

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Trees coming into contact with power lines are one of the leading causes of power outages—not to mention a safety hazard. NIPSCO performs regular vegetation management around its electric system to help protect the public, improve service reliability, and maintain safe access for line maintenance.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT METHODS

NIPSCO practices Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM), which is the standard the industry has established for long-term maintenance of transmission corridors. IVM uses mechanical, environmental and chemical approaches to manage vegetation.

SCHEDULED VEGETATIVE MAINTENANCE

For all planned maintenance, property owners are notified of any work to be done on or near their property, and given contact information to call with questions.

The typical schedule for managing vegetation is as follows:

- Initial clearing for construction of the line
- Year 2—follow up spot treatment with herbicide to eliminate re-sprouting of cut vegetation
- Year 6—Establish 6-year planned maintenance cycle:
 - Year 1—Trimming of trees on “side walls” of the corridor and mowing
 - Year 3—Treatment of brush and re-sprouts; mowing as needed
 - Year 6—Repeat of year 1 work

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Regular maintenance of vegetation is the most environmentally responsible means of management. Properly managed corridors lead to increased wildlife by establishing migratory paths and nesting/foraging habitat. Well maintained corridors serve as a sanctuary for the establishment of native plant species, and assist in reducing the spread of invasive species.

HERBICIDE USE

NIPSCO uses herbicides only in select areas to control small trees, brush, and unwanted vegetation inside the transmission line corridor. All herbicides are applied by trained and licensed personnel. The herbicides used are “General Use” meaning they are not restricted and the formulas can be found in many garden centers.

ADDITIONAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Farming/Crop—Many NIPSCO corridors are used for farm crop production and little, if any, vegetation maintenance work is needed. Whenever possible, NIPSCO makes all reasonable accommodations with property owners to limit the impact on field crops if work is needed.

Pasture—Pasture land typically requires little, if any, additional management by NIPSCO crews.

Recreational—NIPSCO corridors have been used as recreational areas with trails and open spaces for communities in the service territory.

DEBRIS FROM MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

In most cases, the debris from trimming is mowed with equipment into small chips and left in the corridor. However, arrangements can be made to leave logs and firewood on site for the property owner to use as they wish.

Arrangements can be made to leave logs and firewood on site for the property owner to use as they wish.