



# Tree Line USA Requirement Checklist

## Urban & Community Forestry

Applications due: December 1<sup>st</sup>

Apply online at: <https://applications.arboday.org/community/utility>

### Why your utility should be a Tree Line USA community

The Tree Line USA program promotes the dual goals of safe, reliable electric service, and abundant, healthy trees. The benefits of becoming a Tree Line USA utility include:

- Lower line clearance costs resulting from proper pruning.
- Improved rights-of-way management as a result of “right tree, right place” plantings.
- Increased public exposure by meeting the Tree Line USA requirements, resulting in community tree planting and public education.
- Lower peak energy demand through increased canopy and better placement of trees.
- Increased reliability of service because properly pruned and maintained trees with healthy root systems will mean less decay and structural weaknesses, and fewer downed lines during storms.
- Collaborative urban forest management opportunities between the utility and other groups that impact community trees.
- More trees will help absorb carbon dioxide produced by power plants that burn fossil fuels.

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### Tree Line USA Standards

Utilities who meet the following standards are recognized for their best practices in public and private utility arboriculture, demonstrating how trees and utilities can co-exist for the benefit of communities and citizens.

- Standard 1: Quality Tree Care**
- Standard 2: Annual Worker Training**
- Standard 3: Tree Planting and Education**
- Standard 4: Tree-Based Energy Conservation Program**
- Standard 5: Arbor Day Celebration**



This checklist is designed to assist new and recertifying utilities in North Carolina with completing the application for the Tree Line USA award and ensuring proper evidence is attached.

**All reported activities must have been completed between January 1 and December 31.**



## Standard 1: Quality Tree Care

Industry standards for pruning, planting, removals, trenching, and tunneling near trees are consistently followed. Use this checklist to make sure you have included acceptable evidence with your application.

- A. Utility Pruning: Formal adoption of work practices consistent with current ANSI A300 Part 1
- Copy of company policy and procedure
  - Workers who perform line clearance, including contractor workers, have read and understand ISA Utility Pruning Best Management Practices
- B. Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM): Formal adoption of work practices consistent with current ANSI A300 Part 7
- Copy of company policy and procedure
  - Workers who plan IVM work have read and understand the ISA IVM Best Management Practices
- C. Underground Utility Construction: Work practices are recommended by utility. Suggested resources include
- "Trees and Development" by Nelda Matheny and James R. Clark
  - "Trenching and Tunneling Near Trees: A Field Pocket Guide for Qualified Workers" by Dr. James R. Fazio
  - ISA's trenching and tunneling training video
- D. Compliance: Work practices comply with Federal, state, and local tree care statutes, regulations and ordinances
- Name of compliance manager or equivalent
- E. Quality Assurance: Relating to items A & B above
- Summary of quality assurance program
  - List name and title of manager or equivalent
- F. Impact on the Urban Forest: Show positive impact through collaboration
- Copies of letters of collaboration from municipalities and/or
  - Samples of print material highlighting positive impact and/or
  - Copies of letters of collaboration from non-profit tree planting groups

## Standard 2: Annual Worker Training

- A. Complete annual formal training: Focus of training is comprehension of and compliance with Utility Pruning and IVM practices (Requirement 1A and 1B), as well as safe work practices per current ANSI Z133.1.
- Training Summary
  - Include dates and topics
- B. Ensure training takes place and maintain documentation:
- Name of utility designee responsible for documentation
  - Name and title of person responsible for field compliance

## Standard 3: Community Tree Planting and Public Education

Allocate an annual expenditure of at least 10 cents per customer for use in community tree planting programs throughout the service area:

- Summary of tree planting events/program with sample material and/or photos
- Expenditures included on expenditure worksheet (see below)

Examples of Community Tree Planting programs

- A utility tree planting program in utility right-of-way or on public property
- A commercial building shade tree program promoting energy savings through strategically planted shade trees around businesses
- Establishment of a “Right Tree-Right Place” demonstration garden or park
- Documented tree planting programs for the purpose of offsetting the utility’s carbon footprint, enhancing storm water management or improving air and water quality

Make annual contact with all homeowners and customers for the purpose of providing educational information regarding tree related utility issues:

- Samples of print material
- Summary of educational events/trainings/programs with dates
- Expenditures included on expenditure worksheet (see below)

Examples of Public Education communications

- Information regarding identification of tree-related hazards
- Tips on how to prune trees safely
- Information on Right Tree-Right Place and appropriate site selection
- Education regarding trees, power lines, and the danger of wildfire
- Information on the vegetation management program available through the utility’s Web site
- School-based tree/utility safety programs and presentations
- Active support/recruitment of Tree City USA communities in the utility’s service area

Note - Community Tree Planting expenditures and Public Education expenditures can be combined with Energy Conservation Program expenditures (Requirement 4) to meet the 10 cents/customer threshold.

<b>Tree Line USA Expenditure Worksheet</b>		
Community Tree Planting Expenditures (Requirement 3A)		
Public Education Expenditures (Requirement 3B)	+	
Tree-based Energy Conservation Program Expenditures (Requirement 4)	+	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>=</b>	
<b>Total number of utility customers</b>	<b>÷</b>	
<b>Expenditures per customer (must be ≥ \$0.10)</b>	<b>=</b>	

## Standard 4: Tree-Based Energy Conservation Program

A tree-based energy conservation program that makes special consideration of the benefits of trees in energy conservation:

- Summary of tree-based energy conservation program
- Expenditures included on expenditure worksheet (see page 3)

Examples of a tree-based energy conservation program

- Providing energy-efficient landscape information directly to customers
- Partnership with local retailers to promote the benefits of properly sited trees planted around customers' homes
- A tree planting program on private property for energy conservation purposes
- Provide web-based information on the benefits of trees in energy conservation or specific details on your utility's energy conservation program.
- Participate in Arbor Day Foundation's Energy-Saving Trees program — <https://www.arborday.org/programs/energy-saving-trees/>

## • Standard 5: Arbor Day Celebration

An Arbor Day event is sponsored by or participated in by the utility: Work with municipalities, schools, or community tree-planting groups in your service area to promote Arbor Day events.

- Summary of Arbor Day observance with documentation

## Other Items

- Application fee (made out to Arbor Day Foundation)
  - First year fee \$150 or
  - Recertification fee \$75



**For assistance in meeting the Tree Line USA standards, contact your County Ranger:**

[https://www.ncforestservice.gov/contacts/contacts\\_main.htm](https://www.ncforestservice.gov/contacts/contacts_main.htm)

**For assistance with the application process, contact:**

Urban Forestry Program Assistant  
Mandy Tallman Marty  
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919-857-4823

Urban Forestry Specialist  
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[https://www.ncforestservice.gov/Urban/tcusa\\_programs.htm](https://www.ncforestservice.gov/Urban/tcusa_programs.htm)