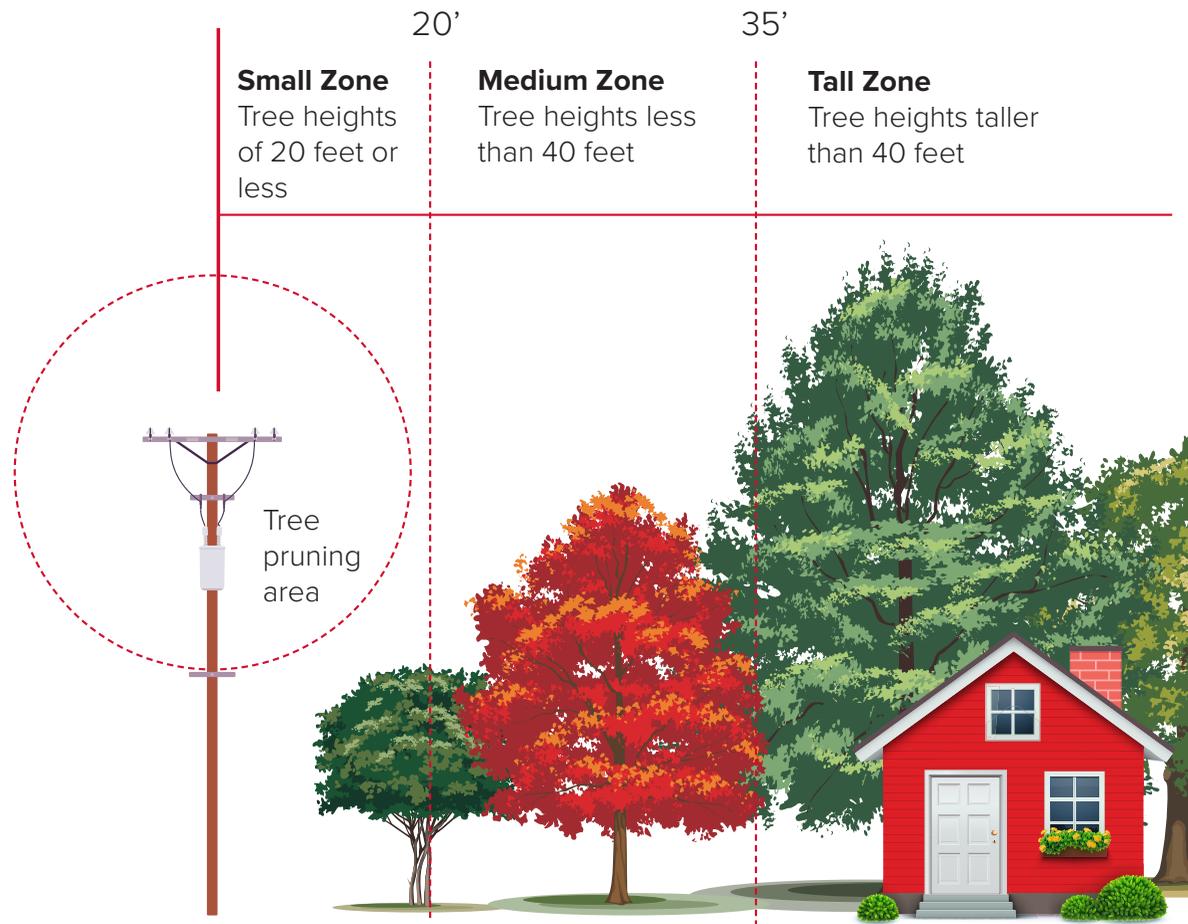




# Planning, planting and protecting trees and energy infrastructure



Use the following tips to ensure your tree lives a long and healthy life.

## Planning Your Plant

Scan this QR code with your phone's camera to watch a video on picking the right tree for the right place.



1. **Get measurements.** When selecting a new tree or shrub, ask the tree nursery what the height and width will be once it's fully grown.
2. **Call 811.** Before digging, call 811 or visit Call811.com to have underground utility lines marked for free. Do this at least two business days before you are planning to plant.

3. **Look up.** If power lines are over the area where you want to plant, plan to plant roughly 20 feet away based on the mature size of your tree.
4. **Look down.** To be safe, plan to plant at least 25 feet away from the flags that indicate underground natural gas lines.
5. **Look around.** If there are any ground-level transformers nearby, plan to plant at least 10 feet away from the front to ensure the transformer is accessible.

**TREE TIP:** If your tree's mature height is 20 feet – plant it at least 20 feet away from any nearby power lines.

## Planting Your Tree

Scan this QR code with your phone's camera to watch a video with tree planting tips.



1. **Dig the hole.** Dig a saucer-shaped hole with sloping sides that is two times the width of your tree's container and only as deep as the height of the root ball.
2. **Free your tree.** Carefully remove the container or cut the wire basket and remove the rope, twine and burlap.
3. **Set it straight.** Place the tree straight so the trunk flare, located at the base of the tree where the roots spread, is slightly visible above the ground.
4. **Add some soil.** Fill in the hole with previously removed soil, but only until the soil is just below the root collar.
5. **Water the tree.** Give the soil around the tree a good soaking to ensure it settles and there are no air pockets.
6. **Add mulch.** Keeping a 4-inch distance from the base of the tree, add about 2-4 inches of mulch on top of the backfilled soil.

**TREE TIP:** Don't forget to remove any tags or labels from your tree and trim any broken or dead branches.

## Protecting Your Tree

Scan this QR code with your phone's camera to watch a video on tree maintenance.



Our Vegetation Management Team works year-round trimming trees away from power lines and transformers. Trees that grow into power lines are a major cause of electrical outages and fires.

1. Plant the right tree in the right place, which means away from overhead and underground utility lines.
2. Never remove a fallen tree or branch from a power line. You could be seriously injured or killed.
3. If a tree or branch touches a power line, keep yourself and others away from the tree and call 911.

To learn more, visit [NorthWesternEnergy.com/trees](http://NorthWesternEnergy.com/trees).



The Montana Osprey Project has a live-stream camera set up at an osprey nest in Missoula.

Check it out, day or night, at [allaboutbirds.org/cams/hellgate-ospreys/](http://allaboutbirds.org/cams/hellgate-ospreys/)

## Report osprey nests built on power lines

NorthWestern Energy has installed hundreds of platforms where ospreys can safely build nests away from power lines.

However, this time of year when ospreys return to Montana, we often see the birds building nests on power lines. This can cause power outages and even fires, and the nests' proximity to energized equipment puts the birds at risk of electrocution.

If you see an osprey nest on a power pole, please report it by calling us at 888-467-2669 or filling out the online form at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/customer-service/safety](http://NorthWesternEnergy.com/customer-service/safety).

When NorthWestern learns of an osprey nest on one of our poles, we implement the Avian Protection Plan, which includes removing the nest if it does not have ospreys or osprey eggs in it and, in some cases, providing an alternative platform for the ospreys.

## Secure baling twine to protect ospreys

Baling twine is often found in osprey nests, but it can be deadly to hatchlings and adults who become entangled in it.

It's unclear why ospreys are so attracted to baling twine, but the best way to prevent it from ending up in nests is to pick up all baling twine and store it in buildings or containers with secure lids.