



# Fort Payne Improvement Authority

## Right- of- Way Maintenance Policy

### **Purpose**

To establish the Fort Payne Improvement Authority (FPIA) policy regarding Right-of-Way Maintenance and Tree Trimming.

### **Scope**

The policy applies to the Operation Department of the utility. The policy will explain the steps and procedures that are required to maintain the power line right- of- way in order to provide a safe, reliable, low-cost power to our customers.

### **Policy**

#### 1. Right- of- Way Clearance

Trees near FPIA power lines are normally trimmed on a 3-year cycle. FPIA is to trim trees for a 3-year growth cycle so that the branches will not interfere with the lines before the next trimming cycle. The amount trimmed depends on how much a particular species grows in 3 years.

Fort Payne Improvement Authority has an obligation to maintain proper clearance of a 15' radius from the center point of power lines to any tree or plant growth with no growth or overhang allowed inside the 30' corridor.

It is necessary for FPIA to trim and remove trees, limbs, vines and brush from underneath our power lines.

Trees and limbs that interfere with service lines will not normally be trimmed or removed. Arrangements can be made to have these wires temporarily removed to permit the property owner to trim or remove trees. If the customer wants electric service wires temporarily disconnected to trim or remove trees, they can contact FPIA several days in advance to ensure the availability of utility crews at the desired time. This service will be made available at no charge during normal working hours, but may be delayed due to emergency work.

Fence installation on power line right-of-way should be avoided. However, those fences located on or that are to be installed on power line right-of-ways shall include the installation of fence gates that will allow FPIA to access the power line right-of-way with large trucks.

FPIA utilizes the following methods to achieve Right-of- Way clearing:

- Manual tree cutting or trimming
- Mechanical rotary drum removal
- Spraying herbicides for brush and vine removal

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2. Customer Specific ROW Clearing and Future Maintenance

The customer is responsible for any ROW clearing required to provide service solely to the customer. The initial clearing may be completed by FPIA or a contractor of the customer's choice, but the clearing will be completed to FPIA specifications and at the customer's expense. For any ROW that will require FPIA to maintain it moving forward for the sole purpose of service for one customer, the maintenance will be at the expense of the customer. FPIA will coordinate clearing and cost with the customer.

3. Customer's Request for Tree Trimming and Cutting

FPIA does not trim or cut trees for aesthetic purposes to reduce shade, falling leaves, etc. nor does FPIA trim or cut trees that are fallen or dead unless one of the following exceptions apply:

- a) If a tree has fallen across a power line, FPIA will cut whatever is necessary for the lines to be cleared. However, the debris removal will be the responsibility of the property owner.
- b) If a tree is dead or dying, or is in the process of falling over, it may be cut if it can be classified as a "danger tree" by the Supervisor. Such trees will be cut; however, the debris removal will be the responsibility of the property owner.

4. Planting Trees and Shrubs

FPIA does not allow the planting of trees or shrubs (especially Bradford Pear trees) directly underneath overhead power lines or directly on top of underground power lines. Trees and shrubs should be planted at least 15' from the pole line, allowing FPIA to maintain a 30' right- of- way. Therefore, FPIA will not be responsible for damage to vegetation resulting from the maintenance or replacement of the lines, or for any other reason. If customers are considering planting trees within the power line Right-of-Way the following is a list of trees to consider planting and those to avoid.

Trees to consider:

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Vine Maple          | Thundercloud Plum    |
| Japanese Snowbell   | Upright Juniper      |
| Japanese Tree-Lilac | Pyramidal Arborvitae |
| Hedge Maple         | Smoke tree           |
| Japanese Dogwood    | Star Magnolia        |
| Fragrant Snowbell   | Amur Maple           |
| Akebono Cherry      | Goldenrain Tree      |
| Red Jewel Crabapple |                      |

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Trees to avoid:

Silver Maple	Box Elder
Lombardy Poplar	Sycamore
Silver Poplar	Osage Orange
Weeping Willow	Siberian (Chinese) Elm
Cottonwood and Hybrid Poplar	Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus)
Bradford Pear	

5. Customer Contact

FPIA makes every attempt, as part of the site survey function, to notify property owner and customers prior to scheduling work. Door hangers or verbal notifications are made when the customer can be identified.

FPIA makes an effort to communicate and verify with property owners an understanding of the work and technique to be performed by companies clearing right- of- ways. FPIA is not responsible for misinformation provided by a customer.

Although FPIA and its contractors attempt to contact customers and property owners, it is necessary for work to progress and will not be impeded due to a lack of notification.

6. Storm Damage

FPIA, as a provider of a critical service to our customers will, during a storm event such as wind storm, tornado, thunderstorm, ice storm or flood, clear any obstacles that impede restoration of electric service. FPIA and its contractors are not responsible for the removal of debris such as trees, limbs, etc. from lines and such obstacles will be left on site.

7. Disputes

In the event a customer refuses to allow FPIA or its contractor access to perform necessary right-of-way maintenance, the following actions will be taken:

- a) FPIA will schedule a meeting with the customer and property owner to address concerns and formulate a solution.
- b) The customer may have a contractor of their choosing perform the work at their expense. The work must provide clearance from the distribution lines to allow for 3 years of growth.
- c) FPIA will review the area in question and make efforts to accommodate a resolution which meets FPIA's goal and objectives.

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- d) In areas which require immediate attention and present a hazard to FPIA's lines and equipment, FPIA will have its contractor or crews remove the obstruction and provide notification to the customer and property owner as soon as practical.

8. Legal Rights

FPIA has the authority and duty to maintain its electric power distribution system. FPIA has the right to install its power lines on all public rights-of-ways and easements that are necessary to operate and maintain its electric distribution system.

FPIA has the legal right to do what is necessary to maintain and protect its facilities within the right-of- way in order to provide and maintain electric utility service for the common good of the service area. This right has been granted by law.

***Approved by the FPIA Board April 14, 2026 (See Board Minutes)***