Frequently asked questions

Why does SDG&E® need to prune trees?
All electric utilities in California are required to maintain clearances for electric equipment, including overhead and underground power lines, transmission towers and power poles.

Any vegetation that touches electric equipment can cause problems with safety and reliability. Proper pruning of trees near power lines keeps trees healthy and helps:
- Save lives by removing electric shock hazards.
- Reduce the risk of fire.
- Prevent power outages.

What does SDG&E’s Vegetation Management Program do?
We take care of trees and brush near power lines to help keep the lights on and communities safe. We work with qualified contractors to manage nearly a half million trees every year. Our annual vegetation management cycle includes:
- Inspection of trees.
- Tree pruning and removal.
- Quality assurance audits of work performance and compliance after each activity is completed.

We also conduct community education and outreach every year, such as tree-planting events at schools. The Arbor Day Foundation® has recognized SDG&E as a Tree Line USA® Utility every year since 2002 for best practices in tree care, worker training and public education.

Can I prune my own trees or hire a contractor?
Never try to prune trees near electric equipment yourself – it’s dangerous. If you touch an electric line or an object such as a tool, ladder or tree branch that’s touching an electric line, it can cause a severe shock or death.

Any tree pruning within 10 feet of power lines must be done by a line-clearance-qualified arborist. If you’d like to know more about such requirements regarding vegetation management, visit sdge.com/tree-safety-rules.

What should I do if I see vegetation growing close to a power line or transformer?
Call our Tree Help Desk at 858-654-8608 to request an inspection. If a tree poses a hazard, we’ll prune it on a priority basis, within 24 hours or a few weeks, depending on how severe the hazard is.

Where can I get more information about the Vegetation Management Program?
Call our Tree Help Desk at 858-654-8608, visit our website at sdge.com/treesafety or write to us at the address below.

P.O. Box 129831 | San Diego, CA 92112-9831
1-800-411-7343

Connect with us at sdge.com and on social media:

- Twitter.com/sdge
- Facebook.com/SanDiegoGasandElectric
- YouTube.com/SDGEWebmaster

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Plant the right tree in the right place

Help prevent power outages and fires by planning before you plant.
Start with the following trees that are popular locally and compatible with overhead power lines. Then browse our tree planting guide at sdge.com/treeguide to learn more about trees that interest you. You’ll also find tips on planning and planting.

Know what’s below before you dig.
At least two working days before you break ground, call Underground Service Alert at 811 or submit a location request at digalert.org to have the location of buried utility-owned gas pipelines marked first. With this free service, you can avoid the dangers and expense of damaging underground utilities. Have a qualified professional locate gas lines that belong to you — typically those that run from the meter to your gas appliances. Learn more at sdge.com/your-gas-lines.

Key:
- Height
- Foliage
- Flower
- Fruit
- Water

Western Redbud
*Cercis occidentalis*
- Moderate growth to 20 feet.
- Deciduous. Leaves are round and medium green.
- Brown or purple pod (1.5-3.0 inches).
- Drought tolerant.

Crape Myrtle
*Lagerstroemia indica*
- Slow growth to 10–25 feet.
- Deciduous. Deep glossy green leaves, fall color is yellow. Some trees turn orange or red.
- Colors include white, pink, red and lavender. Blooms July-September.
- Brown capsule (0.25–0.50 inches), fruiting in fall. Dry fruit is litter issue.
- Drought tolerant.

Hong Kong Orchid Tree
*Bauhinia blakeana*
- Moderate growth to 20 feet.
- Pink, purple or rose. 5-6 inches long. Blooms in fall or winter.
- None. Moderately drought tolerant.

Pygmy Date Palm
*Phoenix roebelenii*
- Slow growth to 6–15 feet.
- Evergreen. Leaves are pinnately compound odd, green. Has thorns.
- Inconspicuous white flowers in spring.
- Red or black drupe (0.50-1.50 inches), fruiting in spring or summer.
- Moderately drought tolerant.

Gold Medallion Tree
*Cassia leptophylla*
- Fast growing to 20-25 feet.
- Semi-evergreen, medium green, pinnately compound leaves.
- 16 inch-long seedpods present a litter problem.
- Drought tolerant.

Tree height zones help guide your planting decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tree height range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tall zone</td>
<td>Trees taller than 40 ft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium zone</td>
<td>Trees under 40 ft.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small zone</td>
<td>Trees under 25 ft.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Tree pruning zone
- 50 ft.
- 20 ft.

Root damage zone

Underground utilities