

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Policy No.: **M-31**

Subject: **Rights-of-Way Maintenance Program**

Background: Trees and other vegetation growing in the rights-of-way cause numerous problems in the operation and maintenance of the electric system. They impede the progress of field personnel in the course of performing operational and maintenance work to the system and during the restoration of power. Tree and vegetation growth making line contact causes line loss and affects the integrity of the electric system by causing power interruptions, outages, and other power quality problems. Situations such as negative public reaction from the membership experiencing power quality problems, threat of power line caused fires, and safety hazards also develop.

Objective: To augment various other Cooperative programs in helping to meet the needs of the membership by providing safe, dependable and quality electric service by having in place an active rights-of-way maintenance program that will provide for a maintained right-of-way corridor necessary to maximize the operating performance of the electric distribution system at a reasonable cost with a minimum negative impact to the environment.

Policy: All maintenance work performed shall be completed in a manner designed to achieve the objectives of this policy. To that end management shall maintain, regularly review, and modify as needed the Rights-of-Way Clearing GUIDELINES, METHODS AND PROCEDURES handbook and the Herbicide GUIDELINES, METHODS AND PROCEDURES handbook, which are designed to serve as reference tools for the operations department, subcontractors, and the members for guiding best practices to achieve the following essential elements of an active rights-of-way maintenance program:

1. The preservation and protection of the environment.
2. The safe and judicious use of herbicides.
3. The performance of clearing work in a manner that protects the safety of the workers and general public.
4. The communication of planned maintenance activities to the affected members.
5. Maximizing efficiency at a reasonable cost with a minimum negative impact to the environment.
6. Providing members with alternative options as situations may warrant.
7. Establishing right-of-way widths needed to provide for safety, accessibility, efficiency, and reliable, trouble-free power.

Any trees, vegetation, plants, or other growth in the right-of-way corridor is “at risk” for damage or removal by the Cooperative for purposes of performing operational and maintenance work to the electric system and is not compensable.

The rights-of-way maintenance program shall be reported to the Board annually in a Rights-of-Way Summary.