

Safe lines are everyone's responsibility

For reasons of both public safety and protection of your power supply, trees need to be kept at a safe distance from power lines.

Trees can become a dangerous hazard and can interrupt your power supply when they grow too close to power lines. They have the potential to cause power surges and appliance damage, power failure, fire, electric shock or electrocution. We have an ongoing tree inspection programme on our **network** lines to ensure adequate clearances are maintained – however if you are aware of a tree that is in close proximity to the line (closer than 2.5 metres) please call us.

In January 2004 the Government passed legislation about the safety of trees relative to power lines. The legislation becomes effective from July 2005 and sets rules for tree owners and electricity network companies responsible for cutting or trimming trees that grow too close to electricity network lines. The legislation requires clearances of 2.6 metres for 11kV lines and 1.5 metres for those of lower voltage.

We have summarised the key points of the legislation as follows:

Our Responsibilities

All electricity network companies, including Marlborough Lines are required by the regulations to ensure that trees do not grow too close to our (network) lines or electrical equipment. We are responsible for:

- Inspecting our networks to identify trees inside the growth limit zone. The growth limit zone specifies the distance around power lines and electrical equipment which must be kept clear of trees, shrubs and vegetation.
- Providing the First Cut or Trim free of charge for trees inside the growth limit zone, unless the tree is covered by a previous arrangement with us or is part of a horticultural shelterbelt.
- Notifying tree owners with a Cut or Trim Notice when a tree is too close to power lines.
- Ensuring that the tree owner complies with the Cut or Trim Notice and the regulations.

Tree Owners Responsibilities

• Network power lines

After the First Cut or Trim, it is the tree owner's responsibility to keep the tree clear of the growth limit zone around network power lines. Marlborough Lines will notify residents of a property with a Cut or Trim Notice when a tree needs to be cut or trimmed relative to our lines. The tree owner must comply with that notice using an approved arborist, within the time stated. Tree owners who fail to comply could be fined up to \$10,000 and other costs, and could also be liable for costs if power lines or equipment are damaged by a tree.

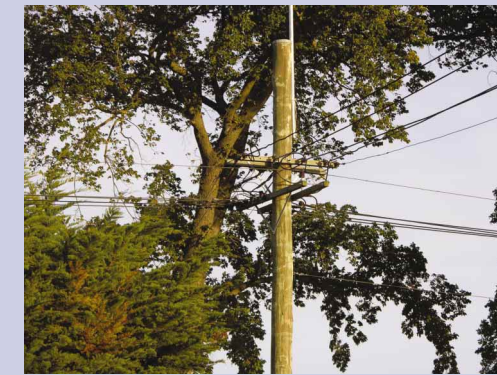
Important: Do not trim trees near network lines yourself as this is very dangerous. The regulations require that the work be undertaken only by professional arborists approved by the electricity network company. In Marlborough this task can be undertaken by Marlborough Lines Contracting.

• Service Lines

The property owner is responsible for the maintenance and repair of electrical lines and equipment, known as service lines, on their property. This means that property owners are responsible for the costs of trimming trees near their service lines.

Marlborough Lines Contracting can trim trees around service lines. For a quote and to book a crew to trim trees near your service line call 577 7007, or alternatively you can hire another qualified arborist or you can do-it-yourself – **but remember that unless you are using someone qualified to work around live lines, always have your power supply temporarily disconnected before working near service lines.**

To arrange a temporary disconnection phone us on 577 7007



The Electricity Chain

The process of electricity transfer, from the original generation source to the end user.

1 Power Stations
Electricity is generated by hydro-electric power stations in the South Island. The North Island also has thermal and geo-thermal plants. The DC line allows energy to be transmitted between the North and South Islands.

2 Transmission Lines
TransPower own and operate the National Grid. This consists of the Transmission Lines (220kV and 110kV) and the equipment used to connect to the National Grid (eg, Blenheim Substation).

3 Distribution Network
Marlborough Lines owns and operates the Distribution Network. (ie. the power lines and equipment that transport power from the National Grid to your property boundary) within Marlborough.

We also operate a business unit for the construction and maintenance of lines.

Marlborough Lines has 285 km of 33kV power lines from Ward to the Rai Valley and has 2400 km of 11kV power lines, and owns 500 km of 230/400 V lines in the streets.

4 Zone Stations
Marlborough Lines has 14 zone substations which convert 33kV electricity to 11kV

5 Distribution Transformers
Marlborough Lines has 3000 Distribution Transformers which convert the 11kV electricity into 400/230 V.

6 Electricity User
The final part of the 400V lines from the streets to the house is owned by the electricity user.

The Electricity Chain - Understanding the electricity supply process, from generator to end user, helps to clarify areas of individual responsibility

