

# **Customer's Guide for Tree Trimming**

Transmission & Distribution (T&D) Operations January 2017





## Why is it important to trim trees near power lines?

CUC has an obligation to provide safe, reliable electricity to over 28,000 customers, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our ability to do that is affected by the growth of trees that could pose a danger to the power lines and the people we serve.

When tree limbs come in contact with power lines it can cause serious problems, particularly during adverse weather conditions including high winds and heavy rain. We often have to trim tree limbs away from power lines to help prevent outages from occurring and to reduce the risk to public safety. That's why it is necessary for us to trim or remove trees to maintain proper clearance from power lines.

Our tree trimming is aimed at keeping over 400 miles of transmission and distribution lines clear of trees and undergrowth. Through our focus on effective vegetation management, which includes periodic inspections of power lines and information from customers, we can identify trees that are growing too close to power lines and thus, cause concern for public safety and reliability.

While we have a legal right to remove or trim any trees or shrubs located near power lines (The Electricity Law, Section 22 (1), we prefer to work with our customers in preserving as much of the Island's natural foliage as possible.

## Who is responsible for tree trimming?

CUC employs contractors whose skilled, professional crews trim trees to provide enough clearance between limbs and power lines for safe and reliable service with a minimum of inconvenience to you.

We encourage our contractors to use a natural trimming method whenever possible, which is proven to be the best method for the long-term health of the trees. Also, our tree trimming experts make every attempt to trim sufficient clearance so that the tree can be maintained by the customer. They are trained in proper pruning techniques and do their best to redirect growth away from the power lines.

Never attempt to prune or trim trees that grow within 10 feet of power lines. Only qualified personnel approved by CUC should trim trees or branches within 10 feet of power lines. Contact with a high voltage power line can result in serious injury or even death.



#### Kids and trees

Children do not always know or remember what can be dangerous, so it is up to the rest of us to watch out for their safety. Children should never climb trees growing near power lines.

In Cayman, it is a tradition for children to climb mango, guinep, plum, coconut, nazeberry and other fruit trees so please be aware of these types of trees growing near power lines and explain to your children about the dangers involved.

### Who do I contact if I need trees trimmed?

It is inadvisable for customers to attempt to prune of cut trees that are close to power lines. For safety reasons, trimming trees around power lines should only be attempted by trained professionals.

If branches are within 10 feet of our power lines, please contact CUC via e-mail at *service@cuc.ky*. If branches are over 10 feet away from our power lines, contact your gardener/landscaper.

#### What will CUC do if trees need to be trimmed?

Once contacted, CUC will inspect the trees that require trimming to ensure that they are within 10 feet of our power lines and issue a letter of agreement stating that CUC will arrange to have the trees trimmed, cut or removed without cost.

The letter will further state that once CUC arranges for the trees to be trimmed the first time, the property owner is responsible for maintaining the necessary clearance between the trees on the property and the power lines to avoid further encroachments to this space. Failure to maintain the minimum required distance between the trees and the power lines shall result in the provision of a notice in accordance with The Electricity Law (2008) and the imposition of a fee for necessary tree trimming or removal.

## What steps can I take before planting trees?

It is important to take time to plan before you plant. If you are planting a new tree, consider how large it will grow and what it will look like in 10 or 20 years. Also, always look up and make sure you place the tree well away from overhead power lines. Contact the local nurseries and get advice on types of



trees and the right locations for planting trees to reduce the need for future tree trimming around power lines.

In addition, if you notice that a tree on your property has the potential to be a safety hazard in the near future, arrange for the tree to be removed before it gets too large.