of common situations)
- For safety reasons it is recommended that cutting of trees be done before trees grow to within **one metre** of an insulated electric service line and **two metres** of a bare wire electric service line
- If the trees are closer to these electric lines than the clearances above, or where cutting may cause branches to fall onto electric lines, do not cut them yourself as this may pose a risk to both yourself and your property. In such cases cutting should be done by persons trained to work in the vicinity of electric lines
- Legislation authorises electricity distribution companies to enter your property to inspect and to maintain electric lines.

Safety near powerlines

DO NOT:

- Fell a tree within **two metres** of electric lines
- Come within **one metre** of an insulated electric service line
- Come within **two metres** of bare electric lines
- Prune near high voltage electric lines

DO:

- Use qualified vegetation contractors or Registered Electrical Contractors (RECs)
- Ask United Energy for advice on 1300 131 689

Diagram A: Electricity supply from powerlines in the street

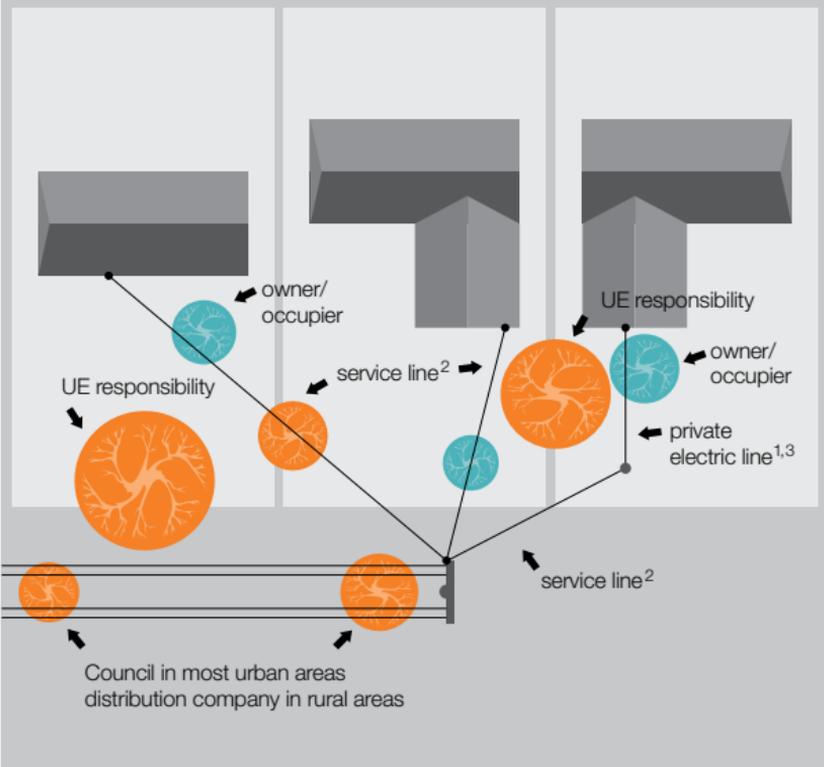
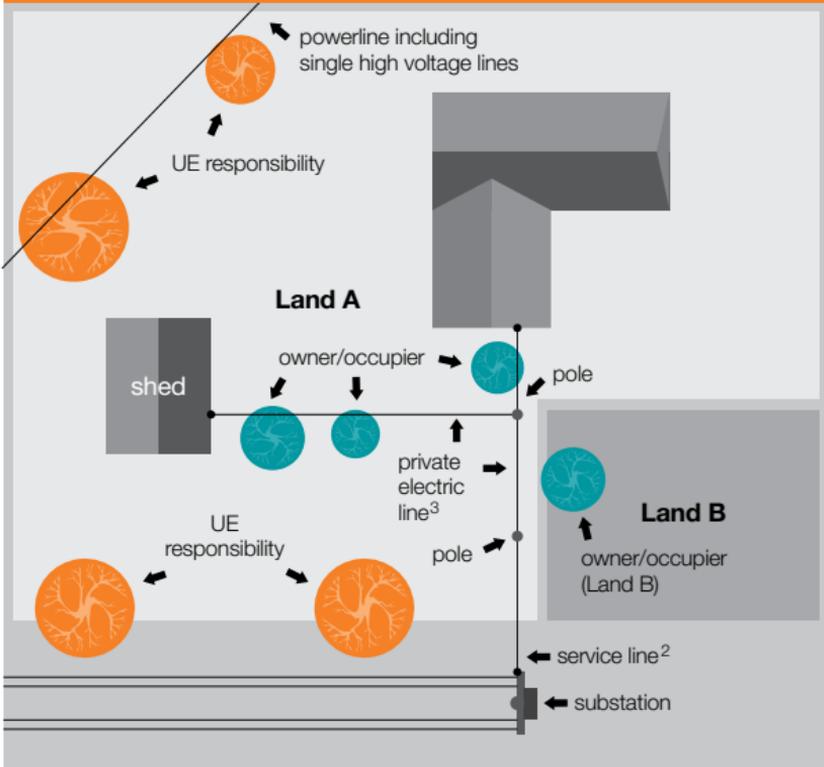


Diagram B: Powerlines on rural properties



- 1 This situation is more common in rural areas.
- 2 For service lines, a minimum of 600mm is required at all times.
- 3 For private electric lines a minimum of 600mm is required for insulated line and 1.5m for uninsulated lines at all times.

Pruning

Pruning trees to ensure they are clear of powerlines is essential. The best way to prevent fire and supply interruptions is to remove inappropriate trees.

UE prunes trees on a two year cycle. This requires trees to be pruned to beyond the minimum safety clearance to allow for vegetation regrowth as required by the regulations.

Once the minimum safety clearance, plus an allowance for regrowth is determined for each branch, it is then trimmed at the nearest collar (or growth point) outside the clearance zone (refer to diagrams C and D).

This is a requirement under Australian Standards AS4373.

This protects trees from infection or disease and reduces the development of weakly attached growth that can result from trimming trees mid-branch (see below).

Appearance of the trees after pruning

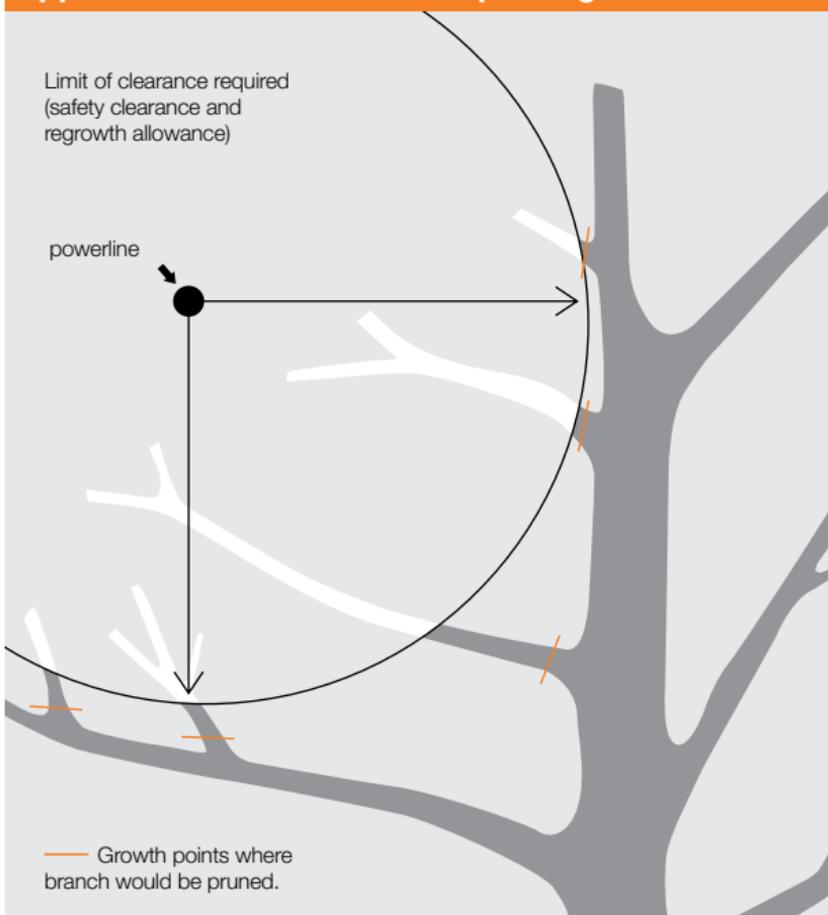


Diagram C: Pruning in low bushfire risk areas

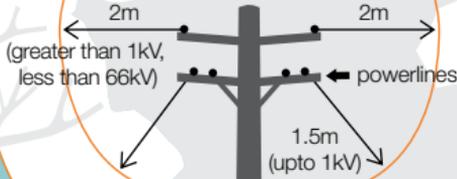
Hazard space

Sound limbs may grow over the clearance space for powerlines up to 22kV.

Trees shall not be removed without prior consultation (except in emergency situations).

Regrowth space
2 years x annual regrowth
(2 years = Vegetation Management Cycle)

Clearance space
Free of vegetation at all times

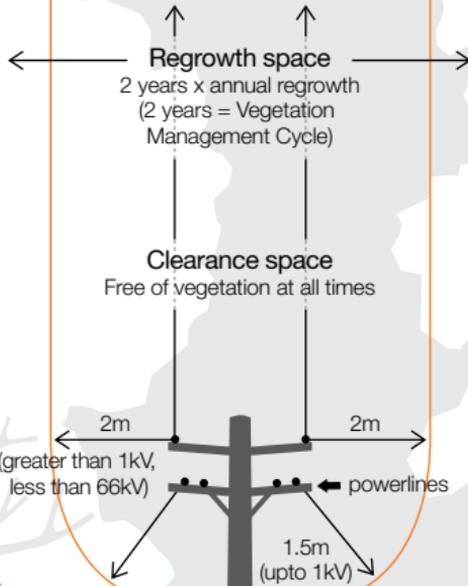


To minimise pruning only species with suitable growth habits should be planted near or under powerlines.

Diagram D: Pruning in hazardous bushfire risk areas

Hazard space

Trees shall not be removed without prior consultation (except in emergency situations).



Unsuitable species on your property may be removed but only with prior appropriate notification.

Only species with suitable growth habits shall be planted near or under powerlines or be allowed to remain.

Contact us

Customer Service Desk

Monday to Friday 8am–6pm

1300 131 689

Emergency/Faults 24 hours

132 099

www.ue.com.au