



At Your Service

PROVIDING
ELECTRIC, GAS, WATER AND
SANITARY SEWER SERVICES

September 2018

Tree Trimming, Reliability of Service & Safety

The urban forest of Hastings is important to the well-being of the community. Trees have an enormous dollar value benefit for everyone living in Hastings by controlling erosion and storm water, lowering air conditioning costs, and providing wildlife shelter. However, trees that interfere with power lines can cause power outages that interrupt service. That creates potential danger for customers and their property. But that danger can be avoided by not planting tall-growing trees under or near electric wires and by routine tree trimming. The following are answers to the most commonly asked questions concerning Hastings Utilities' tree trimming policy:

Will Hastings Utilities Trim or Remove Trees?

Trees that interfere with or have the potential for interfering with existing utility lines or trees that obstruct the route of new lines will be trimmed or removed. There are however, two exceptions:

1. Trees that interfere with service wires (wires from utility poles to the customer's house or building) will not be trimmed or removed by HU or any of its contractors under normal circumstances. Arrangements can be made to have these wires temporarily removed to permit the property owner or the property owner's contractor to trim or remove the tree. If you want electric service wires temporarily disconnected to trim or remove a tree, contact Hastings Utilities several days in advance to ensure the availability of a utility crew at the desired time. This service is available at no charge during normal working hours, but may be delayed due to emergency work. If the work must be done after normal working hours, weekends, or holidays, a service charge will be required.

2. Hastings Utilities will not trim trees near streetlight or yard lights to improve illumination. If Hastings Utilities requires that a tree be trimmed or removed, all branches and wood cut from the tree will be removed from the property by Hastings Utilities. The property owner may keep any portion of the wood desired. However, Hastings Utilities will not cut wood to uniform length nor stack the wood. Trees to be removed will be cut as close to ground level as possible. Hastings Utilities will remove stumps if they are accessible.

Fallen trees or limbs that have fallen from standing trees are the responsibility of the property owner. The property owner is also responsible for the disposal of all limbs and wood resulting from the trimming of storm-damaged trees for Hastings Utilities service restoration effort.

Is Permission of the Property Owner Necessary Before Doing Tree Work?

Provisions of right-of-way easements grant Hastings Utilities the authority to trim trees without property-owner permission to provide for a safe and reliable electric system. However, Hastings Utilities respects the property of its customer-owners and will notify the property owner of the need for tree work before the trimming is done. In unusual or emergency situations, it may be necessary to trim trees without first notifying the property owner in order to restore service or eliminate safety hazards.

Hastings Utilities recommends the removal of trees that will require extensive trimming on a regular basis. However, trees will not be removed without the property owner's permission.

What Factors Influence the Care of and Removal of the Terrace Trees?

The trimming and pruning of trees located on the public terrace is the responsibility of the property owner. All fallen limbs from terrace trees are the responsibility of the property owner as well.

The Hastings Parks and Recreation Department will remove any terrace trees that are diseased or that are 75% dead or more. If your terrace tree meets these requirements you may call the Hastings Parks & Recreation Department at 461-2324.

Property owners may not remove, or cause removal of, any living terrace tree without the permission of the Hastings Parks & Recreation Department.

For every tree within the city limits that has to be removed by Hastings Utilities including those that interfere with overhead and/or underground utilities, HU will replace the tree as long as it is re-planted by the property owner in an area approved by HU. If the property owner declines, HU will offer a replacement tree to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Hastings Utilities is a municipally-owned, not-for-profit utility system that has served the community of Hastings since 1886.

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