

In response to article: [This Just In: Ones, Twos and Trees](#)

Rooted in Safety: Piedmont Electric's Proactive Tree Management for Community Well-Being

We at Piedmont Electric appreciate your heartfelt connection to the beauty of Chapel Hill's trees and we have a shared dedication to the safety and well-being of the community. We understand the importance of striking a balance between preserving the natural landscape and ensuring a reliable power supply. Your personal experiences with storm-related tree incidents highlight the very reason why Piedmont Electric has proactive measures in place to maintain a clear corridor around power lines.

At Piedmont Electric, we employ a comprehensive vegetation management program that includes regular inspections and strategic tree trimming along power line rights-of-way. We operate on a three-year cycle which means our tree crews will be in the area once every three years to trim tree limbs near our power line easements. These easements allow us to only clear 15 feet on each side of the power line. Residents and property owners are informed in advance of vegetation management activities.

Routine inspections and timely intervention help electric cooperatives stay ahead of potential risks and maintain a clear right-of-way should crews ever need to access it during power restoration. Our trained professionals conduct thorough inspections of the right-of-way areas to identify potential danger trees. This assessment considers factors such as tree health, proximity to power lines, and potential risks during adverse weather conditions.

In instances where a tree poses a potential threat to surrounding power lines outside of our easement, property owners are notified to ensure their awareness of the situation. This proactive communication allows property owners the opportunity to address the concern by arranging for the safe removal of the tree.

Your observations about trees and power lines along N.C. 86 highlight valid concerns and we want to assure you that we take them seriously. In regions where service areas overlap, like along the N.C. 86, Piedmont Electric coordinates efforts with Duke Energy and telecommunications entities to address vegetation management that affects their equipment. However, we cannot perform right-of-way maintenance on their system.

All utilities recognize the importance of maintaining a clear right-of-way to minimize potential risks of power outages and ensure public safety. We are continuously working to enhance our vegetation management practices and member input is invaluable in helping us prioritize preventive measures.

As we collaborate to create a safer environment for all, we look forward to a future where tree-lined streets continue to thrive. Thank you for your advocacy and your ongoing commitment to our shared community.

###

Piedmont Electric Cooperative is a local, member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative serving more than 33,000 member connections in Alamance, Caswell, Durham, Granville, Orange and Person counties. Piedmont Electric exists to serve our members and improve the quality of life in our communities through local employment, economic development, business engagement, youth education, grants to educators, advocacy for energy issues, community involvement, broadband connectivity and emergency preparedness support. Visit www.pemc.coop for more information.