

Trimming Trees Near Electric Facilities

Understanding the Hagerstown Light
Department's Roles and Responsibilities



Hagerstown Light
Department



Education

When you call HLD in regards to a tree trimming request, we will ask multiple questions to determine if the issue is something HLD can assist you with. We need to determine if the request constitutes an emergency that could cause an outage or safety hazard, or is just a routine tree trimming notification/request. By calling HLD, your information allows us to determine the proper way to handle the request and if not, assist you in finding a solution. Many times, HLD receives calls for tree limbs on, or growing into communication lines which we do not have the right to trim/remove due to liabilities with the communications companies. We appreciate each call and all the information that is provided to us.

Please review this entire document carefully, as it will provide you with all the information required to determine what responsibilities HLD has for tree trimming on its system. It will also clarify what responsibilities you have as a homeowner and HLD customer to prevent trees from growing into electric facilities.

If you have any further questions after reviewing this document, please contact HLD at **301-790-2600**. When you have an issue involving trees, please use the information provided in this document to assist us with handling your request.



Overhead Facilities

- **Primary Wires** – these wires are located on the very top of our utility poles and carry the high voltage required to distribute power around the City. HLD has a vegetation management program to trim trees around these wires on a rotating schedule. From time to time, trees grow or fall into these wires even with HLD maintenance. If you see a tree limb laying on these wires or a tree actively growing into these wires, please contact us.
- **Secondary Wires** – these wires are located below the primary wires. They are typically a twisted bundle of 3 wires (2 black, 1 bare) or they can be 3 individual wires hanging parallel above and below each other on the utility poles. HLD has a vegetation management program to trim trees around these wires on a rotating schedule. From time to time, trees grow or fall into these wires even with HLD maintenance. If you see a tree limb laying on these wires or a tree actively growing into these wires, please contact us.
- **Telephone and Cable Wires** – these wires are normally the lowest installed wires on a pole. They are individual black wires that vary in size based on the need of the communications companies. HLD does not trim or remove trees from these facilities. Please contact your communications service providers for questions and issues regarding these wires.
- **Service Drop** – these wires are typically a twisted bundle of 3 wires (2 black, 1 bare) or they can be 3 individual wires hanging parallel above and below each other that are installed from the pole to your house. The homeowner is responsible for keeping trees trimmed around these wires. HLD will de-energize the service drop for work to be done or a reputable tree maintenance service can complete the work for you.



Policies and Procedures

Tree-Trimming Requests

- HLD schedules tree trimming in your area on a rotating schedule, following best practice vegetation management guidelines. In addition, HLD is constantly “spot trimming” areas where re-growth occurs that affects the proper operation of HLD overhead lines.
- If you notice trees growing into HLD primary lines (see Overhead Facilities) please contact HLD and provide as much information as you can, such as address and location description.
- HLD does not trim trees growing into or around service drop conductors (see Overhead Facilities). This type of work can be performed by a qualified tree trimming professional that is certified to work within 10 feet of electrical hazards. HLD must be notified any time work will be performed within 10 feet of overhead electrical wires. An HLD representative will meet with you to assess the risk for a safety hazard or outage due to the proposed work. HLD will coordinate with you and your vegetation management professional to ensure the work is completed safely. HLD may need to provide sufficient clearance or de-energize the wire to enable this work.



Policies and Procedures

Tree-Removal Requests

- If you are planning to trim or remove a tree that is near HLD facilities, please contact us. An HLD representative will meet with you to assess the risk for a safety hazard or outage due to the proposed work. HLD will coordinate with you and your vegetation management professional to ensure the work is completed safely. HLD may need to provide sufficient clearance or de-energize the wire to enable this work.
- HLD does not perform complete tree removal for service drops to your home. This type of work can be performed by a qualified tree trimming professional that is certified to work within 10 feet of electrical hazards. HLD must be notified a week ahead any time work will be performed within 10 feet of overhead electrical wires. HLD may need to provide sufficient clearance, provide cover-up, or de-energize the wire to enable this work.



Policies and Procedures

Storm-Damaged Trees

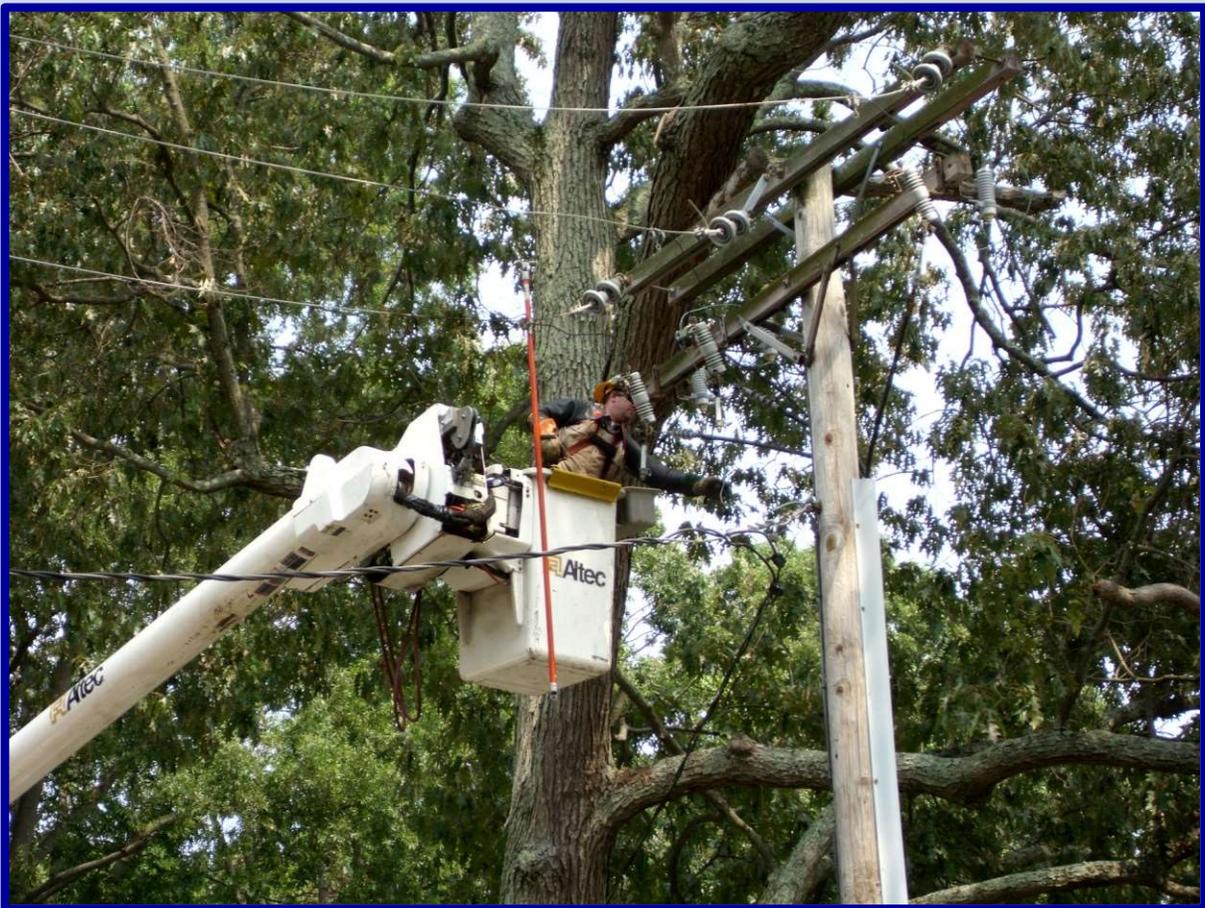
- Storm damage to trees can be limited to a few broken branches or entire uprooting of trees. The Hagerstown Light Department is responsible for clearing storm-damaged trees from our electric lines and facilities in order to:
 - restore service,
 - allow reasonable access for emergency service restoration, or
 - ensure future service reliability.
- The cleanup of storm debris removed from, on, or over HLD facilities or to provide emergency access, remains the responsibility of the owner of the tree, whether public or private. Following major storms, the City of Hagerstown Public Works Division often assists in the cleanup of storm debris.



For Your Protection

Plan Ahead

- You can help protect your home and community by planting tall-growing trees away from electric lines and right-of-ways. Tall-growing trees planted beneath or along electric lines present a future hazard and eventually will require trimming or removal. If you are considering planting trees on your property and you know overhead electrical lines exist, call HLD to discuss your plans. We can meet with you to determine what to plant and where the best places are to plant them.



Contact HLD

The Hagerstown Light Department

- If you have any questions about what you just read, please call us. We can be reached at **301-790-2600** from 7:00am until 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except for holidays. We are here to assist you with any questions regarding your electrical service from HLD.

