

Letter to Rural Municipalities and town councils

August 30, 2017

I am writing to inform you about Manitoba Hydro's policies regarding managing vegetation that interfere with overhead powerlines.

The management of vegetation near and around power lines is essential for the safe and reliable supply of energy. Tall growing trees and shrubs can interfere with overhead conductors causing power outages and safety hazards to property owners and the public.

Trees and vegetation on private or municipal property (in ditches or adjacent to municipal roadways) will be trimmed should they pose a potential threat to public safety or meet the following conditions:

- If the tree or branches are smoking, sparking or burning on a hydro line
- The tree is an immediate hazard to the line (split, leaning, hanging over, uprooted)
- The tree is leaning on a Manitoba Hydro pole
- The tree is causing a power outage

Trees that are found in the above conditions during outage or emergency response by Manitoba Hydro will be trimmed back to alleviate the hazard or safety concern, creating adequate clearance. Vegetation debris that results from Manitoba Hydro's outage and emergency response activities is left on the rights-of-way to naturally decompose and return nutrients to the soil and reduce the possibility of soil erosion. The municipal authority, customer or property owner may, at their own expense, remove or clean up debris that has been left by Manitoba Hydro in these circumstances.

The exception to this policy is trees and vegetation that have been cut along municipal roadways and ditches as a component of Manitoba Hydro's integrated vegetation management program. Debris from this operation will be chipped or removed.

If the municipal authority, contractor, customer or property owner desires to remove large trees adjacent to power lines, Manitoba Hydro will temporarily disconnect or remove the overhead distribution lines or service conductors at no cost.

If you require further information, please contact your nearest Manitoba Hydro Customer Service Centre at 1-888-624-9376 or visit us online at https://www.hydro.mb.ca/environment/right_tree_right_place.shtml.

Q & A

Q: Is this a new policy being implemented by Manitoba Hydro?

A: The communication is not a new policy, but a clarification of existing policies and practices followed by Manitoba Hydro. The policy clarification applies to vegetation that is trimmed or cut to alleviate a safety concern or restore electric service.

Q: Who is affected by this policy?

A: The policy affects private property owners and municipal, town and city governments (not on a Manitoba Hydro owned right-of-way) where vegetation is trimmed to either restore electric service or alleviate a safety concern. Vegetation will be trimmed and left to naturally decompose. This policy clarification does not apply to vegetation cut or trimmed as part of Manitoba Hydro's regular vegetation maintenance program for right-of-ways. During programmed maintenance, Manitoba Hydro will typically mulch and/or chip vegetation debris, leaving it on site.

Q: Will Manitoba Hydro continue to maintain right-of-ways under distribution lines?

A: Yes, Manitoba Hydro will continue to maintain the right-of-ways under distribution lines with the frequency based upon the vegetation growth. As part of this maintenance program, cut and trimmed vegetation will typically be mulched and/or chipped and left on site. .

Q: Will Manitoba Hydro notify property owners and municipal governments when trimming has occurred?

A: Manitoba Hydro will attempt to notify customers where practical. During major events where widespread outages are caused by falling trees, this may not be possible or practical.