

CO-OP USE OF HERBICIDE FOR VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Appalachian Electric Cooperative (AEC) maintains more than 2,500 miles of power lines in our five county service area. The cooperative maintains a right of way in and around our substations and other facilities and along power lines to keep our community safe, ensure reliability and reduce the overall cost of energy.

Safety

Trees and other vegetation can become energized if they contact high-voltage distribution lines. This could bring deadly voltage within the reach of people or pets. AEC has a responsibility to keep our community safe, and that means we must keep vegetation a safe distance from our power lines and other equipment.

Reliability

Trees contacting power lines can lead to power outages. In fact, 45% of AEC's power interruptions are caused by trees. These outages are costly and inconvenient. Because distribution lines are part of a larger system, one tree could create problems for hundreds or thousands of people.

Economic Responsibility

Aside from safety and reliability concerns, AEC's vegetation management program reduces the cost of maintaining the distribution system. Since we are a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, these savings translate into lower rates for our members.

AEC uses multiple tools to maintain the right-of-way, including mowing, tree trimming or removal and the application of herbicide.

The use of herbicide is a common practice by electric utilities, railroads, the Tennessee Dept. of Transportation and other property owners to manage the growth of vegetation. Herbicides are an environmentally sound technique for controlling tree growth while allowing grasses and wildflowers to flourish.

AEC utilizes experienced vegetation management companies who employ certified herbicide applicators to treat vegetation along AEC's right-of-ways. Our contractor employs low volume backpack spraying equipment that targets only the vegetation to be treated.