

## **FIRSTENERGY RECEIVES NATIONAL TREE CARE AWARD FOR TENTH YEAR IN A ROW**

Akron, OH – For the tenth consecutive year, FirstEnergy (NYSE: FE), on behalf of its seven electric utility operating companies, has been named a Tree Line USA utility by the National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters. The award recognizes investor-owned and public utility companies – electric, gas and water – that promote the dual goals of dependable utility service and abundant, healthy trees along America’s streets and highways. Award-winning companies demonstrate excellence in tree care, training and public education.

“Because tree contacts typically are one of the biggest causes of customer power outages, our employees and contractors work hard to strike a balance between ensuring safe and reliable electric service while maintaining the natural beauty in the communities we serve,” said FirstEnergy Senior Vice President of Energy Delivery and Customer Service Donald R. Schneider. “Our tree-care program combines the best practices of certified arborists and foresters to keep vegetation away from power lines and other electric equipment, which helps reduce the number and severity of service interruptions our customers experience.”

Tree or tree limb contacts are one of the biggest causes of service interruptions for FirstEnergy’s seven electric utilities – Ohio Edison, The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, Toledo Edison, Pennsylvania Electric, Pennsylvania Power, Metropolitan Edison, and Jersey Central Power & Light.

In addition to enhancing service reliability, these vegetation management programs also are designed to help ensure public safety and the safety of utility line crews, especially during storms and other hazardous conditions.

To help maintain proper clearances – and enhance the health of the trees – qualified tree contractors working on behalf of FirstEnergy typically utilize a technique called directional pruning. Developed by the International Society of Arboriculture, directional pruning removes only those branches that conflict with power lines rather than

topping the entire tree. Because the branches are pruned back to the center of the trunk where the tree would normally shed them, future growth is directed away from the lines.

It also is important to select the right tree for the right location. When planting trees near power lines, experts recommend low-growing varieties that will mature at a height of 10 feet or less. For additional information about FirstEnergy's vegetation management programs, or advice on planting compatible vegetation near power lines, go to [www.firstenergycorp.com](http://www.firstenergycorp.com). Select one of the seven electric utilities, then click on "Safety" and look for the "Maintaining Trees" or "Selecting the Right Tree" links.

FirstEnergy is a diversified energy company headquartered in Akron, Ohio. Its subsidiaries and affiliates are involved in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, as well as energy management and other energy-related services. Its seven electric utility operating companies comprise the nation's fifth largest investor-owned electric system based on serving 4.5 million customers in Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey; and its generation subsidiaries control more than 14,000 megawatts of capacity.

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