



**To Our Valued Customers:**

Westar Energy's top priority is to provide our customers with the highest quality electric service. We also understand the need to preserve the beauty of your neighborhood. That is why we are providing this packet of information regarding our line clearance practices.

When trees come into contact with power lines, electric service is hampered, and more important, a dangerous situation is created for both the public and utility workers. The goal of Westar Energy's line clearance program is to balance safe and reliable service with preserving the health and appearance of trees.

Our contractors prune trees using the directional pruning method, which is recommended by the Tree Care Industry Association. When first pruned, trees may appear stark, but this method maintains the trees' health and allows the trees to attain normal regrowth.

We are currently clearing lines by electrical circuit only, so you may see crews prune trees in your yard, but not in your neighbor's yard. You may also see several different crews working over several weeks due to their specific line clearance function.

We will leave you notice on your door if we cannot pick up brush before the end of the workday. If we leave brush, we will pick it up the next business day, making an effort not to leave it in your yard over weekends or holidays.

Every year since 1999, the National Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters have named Westar Energy a Tree Line USA Utility for meeting strict pruning, training and public education standards. We are honored to have earned this designation.

We appreciate your understanding as line clearance crews work to ensure a safe environment and reliable electric service. If you are not the property owner, please forward this information to the owner so he or she is aware of our scheduled work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry McCullough". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry McCullough  
Manager, Vegetation



To Our Valued Customers:

Thank you for the opportunity to come into your community to perform tree-trimming services. Westar Energy has hired our company to safely clear away trees from overhead power lines.

We understand your trees are valuable in many ways, not the least of which is they add to the beauty of your area. However, since safety and customer service are priorities for us and Westar Energy, it is necessary to prune your trees to continue to provide safe, reliable electricity.

In pruning your trees, we will take the utmost care. Our crews are comprised of professionals who are trained in the proper techniques to preserve the appearance and health of the trees while clearing the lines sufficiently and complying with safety requirements.

Should you have any questions or concerns about our techniques, please consult the crew foreman on site or call us toll free at (866) 562-5121. We will be happy to assist you.

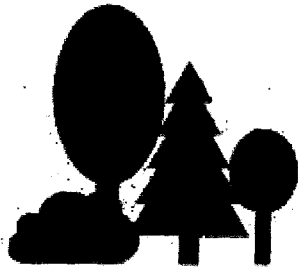
We want you to be completely satisfied with your service and hope you will enjoy the beauty of your trees for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Black", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jerry M. Black  
Division Manager

## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO WESTAR ENERGY CUSTOMERS



To assure safe and reliable electric service to you and your neighbors, professional crews will work in your area during the next few weeks. They will prune trees, as necessary, to obtain adequate overhead electric line clearances.

- All tree cuttings will be cleaned up and removed from your property.
- Volunteer trees, 4 inches or less in diameter, growing under the lines will be removed.
- You will not be charged for work done in accordance with normal utility operating practices.

If you have any questions, special circumstances or a tree that is near our utility lines that you would like removed, please contact:

**1-866-562-5121**  
**TOLL FREE**

## TREE PRUNING FOR OVERHEAD LINE CLEARANCE

Line voltage and species of tree determine the amount of space required for adequate overhead electric line clearance.

When tree branches grow in and around overhead electric lines, they can create a safety or reliability hazard and must be pruned. In some cases, it is better to remove a tree than to severely prune it.

If you have any questions or want more information about the best trees to plant near or under overhead lines in your area, please contact us at the phone number shown on the other side of this notice.

*The National Arbor Day Foundation  
has named Westar Energy a  
Tree Line USA Utility every year  
since 1999 for its nationally recognized  
proper tree-pruning practices.*

**Westar Energy**

For more information, contact  
John Rosenow, President or  
Gary Brienzo, Information Coordinator  
at (402) 474-5655



## News from

# The National Arbor Day Foundation®

100 Arbor Avenue • Nebraska City, NE 68410 • [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Westar Energy  
Named by National Arbor Day Foundation  
to Receive 2004 Tree Line USA Award**

**NEBRASKA CITY, Neb.** -- The National Arbor Day Foundation has named Westar Energy a Tree Line USA utility for the fifth year.

The Tree Line USA program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and recognizes utilities that meet three requirements: a program of quality tree care, annual worker training in quality tree care practices, and a tree planting and public education program.

"Trees are a vital component of the infrastructure in our towns and cities, and provide many environmental and economic benefits. Trees make our communities more livable, increase property values, and help clean the air," John Rosenow, The National Arbor Day Foundation's president, said. "And trees conserve energy, which is especially important to utilities as peak demand is reduced."

"The commitment of the Tree Line USA utilities to protect community trees while providing reliable service not only helps to provide beautiful trees for the future, but also results in long-term operational savings for the utility," Rosenow said.

"Reforming the outdated line-clearance practice of mutilating trees by topping is a major objective of Tree Line USA," Rosenow said. "Natural pruning which trains trees to grow around the wires and retain more of their natural form is better for the health of the trees. Natural pruning also saves money for the utilities, because it has to be done less frequently than topping."

Westar Energy will be recognized during the Arbor Day Foundation's 11th annual Trees and Utilities National Conference in Omaha. The March 29-31, 2004, conference cosponsored by the Utility Arborist Association brings together utility professionals, foresters, arborists, and concerned citizens from across the nation to work together toward the goal of dependable utility service and healthy, beautiful community trees.

Tree Line USAs include both investor-owned and public utilities. These utilities have demonstrated commitment to public education, tree planting, and quality tree care. One utility works with communities in its service area to replant trees that must be removed because of poor health, undesirability of species or frequent problems with lines. Another that carries out annual worker training about proper pruning practices to meet the Tree Line USA requirements also invites area arborists to participate in the training program to extend tree knowledge throughout the community.

"As deregulation has an increasing impact on the structure of utilities throughout America, it is hoped that high quality professional tree care will be at the forefront of both community and company concerns," Rosenow said.

The National Arbor Day Foundation, a nonprofit education organization, is dedicated to tree planting and environmental stewardship.

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established 1938

# National Arborist Association

*Dedicated to the Advancement of Commercial Tree Care Businesses*

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Web site: [www.natlarb.com](http://www.natlarb.com)

Contact: Robert Rouse, Staff Arborist  
E-Mail: [Rouse@natlarb.com](mailto:Rouse@natlarb.com)

***For immediate release***

## Who Butchered My Tree?

How would you feel if you returned home from work to find that the beautiful shade trees by the street in front of your house had been drastically pruned? Now, instead of a thick, symmetrical canopy of leaves, there is a gaping, V-shaped hole through the middle of the tree that reveals the overhead electrical conductors. "Why did this happen?" you would undoubtedly ask.

You may not be aware that while trees add significantly to the beauty of our communities, they are also responsible for costly property damage as well as dangerous power outages. In fact, tree failure is by far the leading cause of outages nationwide. The tree that grows into electrical conductors presents a potential hazard to you and others in the community if it becomes energized or wipes out a power line. This is why we see utility line clearance contractors in our neighborhoods trimming trees.

Some residents get irritated and feel that these trees are needlessly damaged. "The National Arborist Association receives a lot of calls from homeowners complaining that their utility company 'drastically' cut trees near power lines. While it is vitally necessary for utilities to trim trees, sometimes severely, it is nevertheless important for them to follow tree care standards of practice," adds Peter Gerstenberger, director of Safety and Education for the NAA. The NAA is the Secretariat for the ANSI A300 Standard, a national standard that governs tree pruning operations, including line clearance.

When one is evaluating the quality of line clearance tree trimming, it's important to consider that the utility's primary objective is to prevent outages as well as electrical hazards. Minimally, the tree should be left in a healthy state, with at least some aesthetic value. If this cannot be accomplished, the utility may opt to remove the tree rather than create an eyesore and future problem.

Why the gaping hole in the canopy? First, the utility company specifies a certain amount of clearance around its wires, depending upon the voltage, the tree's growth rate and other characteristics, and the pruning cycle - how frequently it will be pruned. Furthermore, scientific research has proven that it is better from the standpoint of tree health if the trimming crew removes whole limbs with a relatively small number of large cuts versus making numerous small cuts and leaving stubbed off branches.

Finally, utilities have found that removal of entire limbs helps to train the future growth of the tree away from the wires, keeping maintenance costs to a minimum while helping to insure that the tree needn't receive the same drastic pruning in the future.

When you hire an NAA-member tree care company, you are assured that the company you are hiring has access to the most recent information on tree care practices, and you know that the company you are hiring is insured and/or bonded to protect you and your valuable property. Homeowners who are looking for someone to assess their landscape and make recommendations should consult a professional arborist. Contact the National Arborist Association (NAA), a 63-year-old public and professional resource on trees and arboriculture. The NAA has more than 2,800 members who recognize stringent safety and performance standards, and are required to carry liability insurance. An easy way to find a tree care service provider in your area is to use the "Locate Your Local NAA Member Companies" program. You can use this service by calling (800) 733-2622 or by doing a zip code search at [www.natlarb.com](http://www.natlarb.com).