

Powering Bass Strait islands

Safe growing near power lines

Trees near distribution power lines

Trees and shrubs are an important part of our environment. But if they come in contact with a power line they can bring the line down and disrupt your power or worse, cause a fire.

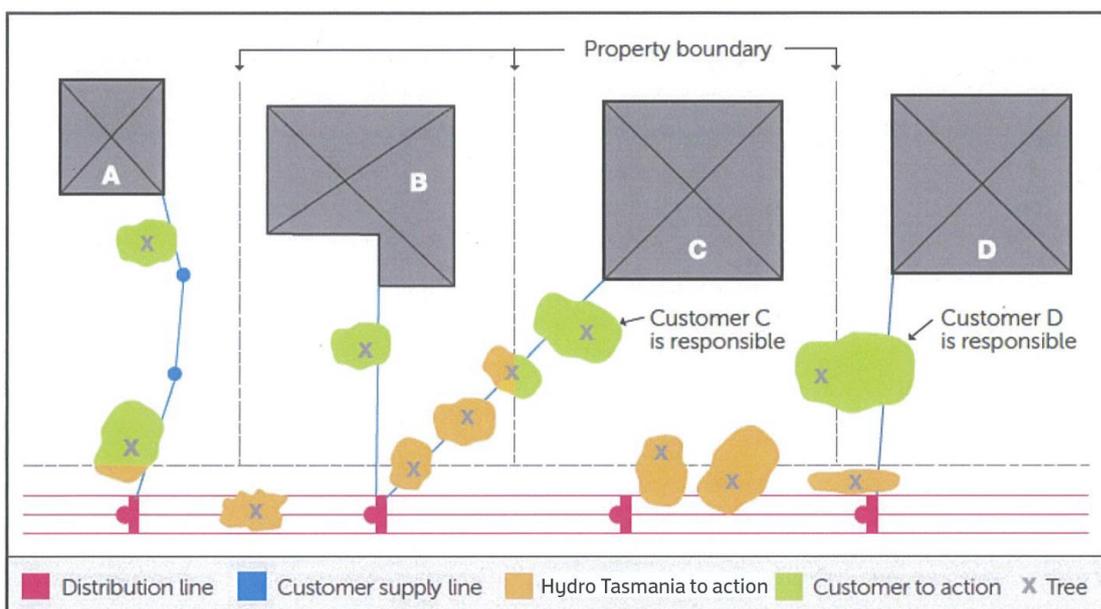
To ensure your safety, your neighbour's safety and the safety of the community, it's vital that you ensure there's a safe distance between distribution power lines and any foliage, trees or shrubs that grow on your property. In fact it's not just your responsibility, it's the law.

Keeping your trees and shrubs clear of distribution power lines will:

- Prevent power supply interruptions
- Protect your home, your neighbours' home and the community from the threat of fire
- Save you the cost of having foliage removed by a professional

Who's responsible?

There are some situations where Hydro Tasmania undertakes vegetation management on private property. The diagram below illustrates some examples of where Hydro Tasmania is responsible for keeping the lines clear.



Customer A is responsible for clearing vegetation inside their property boundary and underneath the Hydro Tasmania owned distribution power line that takes the electricity supply from the pole in the street to their property.

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Customer B is responsible for clearing vegetation inside their property boundary and underneath the Hydro Tasmania distribution power line that directly supplies power to their house. However, Hydro Tasmania is responsible for clearing the vegetation growing inside customer B's property boundary underneath the Hydro Tasmania owned distribution power line which supplies electricity to an adjoining property.

Customer C is responsible for clearing vegetation inside their property boundary and underneath Hydro Tasmania's distribution power line that takes the electricity supply from the pole in the street to their house.

Customer D is responsible for clearing vegetation inside their property boundary and underneath the Hydro Tasmania owned distribution power line that takes the electricity supply from the pole in the street to their house.

Remember – as well as any foliage needing to be at least 3m away from distribution power lines, you need to stay at least 3m away from distribution power lines. You should contact an authorised vegetation contractor to remove any foliage growing too close to power lines.

Safe distance to our distribution system?

You must ensure that trees are at least 3m away from uninsulated (bare) distribution power lines at all times. However if the distribution line is insulated, the safe clearance is 1m. Hydro Tasmania or an accredited vegetation contractor can advise you which type of power line you have.

Power lines and trees may swing in high winds, while high temperatures may cause power lines to sag. Make sure these factors are accounted for when calculating the 3m clearance areas.

Shrubs and plants that grow to a maximum of 3.5m may be planted in the 6 metre easement provided they don't inhibit access to the infrastructure. The height of shrubs and trees can then gradually increase. It's advisable to plant trees that exceed 8m in height at least 12m from the infrastructure to eliminate the risk of vegetation overhanging the power lines.

Generally speaking, we have an easement over land on which our distribution infrastructure is situated. These easements, together with associated legislation, give us the right to access your property and to clear vegetation either side of our infrastructure. It's the best way to reduce the risk of bushfire, ensuring your safety and your neighbour's safety.

Hydro Tasmania distribution easements extend 6m either side of the infrastructure but it can be wider in some circumstances.

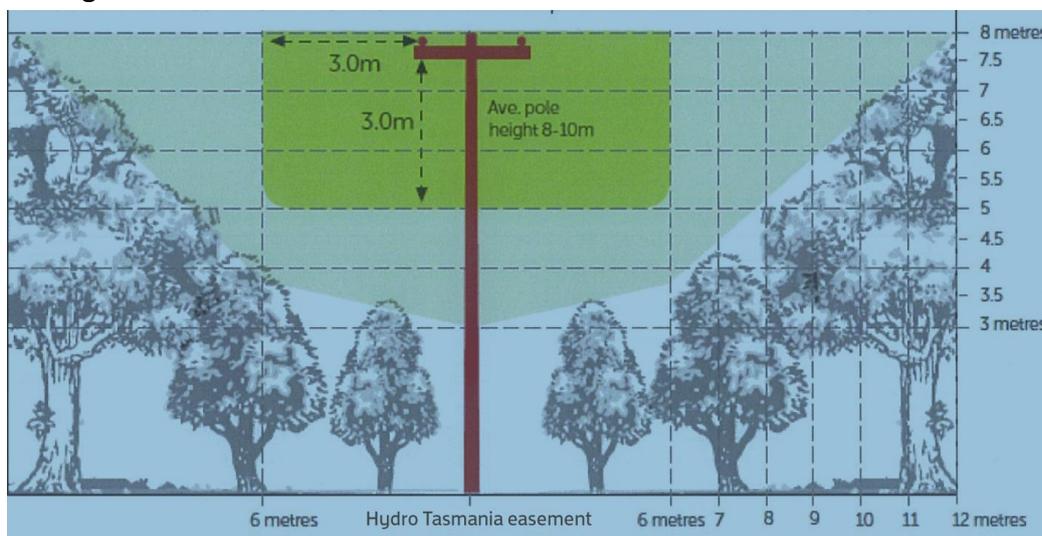
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Hydro Tasmania takes into account the clearance space needed to protect everyone from fire risks and to ensure the continuity and reliability of your electricity supply. That's why in some cases, for example where there are long spans of wires or very tall trees, we may be required to clear vegetation outside this easement.

-  Clearance zone (no trees or branches in this area).
Tree trimming in this area only by specialist vegetation contractors.
-  Hydro Tasmania may be concerned when trees are growing in this area.
Tree trimming in this area may require specialist vegetation contractors – seek advice if in doubt.

You must not allow any part of your body, equipment or the tree being cut to come within three meters of any powerline.

NOTE: Diagram not to scale



How to ensure your trees are safely away from distribution power lines.

- Safe power line alternatives
If the distribution power line to your house or your privately owned power line is uninsulated (bare), you can arrange to have it insulated. Your trees can then legally be within 1m of your line. You could also consider replacing the overhead distribution line with an underground cable. Check with your licensed electrical contractor to discuss these options. Any changes made to the power line will be at your cost.

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- Replace trees or shrubs with suitable alternatives

To avoid continual pruning, consider replacing unsuitable trees with a more appropriate species. Always check with your local nursery before selecting a tree to ensure that it will not exceed 3m in height when mature.

- Do it yourself – **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

In certain circumstances, you may trim your trees near distribution power lines yourself but there are four very important restrictions.

You may not trim trees if:

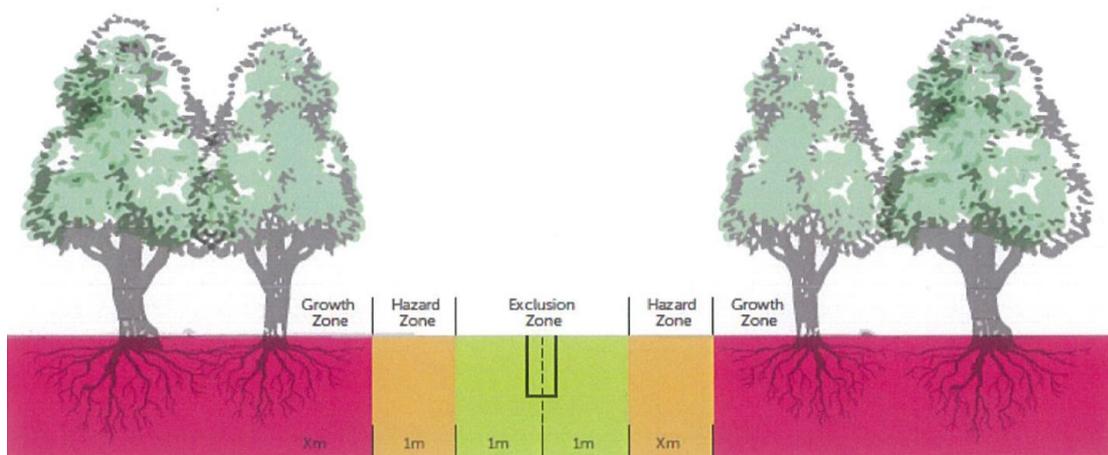
- The tree to be maintained is closer than 3m to a distribution power line.
- Any part of your body or equipment comes within 3m of a distribution power line.
- The tree is above the power line, regardless of the distance between the tree and the power line.
- The tree is in a transmission line easement.

Underground power

A plant's root system can interfere with underground power cables.

If your area has an underground power supply, remember that low voltage cables are approximately 500mm below the surface and high voltage cables are buried approximately 900mm. If you're in doubt about where cables are laid, contact Dial Before You Dig on 1100.

For information on plants that won't interfere with underground cables, talk to your local plant nursery.



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1. Exclusion zone

No machine excavation to be undertaken in this zone.

No tree plantation is allowed.

2. Hazard zone

Observed machine excavation only in this zone.

Small trees with a maximum height of 2m are allowed.

3. Growth zone

Seek advice from your local plant nursery before selecting a suitable tree. Remember – the roots of a fully grown tree must not enter within the 1m exclusion zone.

What about transmission lines?

Customers can plant gardens near transmission lines provided that the trees, shrubs and plants don't grow taller than 3m in height.

Trees that grow too close to high voltage transmission lines can cause major electricity interruptions or even start a bushfire.

Hydro Tasmania conducts both aerial and ground patrols of their assets on a regular basis and has the responsibility of clearing any vegetation near transmission lines. This is done in conjunction with landowners. Under no circumstances should customers ever attempt to remove any vegetation within a transmission easement – which can be up to 60m.

If you are unsure about the type of power line you have on your property or if you would like more information regarding transmission lines and easements please call 1300 360 441.