

# Tree Trimming Done Right

*KPUD keeps power lines clear for safety and service*

*By Lori K. Froehlich*

You love those beautiful old trees that have been in your yard for generations. Trees are a vital part of any rural or urban setting's quality of life, but when they start growing too close to the power lines and knock out the electricity, they are inconvenient and even dangerous.

Trees and good electric service are important to our community. Unfortunately, the two aren't always compatible.

Klickitat PUD trims trees for safety reasons—required by law—and to prevent service interruptions.

According to the Revised Code of Washington, any time a potential threat exists that could cause damage to electric facilities from trees and vegetation, an electric utility is required to remove the hazard.

KPUD policy is to maintain a minimum of 23 feet of right-of-way clearance from the conductor on transmission lines, and a minimum of 10 feet of clearance on distribution lines.

The extent of trimming required is determined by the tree's growth rate, the movement of trees and conductors in adverse weather, and the voltage of the lines.

To ensure proper tree trimming and removal, KPUD employs a professional tree-trimming crew, which includes a certified arborist, foreman Dale Stelter. Dale helps determine if a tree is diseased, dead or dying.

Depending on the proximity of a



*KPUD's tree trimming crew, from left, Foreman Dale Stelter, Groundman Kirt O'Leary, Apprentice Bobby Koffler and Journeyman Jim Gast.*

## Leave the Trimming To Us

**Call KPUD at (509) 773-5891 or (800) 548-8357 if you have trees or branches growing close to power lines.**

tree to electric facilities, Dale also considers whether complete removal is required.

Trees cause most of the power outages and interruptions that affect KPUD customers.

Tree limbs can fall into power lines and damage wires, cause short circuits and other problems. This creates a dangerous situation for you and your property. This danger can be avoided by not planting tall-growing trees under or near electric wires.

It is essential that tree trimming be done properly to ensure safe and dependable electric service, and to

provide for the welfare of the trees on your property.

Provision of right-of-way easements grants KPUD the authority to trim trees without property-owner permission to provide for a safe and reliable electric system. However, KPUD respects the property of its customer-owners. In most cases, KPUD will notify the property owner of the need for tree work before trimming is done.

In unusual or emergency situations, it could be necessary to trim trees without first notifying the property owner to restore service or eliminate safety hazards.

Cutting branches near an overhead line is dangerous and not for do-it-yourselfers. KPUD crews are trained to work safely around live power lines, and know how to preserve the health and beauty of your trees. ■