

# Utility Arborist Newsline

SEPT/OCT 2019

VOLUME 10

NUMBER 5

## INSIDE

President's Message .....4  
 Exec. Director Comments .....6  
 Industry News .....8  
 Safety Tailgate .....11  
 Spotlight: Environment .....12  
 Beyond Reliability: IVM .....14  
 General Forman's Corner.....19  
 Finance Committee Update...20  
 Regional Reports .....46

### FOCUS ON COMMUNICATIONS

The Need for Good  
 Communication.....1  
 Win-Win Customer Service  
 Relations .....22  
 Caring for Employees and  
 Customers .....26  
 Using Surveys for Better  
 Customer Satisfaction....30  
 Role of PR Firm in VM  
 Communications.....33  
 Help the Different Generations  
 of Your Business Learn ...34  
 Opinion Editorials:  
 Anybody Still Out There? .....40  
 Building Company Culture  
 with HR & Marketing .....42  
 REC Update 2019 .....44

PHOTO: PREMAPURNA AT PIXABAY



## The Need for Good Communication

By Todd Walker, Lead Consulting Utility Forester, CNUC

Homeowner communication can be a hot topic, and in this digital age full of texts, e-mails, calls, and social media posts, it's very important to improve our communication skills. Information and misinformation have saturated the internet and our industry hasn't been spared. As experts in the utility arborist field, we should be the front line, dispelling myths and spreading good information regarding the need, importance, and reality of the utility vegetation management (UVM) industry.

Whether we are in the field speaking to a homeowner about a palm tree that has outgrown its place under the powerlines, at a daily job briefing discussing a large removal, or in a board meeting with utility stakeholders that expect a production status update, we all need to communicate well in order to work safely and operate effectively.

### Principles of Good Communication

#### ■ Be Informed and Knowledgeable

Staying aware of changes in the UVM industry will allow you to be an effective communicator. We cannot answer questions and communicate well if we do not know about what we are talking. I have often found myself so busy in the day-in and day-out of my work that I forget to

### FOCUS ON COMMUNICATIONS

schedule time to advance my education. Homeowners require attention, vehicles have to be repaired, e-mails need to be answered, and dead-

lines need to be met. However, it is so important to take the time to learn and grow where we are planted.

Advancing education does not have to be terribly complicated or time consuming. You can read an article from an issue of the *Utility Arborist Newsline*, watch a video, or listen to an audio book chapter. The ISA is also a wonderful online resource and earning one of their certifications is a great way to advance our knowledge of utility arboriculture in a way that is guided, focused, and sensible.

With industry knowledge, you will be better equipped to preemptively answer homeowner questions and concerns, give top-notch presentations, and interact clearly with utility representatives and other stakeholders.

#### ■ Listen Well and Pay Attention

Homeowners and customers want to know that you are truly listening to them—not just waiting for your turn to speak. Learn to listen intently, and give the person you're talking to the opportunity to express their concerns so you can better answer their objections. *(Continued on pg. 3)*

# SAFETY IN NUMBERS



**SAFETY IS MORE THAN JUST A NUMBER. BUT IF WE STRIVE FOR ONE, IT'S 0.**

Programs like Davey Performance Excellence and The Road to Zero focus on holistic training, team goal setting and encouraging our industry professionals to proactively identify and correct unsafe behaviors and conditions towards achieving annual injury-free workplace goals.

[daveyutilitysolutions.com/safety](http://daveyutilitysolutions.com/safety)



ASSET  
MANAGEMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONSULTING



LINE  
CLEARANCE



STORM  
RESPONSE



VEGETATION  
MANAGEMENT



TELECOM  
CONSTRUCTION

## Need for Good Communication

(Continued from page 1)

I remember one homeowner I was interacting with began to get aggressive when I said that her palm tree was in a tough location and would likely need to be removed. The more we talked, the more intense the conversation became, and at one point, it became glaringly obvious that we needed to change directions. I stopped and said, “Ma’am, I think we’re off on the wrong foot. Can we just start over?” She very kindly agreed, and I listened to her concerns rather than listening to answer. The conversation radically shifted. Although she did not agree to remove the tree, I learned a valuable lesson. It is perfectly okay to back down and admit your discussion needs redirection if you find it quickly going south.

Despite your best intentions, you may encounter people that respond adversely to you. Remember, sometimes there is no way around conflict. Make sure that your body language is non-confrontational and says that you are present in the conversation and read the body language and tone of voice of the person with whom you’re speaking. If you feel there is no saving the conversation, kindly excuse yourself and exit the situation. Report threats or aggressive behavior to your utility company immediately.

*Good communication skills can help you avoid many conflicts and build better, longer-lasting relationships with homeowners, customers, and co-workers. Honing your knowledge and communication skills will also help you operate efficiently and work safely.*

### ■ Be Honest and Realistic

Being honest and realistic are essential parts of effective communication. Are your communications believable and based on truth? I’ve spoken with consulting utility foresters (CUF) in previous jobs that admitted they would mislead homeowners in order to get approval for tree removals. This is not a good practice. As utility arborists, we represent the utilities for which we work. Our job is to present truth and facts so we can build trust. Should the homeowner uncover dishonesty, it not only destroys our own credibility, it also damages the credibility of the utility.

It is also important to be direct. Do not try to hide the truth or tell the other person what they want to hear if it isn’t true. More times than I can count, I have had to tell homeowners that their palm trees would be too close to the powerlines in just a few years and would need a top cut, which would likely kill it. It would be better in the long run to get a free removal offered by the utility sooner rather than later. Being realistic gives the homeowner the full picture so they can make an informed decision.

The more often you give honest information, the more likely they will trust you. In essence, you are establishing a relationship with them and only have a very short amount of time in which to do it. You do not have to have all the answers immediately. If you do not have a good answer, do not be afraid to let the homeowner know you will need to look into the matter and get back to them.

### ■ Act Like You Are on Camera—You Might Be

Recording technology could be anywhere. Be aware that there may be hidden cameras in various locations. There are even doorbell cameras equipped with microphones that record even the quietest sounds. A good rule is to always assume that someone is watching or listening to your communications, and they could be made public at any time. This includes e-mails that could accidentally be forwarded by another person to unintended recipients or a hot mic you forgot to mute during a video conference. Be professional at all times so you won’t find yourself in an embarrassing situation that requires explaining.

Good communication skills can help you avoid many conflicts and build better, longer-lasting relationships with homeowners, customers, and co-workers. Honing your knowledge and communication skills will also help you operate efficiently and work safely.



©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/NAZAN\_AKPOLAT



# Utility Arborist Association

2018 - 2019 Officers

**Executive Director - Philip Charlton**  
(513) 623-1737 • philipcharlton@gmail.com

**President - Bob Richens**  
ArborMetrics Solutions  
(828) 685-1880 • rrichens@arbormetrics.com

**Past President - Sara Sankowich**  
Unitil  
(603) 379-3833 • sankowich@unitil.com

**President Elect - Eric Brown**  
SMUD  
(916) 732-6766 • eric.brown@smud.org

**Vice President - Paul Hurysz**  
Duke Energy  
(980) 373-9371 • paul.hurysz@duke-energy.com

**Treasurer - Jim Neeser**  
Davey Resource Group  
(651) 202-1088 • jim.neeser@davey.com

**Director - Chuck Anderson**  
ECI  
(919) 744-0050 • canderson@eci-consulting.com

**Director - Brandon Hughson**  
Rainbow Tree Company  
(612) 685-5476 • bhughson@treecaescience.com

**Director - Amy Murray**  
Integrity Tree Services  
(248) 425-6531 • amym@integritytree.com

**Director - Becky Spach**  
First Energy Group  
(330) 384-5533 • spachr@firstenergycorp.com

**Director - Tim Walsh**  
The Davey Tree Expert Company  
(303) 673-9515 • tim.walsh@davey.com

**Director - John Wasmer**  
ACRT Pacific  
(209) 329-6246 • jwasmer@acrtinc.com

**Utility Arborist Association**  
2009 W. Broadway Ave., Suite 400, PMB 315  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
(651) 464-0380  
**Operations Manager -**  
Diona Neeser • dneeser@gotouaa.org  
**Communications & Admin Assistant -**  
Renee Phillips • rphillips@gotouaa.org

## UAA Newslite

**Editorial Chair - Nelsen Money**  
nelsen.money@gmail.com

**Editorial Coordination -**  
Pique Publishing, Inc.  
Nadia Geagea Pupa  
Abbey Espinoza  
www.piquepublishing.com

**Graphic Designer - Deb Eisenmann**  
djdesigner@comcast.net



## President's Message

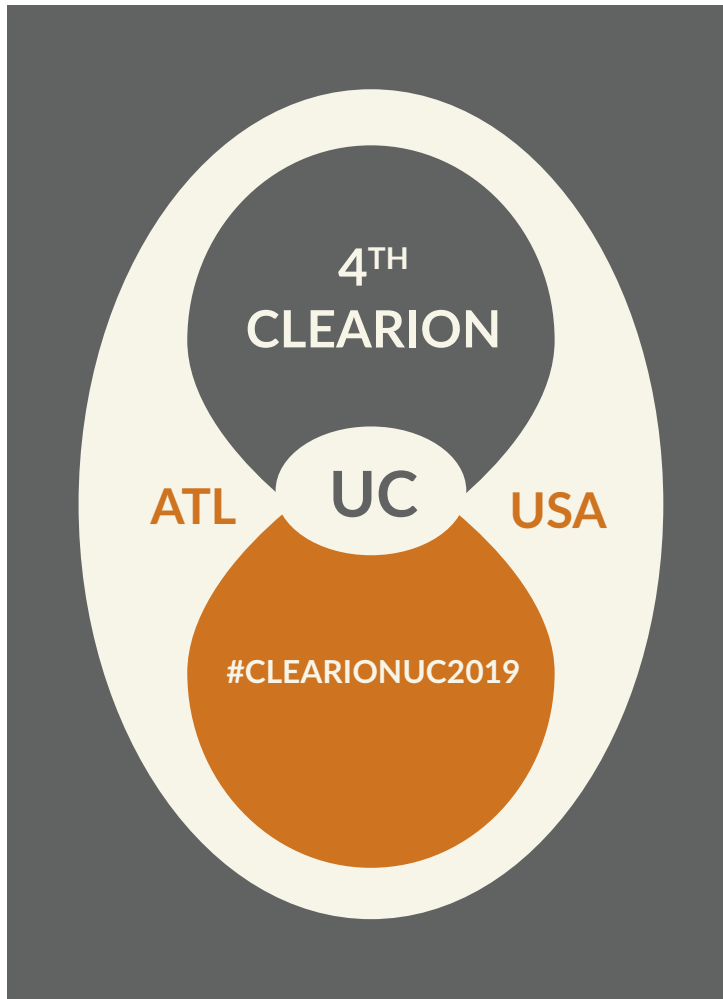
*By Bob Richens*

How many times have you heard the root cause of an issue—a project gone bad, a family feud, or a marital problem, for example—was the lack of good communication? This is all too common, and there are tools, techniques, and training to improve communications. I recently had the pleasure of participating in a community workshop with the purpose of connecting stakeholders in order for them to communicate in a proactive way. The goal was to present information on why utility maintenance regarding tree pruning in their community was needed, and why the local utility and their contractor used the methods they did.

Communication is always about listening and understanding other points of view. One thing we often forget is that most members of the public are unaware of the difference between household current and the primary distribution line passing their house. They have little appreciation of the potential represented by 12,000 kilovolts (kV). Likewise, utility personnel must also appreciate the value of green infrastructure, the benefits provided by trees to the communities where we live, and the role of the utility in maintaining and conserving this valuable resource.

Participating in the workshop were citizens of the community, local tree preservation organizations, city staff, the state urban forestry group, and the local utility staff. The information communicated helped everyone understand: (1) the need for routine utility maintenance pruning, (2) that there are reasons why burying lines underground is not always a viable option, (3) the fact that the utility follows industry tree-care standards and best practices, and (4) what can happen when trees come into contact with energized conductors. There were plenty of excellent questions and lively audience participation. It was a forum that improved understanding in this particular community which places a high value on trees and the impact they have on the quality of life.

A healthy, well-maintained urban forest benefits all stakeholders. By reaching out and participating in this kind of event, utility arborists have an opportunity to improve communications, promote common ground, and build more support for their vegetation management (VM) programs. Think about holding one in your community!



**2019**  
**USER CONFERENCE**  
October 7th – 10th  
Atlanta, GA  
**REGISTER TODAY**  
[clearion.com](http://clearion.com)



**Join us in Atlanta for education,  
networking, and peer presentations.**



# Executive Director Comments

By Phil Charlton



The critical first step in communications is deciding what to communicate. I appreciate the fact that the Editorial committee gives the various committees the opportunity to occasionally report on progress. You will find Lynn Grayson's update from the Finance Committee in this edition of the *Newsline*.

The Finance Committee is one of the many groups working on various projects. At any given time, there are about 14 committees at work, a couple of Task Force groups, and participation in various industry groups (e.g., A300, Z133, right-of-way (ROW) Stewardship, ISA Council of Representatives). The Finance Committee has done a great job fulfilling its responsibilities as part of the UAA's Strategic Plan—100 percent—but they are not alone. During last month's board meeting, I reported that expectations have been met or exceeded for 67 of the 70 targets (tasks) identified in the strategic plan for 2019. All the committees have excelled. Great job and thanks to all that are participating!

Here are a few updates for you.

What seems like just the other day—July 24—the UAA held its most recent Safety Summit in Missoula, Montana. This was the third safety summit this year.

Just around the corner is the Trees & Utilities (T&U) Conference (September 10-12). There are already more than 400 participants, twice the number registered at this point in time last year. The ROW as Habitat Working Group is providing some unique opportunities this year and will be bringing managers from other industries and governmental organizations. Please don't forget that there will also be a pre-conference workshop called "Women in Utility Arboriculture." There will be lessons to learn by women and men, so I hope everyone considers attending.

If Cincinnati in September is not a possibility, remember the other opportunities coming this fall. The next Safety Summit will be in Indianapolis in November. Regional meetings are already scheduled in Ohio, New York and California, with others coming soon. Check out the events page on our UAA website for details.

By the time the T&U conference arrives, you should see publication of the Utility Tree Risk Assessment best management practices (BMP) and the UAA's new video focusing on environmental stewardship. It will be jointly published by the UAA and ISA.

Later this year, there is a big change coming to the Utility Vegetation Management (UVM) Professional Training and Certificate Program. This program is the result of a partnership between the UVMA (western Canada) and the UAA. It is a six-course, college-level program and the second class will be completing the program this fall. The exciting news is that the UAA and UVMA have taken it to the next level.

Beginning this fall, the courses will be offered by the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point (UWSP). The UWSP will offer a certificate of completion for each course completed. When all courses are completed, the UAA will award a UVM Professional credential. Those entering the industry with a desire to be better prepared and wanting to distinguish themselves from their peers should look closely at the program. It can boost your career, whether you have traveled along the traditional four-year college path or you are one that has gained experience and demonstrated leadership in the field. Foremen, general foremen, supervisors, and all other field personnel should soon find the professional credential, combined with their hands-on experience, makes them an attractive candidate for managerial positions without the traditional Bachelor in Science degree. The better-trained and more diverse our UVM professionals are, the better our industry will be. The program is counting on contractors, consultants, manufacturers, utilities, and every other UVM organization supporting emerging leaders in their organization by encouraging them to enroll and by recognizing those that have distinguished themselves when it comes time for promotion.

These are just some of the events happening this fall. Keep up to date on everything going on by connecting through social media, taking a minute to read the UAA's monthly update, and of course, reading the *Newsline* cover to cover.

BY 9883074 - PIXABAY



# Bilingual Training Hands-on Practice Peer Coaching

You can count on Lewis Tree Service to train the very best. Across all levels of our organization, Lewis offers ongoing training, coaching and mentoring to ensure that our team members consistently meet your needs safely and proficiently:

- Industry-certified Safety Specialists
- New employee technical training and testing
- Driver safety training and testing
- Technical Knowledge Skill Certification (TKSC) testing
- Annual leadership summit



To learn more please visit: [www.lewistree.com](http://www.lewistree.com)

Proud winner of a 2016 ETHIE award from the Rochester Area Business Ethics Foundation.



## Industry News



### CNUC Awarded \$50,000 UARF Grant



Philip Chen

CNUC's Manager of Research and Development Philip Chen has received a \$50,000 Utility Arborist Research Fund (UARF) grant from the Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund (TREE Fund). These funds will support the "Cost of Deferred Maintenance" project describing the relationship between the time since a length of distribution line was last worked and the cost and effort required to regain specification clearances.

The grant will allow Chen to build on Browning and Wiant's 1997 study of the long-term costs of falling behind on maintenance cycles. Their research involved three utilities in the U.S. and determined that

the time and cost of providing clearance from powerlines escalates as trees grow toward and beyond the conductors.

"I was in my previous role as the UAA Executive Director in 1998 when I saw the positive impact on line clearance budgets from the study," said Derek Vannice, president of CNUC. "This study will build on the previous work with a more rigorous

analysis and data collected from many utilities. Our hope is that the results will statistically validate the importance of consistently funding a vegetation management (VM) program."

The award, part of the highly competitive TREE Fund grant and scholarship program, is one of 11 issued this spring, totaling \$234,000. The TREE Fund has awarded more than \$4.2 million in grants and scholarships since 2002 to empower tree care professionals, their customers, and the communities in which they work and live.

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

### Better Communication for Better VM

Negotiation skills. Conflict resolution abilities. Empathy. Tact. While they are not the first things that come to mind when you think about VM, these attributes are the secret sauce of the discipline. Effective VM starts and ends with good communication—and that's not limited to supporting and bolstering project management. It includes the combined art and science of speaking one-on-one with a landowner, and its importance can't be overstated.

At **ARBORMETRICS**, we're knocking on doors every day, working toward a singular goal: clearly convey the work prescription to the landowner. That goal also applies to tree crews. And, safe execution is the primary driver every time. To realize our goal, we need to ensure effective communication. That's why our teams work together to "own it" up and down the chain of command, and our field

SILVER  
LEVEL



ARBORMETRICS®  
PEOPLE ARE OUR POWER

personnel receive ongoing training around positive knowledge transfer and customer discourse.

We leverage real-time tools to manage the health of our operations. And, we track and investigate landowner refusals down to the field tech. Armed with this detailed information, we have a timely feedback loop to monitor and build on the progress and success of both our teams and our individual contributors. But while we use technology in pursuit of our goal, it will never replace the human element. Our feet on the street are ready, willing, and able to manage your landowner interactions with respect, trust, and expertise.

At **ARBORMETRICS**, our mission is to improve the effectiveness of VM through safe, efficient planning, scheduling, and reporting services. And, good communication underscores everything we do. Learn more by contacting (866) 685-1880 or [info@arbormetrics.com](mailto:info@arbormetrics.com).





LET'S TALK...

## AT ARBORMETRICS®

We understand that effective communication is fundamental to success when managing the scope, cost, and schedule of your utility vegetation management program.

*Step one is listening... so lets talk!*



ARBORMETRICS®

PEOPLE ARE OUR POWER

[www.ARBORMETRICS.com](http://www.ARBORMETRICS.com) • 1.866.685.1880 toll free

## SAFETY SERVICES



# SAFETY POWERED BY PEOPLE

**People drive the industry.** Without people, there is no industry. The same can be said with safety. Your safety program exists to protect your people, but they can only stay safe by using safety best practices themselves. That's why we offer a suite of Safety Services like safety gap analysis, crew assessments, safety auditing, auditing software, competency training, and expert witness testimony. These services ensure that your program is comprehensive, that your people follow it at all times, and that your organization benefits from a continual reduction in safety-related incidents.

Learn more at [acrt.com/safetyservices](https://acrt.com/safetyservices)



*We empower the best people to help  
sustain our world. 100% employee-owned.  
Independence guaranteed.*



# Safety

## T A I L G A T E

### Safety in Three Words

By Keith Pancake,  
Operations Manager, ACRT, Inc.

It has been said that Ernest Hemingway, when challenged, wrote a story in only six words. "For sale: baby shoes, never worn." When words are limited, they can often carry a heavier meaning. From this inspiration, magazine publisher-turned book author Larry Smith challenged the world to write their story in six words. Borrowing from the idea of the Six Words Memoir, we decided to ask industry leaders to describe what safety means to them. This time, we limited them to three words.

Anne-Marie Moran is the northeast transmission and distribution (T&D) forestry manager for National Grid. Her answer? "Always being prepared." She encourages people to stop rushing and take time to assess, prepare, and implement the task at hand. People should start speaking up more and not hesitate to call an "all-stop" if a situation warrants it.

At Vermont Electric Cooperative, Sara Packer is the T&D vegetation management (VM) program manager. She understands that safe work practices are sometimes more closely followed when we think someone is watching. It would be better if we worked in the safest manner possible, "even when we know no one is looking." Her three-word safety story? "Everyone goes home."

Beth Stewart, VM supervisor at NH Electric Cooperative, wants people to never become complacent. She answered our safety challenge with, "Maintain situational awareness." She advises others to take the time they need to evaluate the risks in every situation that may arise, communicate, and work smart. Don't cut corners.

What does safety mean to you?

How would you answer it?

# why strain?®

## Use a Leverage Booster

- Super Leverage = Super Stability
- Avoid Injury
- Prevent and Reduce Wrist, Arm, Rotator Cuff and Back Pain



For "Hot Sticks" and Extension Poles 10' 20' 30' 40'



Use with Power pole saws, pole saws, pruners, hedge trimmers and weed whackers



whystrain.com  
superezworktool.com  
sales@superezworktool.com

# UVM: Shifting Perspectives

## The powerline as an environmental asset

By Jarod Cassada, Forester,  
Oklahoma Gas & Electric Services

# SPOTLIGHT

## on the Environment



NASA IMAGE



The members of the UAA possess a great wealth of knowledge. That knowledge itself is inanimate. It has no ability to express itself. It exists in books, publications, and our minds, waiting for us to execute on it, share it, and teach others. Through the sharing and application of knowledge, we do our best work as the UAA and put that knowledge to exceptional use. The UAA is our platform for ideas, some failures, and some successes. This article is a call to challenge self-imposed limits we may perceive concerning our profession and what we offer the world.

“If a tree wants to be beautiful, it shouldn’t grow near a powerline.”

— O.C. Seevers, *Efficient Electric Utility Operation*, 1982.

I once came across a document depicting the Ten Commandments of line maintenance. The ninth read:

“Only God can make a tree, but if He makes it in thy rights-of-way (ROW), thou shalt cut it down.” For many, the tree is a villain—a green thing that stands in the way of safe, reliable power. We often concern ourselves with individual trees and call ourselves “tree trimmers” and “arborists.” There are billions of trees in or around powerline corridors. These together make up a forest.

If you looked up the word “forest,” you may read about ecosystems, sustainability, and how society and forests influence one another. A forest is not necessarily defined by the type of vegetation, but by the purpose that the land serves. It is theoretically possible with that thought in mind to see the forest, not necessarily for the trees, but for how that land has been designated. The area around our powerlines could be considered an urban forest, or a utility forest.



Picture in your mind a powerline with grass, sky, and a variety of plants. The line moves electricity to serve your customers as it was designed and intended. Your image may have good elements: strong poles, accessibility, protection from lightning, and guard from wildlife. For some, it may have grotesquely misshapen trees, badly sagged open-wire secondaries, and brush establishing itself. Has one pictured a forest, and the other a disaster waiting to happen? I optimistically argue that both images described are forests and opportunities.

Since the first overhead span of powerline was installed, an ecology emerged. Plants, mosses, fungi, insects, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and soil microorganisms have taken up residence in our utility easements. They climb our poles. They roost upon our wires. The industry has spent fortunes and decades lamenting the interest nature has in our ROWs. However, in this pursuit of a pure easement, we missed something. While creating robust economies, those powerlines have effectively prevented a considerable amount of space from being developed in the manner nature intended. That space is now accruing value, not only as an easement, but for its ability to sustain migratory butterflies, reduce storm water run-off, create habitat, mitigate the effects of pollution, and create healthy communities.

The powerline corridor you pictured in your mind is an effective tool capable to move electricity, and capable of much, much more than that alone. It is an environmental asset that can be managed to drive even more value to communities and stakeholders. It is like a big savings account full of nature capital that most utilities fail to recognize. Consider the following: for each individual property, a house and driveway cover far more footage than a powerline easement and only support a few humans and their pets. The easement supports the whole community and potentially every living thing that migrates through. Entire life cycles happen in the shadow of those conductors. UAA members are arguably the progenitors of one of the world's most powerful ecosystems.



PASJA1000 - PIXABAY

What does this mean for the UAA professional? Your vegetation management (VM) program is an investment. Primarily, this program ensures safety and reliability; however, it can also evolve to accomplish other amazing things that transcend Ohm's law. The ROWs you serve make up a forest which connects all customers and communities. Whether the desire or the need comes first, we must alter the industry prejudice about line clearance as a cost of doing business. UAA members must be the advocates for this change, and that begins with the readers of this article. How can we alter the perspective of what a line clearance program does for society? We are managing one of the most valuable assets on this planet. This good work may not be recognized by our companies and communities because we might not yet have realized it ourselves.

providing  
**SUSTAINABLE  
 RIGHT OF WAY  
 SOLUTIONS**

[growwithtrees.com](http://growwithtrees.com)





## Beyond Reliability: IVM

*By Josiane Bonneau, Senior Director of Conservation Strategy and Planning, Wildlife Habitat Council; Philip Charlton, Executive Director, UAA; John Goodfellow, Principal, BioCompliance; and Ruth Stein, Public Representative, ROWSC.*

Effective vegetation management (VM) programs have long been important to providing safe and reliable electricity while minimizing environmental impacts. Now, energy companies are looking beyond reliability goals, from focusing exclusively on what vegetation has to be controlled to asking the important question, “What can be created in the process of controlling incompatible species?”

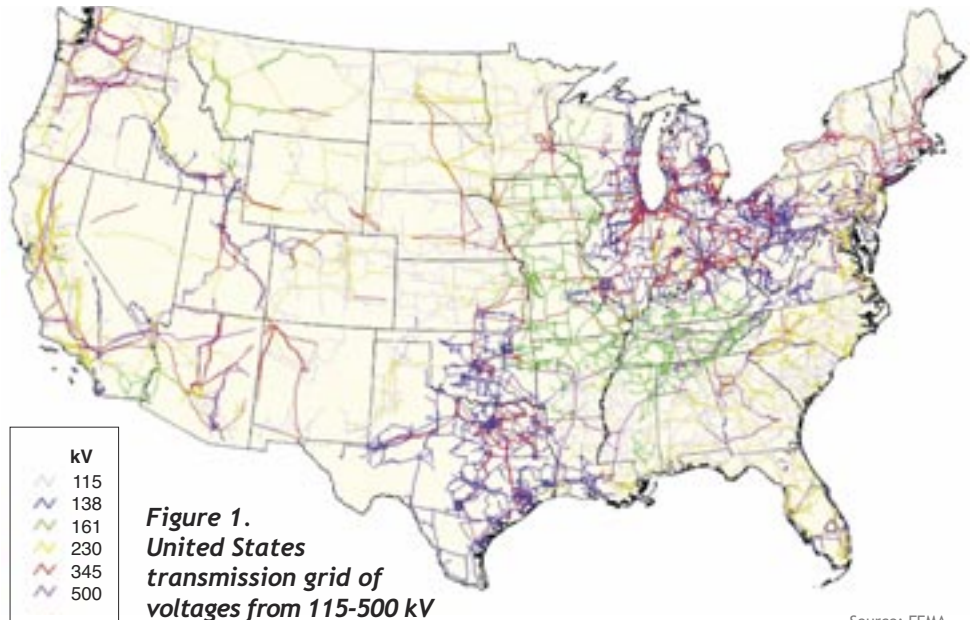
Energy companies are breaking down the traditional silos surrounding VM and bringing together a diverse team of internal stakeholders, including VM, environmental, communications, sustainability, capital investment, and land groups. The result has been the creation of pollinator and wildlife habitat; protection of rare, threatened, and endangered species; conservation of cultural and riparian resources; reduction in the spread of non-native invasive species; and improved relationships with communities, regulatory bodies, and other external stakeholders. This success leverages existing VM expenditures while generating added value for the company and reducing resources needed for right-of-way (ROW) maintenance.

### Turning a Corner

Few would argue that the Great Northeast Blackout of August 2003 hasn’t had a profound impact on the way vegetation is managed on the transmission system. In roughly an hour time span, three transmission lines in Ohio sagged into trees in quick succession. These tree-initiated faults set in motion cascading failures as protective relays opened on system after system. The result: the largest blackout in North American history. Since then, the electric power in-

**Rick Johnstone, President IVM Partners:**

“Utilities are routinely criticized for removing trees, mowing brush, and applying herbicides in order to properly manage vegetation on their ROW, but they seldom receive praise for the restoration of native prairie and wetland meadow habitat that is so desperately needed by birds, pollinators, and mammals. The ROW Stewardship Accreditation program is an opportunity for utilities that practice professional IVM to be recognized by a reputable third party conservation organization, which will provide their program credibility to customers, regulators, and public agencies.”



**Phil Charlton, UAA Executive Director:**

“The UAA’s Strategic Plan commits to working with utilities to be proactive in the promotion of BMPs and industry standards for sustainability and environmental stewardship. Federal regulations demand they be aggressive in their management of vegetation on our nation’s high voltage transmission ROWs to ensure service reliability. The ROW Stewardship Accreditation program is an opportunity to recognize those utilities that are demonstratively successful at achieving both and to encourage those that are not.”

dustry has been very successful in reducing instances of flashovers from high-voltage conductors to trees.

It is also important to acknowledge that, in some cases, the changes in VM activities on transmission ROW can significantly alter the ecological characteristics of existing transmission corridors, resulting in unnecessary disruption to the environment and increased management costs and effort.

Research, case studies, and on-the-ground experience have proven that integrated VM (IVM) is the most cost-





**Table 1. Parties Involved in Initial Discussion of the Conceptual Accreditation Program for IVM on the North American High Voltage Grid.**

- The Nature Conservancy
- Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC)
- Utility Arborist Association (UAA)
- Electric Power Research Institute
- SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
- Edison Electric Institute (EEI)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

effective means of achieving management objectives in an economically efficient and environmentally responsible manner.

Today’s IVM principles are intended to create, promote, and conserve stable plant communities that are compatible with overhead transmission lines and to discourage incompatible plants such as tall-growing trees that may pose a risk to the reliable operation of the transmission system.

### Environmental Benefits of IVM

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300, Part 7, defines IVM as a system of managing plant communities in which managers set objectives; identify compatible and incompatible vegetation; consider action thresholds; and evaluate, select, and implement the most appropriate control method(s) to achieve their established objectives.

What does adopting an IVM-based program really mean for progressive energy companies? It means moving away from rigid one-size-fits-all prescriptions based on fixed time periods. It means not repeating nonselective mowing or broadcast spraying across the entire ROW without first setting objectives of establishing diverse, compatible plant communities. It also means evaluating control methods based on their environmental impact and anticipated effectiveness, while considering site characteristics, security, economics, current land use, and other factors.

The result is an emphasis on using selective maintenance techniques to encourage relatively stable communities of low-growing plants that naturally inhibit the development of tall-growing trees that can interfere with the overhead facilities. A successful IVM-based program will require fewer costly maintenance activities as relatively stable communities of compatible plants are established and nature plays a role in decreasing re-invasion by tall-growing trees.

At its core, IVM requires a paradigm shift away from a focus on simply *controlling* unwanted trees. IVM focuses on actively *managing* the entire ROW using treatments that encourage the establishment of compatible vegetative cover. The value of IVM exceeds achieving objectives of safety and

**Tom Sullivan, UAA Director:**

“The UAA strives to improve the quality of utility arboriculture ROW VM. Development of ROW Stewardship is consistent with this UAA aspiration. ROW Stewards would promote and recognize ROW programs that incorporate social, economic, and environmental considerations into ROW VM—considerations consistent with good environmental stewardship. ROW Stewards would provide rigor and consistency to the practice of IVM.”

**Richard Loughery Director, Environmental Activities**

“Electric transmission ROWs can be managed to provide positive ecological benefits while maintaining reliability. The ROW Stewardship Program is an important part of the effort to promote this win-win for the environment and electric utilities.”

reliability at a lower cost. Adopting the principles at the operational scale generates tangible outcomes considered worthwhile across the company.

For most energy companies, VM activities and their outcomes are highly visible to the public. Questions and comments are commonplace. IVM offers answers based in science, from promoting native habitats for a suite of locally appropriate species, to increasing ecosystem value and biodiversity. This positive environmental message is key to constructive community relations.

The adoption of IVM can provide different narratives to be shared with local, state, and federal agencies. A company removing tall-growing trees may create native grassland habitat important to range and wildlife managers. Less site disturbance during VM activities may contribute to the health of a watershed as pursued by the local township. The IVM-managed segment near a high school, for example, may offer the school district more visibility and a greater sense of safety. These IVM benefits only lack value when managing existing corridors, but they are also instrumental in capital projects when looking to secure permits for new energy infrastructure. The beneficial outcomes of IVM implementation being used as metrics for sustainability reporting should not be overlooked.

### Raising the Bar

Some energy companies are raising the bar and seeking to formally distinguish themselves through their commitment to IVM. The Right-of-Way Stewardship Council (ROWSC) has established an accreditation program to recognize excellence in VM on transmission and natural gas ROW on the North American energy grid. The ROW Steward Utility



**Jack McCabe, UAA Director:**

“An integral part of the vision for the ROW Stewardship initiative is the recognition that a properly managed ROW is more than a critical component of a transmission and distribution operation; it is an environmental asset to the adjacent lands.”

Accreditation program offers a comprehensive set of requirements that are rooted in the current ANSI standard and associated best management practices (BMPs) and provides a path to environmental stewardship excellence. The ROW Steward initiative has the support of many industry practitioners and regulators.

“The Environmental Protection Agency supports the industry’s idea of a credible third-party certification program for utility ROWs based on IVM principles and standards, which provide a means of reducing the need for pesticides and greater natural species diversity along ROWs and better control of invasive species,” said Frank Ellis, chief of the EPA’s Environmental Stewardship Branch. “The agency welcomes development of a program to ensure credibility, appropriate standard development, and the promotion of IVM adoption on the U.S. electric power grid.”

The size of the land area being managed has caught the attention of several environmental stakeholders as well. Bill Toomey, the Nature Conservancy’s (TNC’s) director of forest health protection, sees ROW Steward as “an opportunity for TNC to leverage our expertise and improve natural resource management practices on millions of acres of land.”

“ROWs across the country represent an invaluable opportunity for the creation of native habitats, control of invasive species, and enhancement of early successional habitat for nesting birds,” said Margaret O’Gorman, president of the Wildlife Habitat Council. “Offering landowners, energy companies, and the community a credible framework to better manage the extensive transmission and distribution network has the potential to positively impact many species for the benefit of all.”

To date, the council has recognized seven energy companies (AltaLink, Arizona Public Service (APS), Bonneville Power Authority, New York Power Authority, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), and Vermont Electric Light Company) with



**Table 2. Example of the Hierarchical Nature of Potential Accreditation Requirements**

Level	Focus	“Father of the Bride” Example
Principles (10)	High level statements	A wedding reception should be an enjoyable celebratory affair.
Criteria (±50)	Such as: existing IVM, BMPs, and Standards	Guests leave well fed and many are feeling tipsy, but not excessively so.
Indicators (±100)	Performance metrics	Guests receive appropriate food and drink.
Verifiers (±100)	Evidence, outcomes	Menus, invoices, exit interviews with guests, and venue wait staff interviews.

**Table 3. Types and Level of Recognition. ROW Steward Will Be Based on Accreditation.**

Type of Recognition	Description
Certification	A voluntary process by which individuals are assessed against predetermined standards for knowledge/skills/competencies and granted a time-limited credential.
Licensure	A mandatory government requirement necessary to practice in a particular profession or occupation.
Certificate of Qualifications	Designates that participants have completed a relatively short, non-degree program and passed an end-of-program assessment.
Accreditation	The establishment of the status, legitimacy, or appropriateness of an institution or program granted upon meeting approved criteria or standards.





**Table 4. Miles of ROW and Usage**

Miles of ROW	Types of ROW uses
160,000	Transmission lines operating at 230 - 765kV
290,000	Transmission lines operating at 35 - 138kV
306,000	Petroleum and natural gas pipeline
33,000	Rural interstate highway system
3,100,000	Rural roads
170,000	

accreditation as ROW Stewards for their excellence in sustainable IVM on transmission corridors. In addition, PG&E became the first company to be accredited by the council for its IVM on natural gas pipeline ROW.

### The Value of the Accreditation

The accreditation process is rigorous and requires a top-to-bottom examination of a ROW management program.

**Chris Nowak, Ph.D. SUNY ESF**

“Sister industries and disciplines have developed certification systems in the span of the past 20 years to recognize high-level, professional performance of work. Forestry, for example, has exemplary systems that recognize management that is environmentally sensitive, socially responsible, and economically feasible—that is, sustainable. I think the electric utility industry is ready to do exactly this too. In the last few decades, we have developed an IVM system that does work to balance environment and socioeconomics. It is a matter of taking the next step, embracing the opportunity for improvement and change, and committing to it: a ROW Steward program. With it will come heightened self-awareness of professional work and responsibility, elevated practice of sustainable VM, and expanded and positive stakeholder dialog and collaboration. The pieces are all there for the electric industry. We just need to pick them up, sift through them a bit, and do it—develop a formal certification program to improve practice and highlight our successes! IVM is good, if not great—and the world should know it.”

This high-level challenge to procedures and policies inevitably identifies potential areas for improvement. Beyond the benefits of the internal procedures analysis, the accreditation offers third-party recognition, as well as an independent, proven process to convey credibility and bring recognition to IVM programs. Like the benefits of IVM, the value of the accreditation reaches beyond the practitioner’s sphere; it has the potential to positively impact the industry, communities, stakeholders, and agencies. Accreditation benefits include:

- *Institutionalizing sustainable management.* Comprehensive documentation processes institutionalize sustainable management and ensure adoption, efficiency, and continuity of practices and policies while engendering consistent performance.
- *Improving positive relations with stakeholders.* The accreditation places strong emphasis on engaging communities and other stakeholders in VM. From broad communication to consultation and active participation, these interactions are known to generate positive outcomes with stakeholders. A greater understanding of activities and outcomes by customers can lead to increased confidence and trust and a decreased likelihood of conflict and legal disputes.
- *Surpassing regulatory requirements.* Society’s growing interest in the environment and its heightened awareness of the potential impacts of infrastructure corridors on landscapes increasingly attract attention to VM activities. Proactively applying the accreditation principles on a voluntary basis is likely to strategically position the industry to prevent or meet any future regulations by demonstrating a long-standing commitment to the environment and societal values.

(Continued on page 18)



(Continued from page 17)

### Looking to the Future

For asset-owners in the early stages of the transition to IVM on parts of their system or for those experienced in the implementation, the accreditation can serve as a blueprint to success. The principles are building blocks for new programs and a reference guide for existing operational VM documents.

With the accreditation expanding from transmission corridors to pipeline ROW, it is positioned to be used increasingly as a proxy for environmental stewardship metrics and industry benchmarking. Eventually, the program even may develop to include VM programs for roads and highways.

*Josiane Bonneau Director, Field Programs:*

“When looking at the global landscape, only 11 percent of the land is under protection, which is insufficient to preserve biodiversity. With that in mind, conservation leaders from all spheres of work are encouraged to look beyond the traditional system of parks, refuges, and conservation areas for innovative ways to enhance habitat and provide opportunities for education. Visionaries from the energy industry have partnered with the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) for more than two decades to develop biodiversity projects and initiatives on ROWs and related infrastructures with great success. As such, the organization is excited to join the ROW Stewardship project and bring a set of diverse partners to the table to create a strong set of standards, facilitate the discussion between ENGOs and industry, as well as promote a credible sustainability accreditation. The WHC is excited to participate in the ROW Stewardship initiative to support the inclusion of sustainability concepts into land management on a land-based system with such potential. The current system of protected areas is insufficient to protect biodiversity and as such, several industries have risen in the last two decades to a leadership role on private lands. ROWs across the country represent an invaluable opportunity for the creation of native habitats, control of invasive species, and enhancement of early successional habitat for nesting birds. Offering landowners, operators, companies, and the community a credible system to better manage the extensive transmission and distribution network has the potential to positively impact a large number of species for the benefit of all.”

**RESEARCH ACUMEN**  
urban forestry expertise  
ROOTS AND SOIL  
science-based data

SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY INTELLIGENCE  
planting process best-practices

ROOTS AND SOIL  
technology transfer wisdom

URBAN TREE CARE ISSUE INSIGHTS

URBAN FORESTRY EXPERTISE  
ARBORICULTURE EDUCATION  
**research acumen**  
science-based data  
ROOT AND SOIL MANAGEMENT TOOLS  
technology transfer wisdom

PLANT HEALTH CARE STRATEGIES  
PROPAGATION, PLANTING AND ESTABLISHMENT KNOW-HOW  
ROOTS AND SOIL

URBAN FORESTRY EXPERTISE  
URBAN TREE CARE ISSUE INSIGHTS

SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY INTELLIGENCE  
technology transfer wisdom

DISSEMINATION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE  
PLANT HEALTH CARE STRATEGIES  
ROOTS AND SOIL  
URBAN FORESTRY EXPERTISE

**What does ONE FREE CEU credit really get you?**

Knowledge gained from TREE Fund webinars directly impacts tree care practices, arborists' techniques and people's lives every day. Get research-driven insight direct from industry-renowned scientists while gaining CEU credit from ISA, SAF, NALP or LACES.

FOR A LIST OF WEBINAR SPEAKERS AND DATES, VISIT:  
[treefund.org/webinars](http://treefund.org/webinars)



THANK YOU TO OUR CROWN AND DIAMOND PARTNERS:



Visit [treefund.org/partners](http://treefund.org/partners) to see all of our Partners



## Safety During Storm Work

Featuring Jim Engelke, General Foreman, Wright Tree Service

PHOTO BY O12-PIXABAY

I started working for Wright Tree Service in 1979 during a recession, which meant if I wanted to work, I had to be open to change. In 13 months, I moved to five different states: Iowa, Wisconsin, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Minnesota. I have worked as a groundman, trimmer, foreman, and I am currently a general foreman (GF). I even ran a spray crew for a while. One thing that's helped me as a GF is all the different jobs I've had and all the equipment I've been around. My advice to crew members is to try to learn as much about as many things as you can. Having this knowledge helps you to be open to change.

I was able to gain a lot of experience doing a variety of different things while moving around. Even though I've now been in the St. Paul, Minnesota area for about 20 years, I get to travel to interesting places while doing storm restoration work.

So far in my career, I've worked in restoration for five different hurricanes, four ice storms, and a few fires in California. The work is difficult, but there's nothing like the satisfaction that comes from helping people. Right after Hurricane Frances hit Florida in 2004, my crew and I were working all day in a neighborhood by clearing vegetation and debris from the utility right-of-way (ROW). The utility linemen were working right behind us to rebuild the powerlines. We finished as the sun went down and, once everybody was safe and clear of the wire, the linemen clicked in the final fuse, lighting the entire neighborhood. It was very satisfying seeing the impact my work had on restoring power to a neighborhood.

Storm restoration work is also a good opportunity to learn faster than at normal jobsites. The first hurricane or storm is always a learning process. Do not be afraid to ask questions and listen to the people around you. Even the experienced storm restoration crew members can learn something new in every emergency situation. Everyone has knowledge and experience to share, so as long as you listen to other people's ideas, you can come up with a very good plan and gain new skills.

The more time you have to plan and get to a safe place before a storm hits, the better. However, you still need to be as close to the storm as possible without risking safety in order to be ready to respond. I once had to drive into the outer layer of Hurricane Irma, which hit during fall 2017, to get to a hotel. Our choice was either to drive into the hurricane or turn around and drive three states north to reach a hotel with vacancy.

There is a lot of planning and strategizing that goes into a successful restoration project. First, you have to know

what work conditions to expect. Generally, with hurricanes and ice storms, there is debris, tree limbs down, and the powerlines are not active, so the team has a pretty clear path from which to cut vegetation. However, when working on fire restorations, the utility could have the powerlines back up before we start working and hazardous trees could still be standing. The power's back on, but the hazard trees still have to be mitigated, so we have to be very cautious and aware of the work we're doing.

We also have to have a primary communications plan and a back-up communications plan. In today's world, technology and the internet provide a true advantage for storm work. However, if the company depends on technology too much, it will be difficult to carry out a safe plan once the storm hits. In Texas, during restoration for Hurricane Ike in 2008, we had cell phones, but service wasn't reliable. We ran into a problem because the back-up batteries for the service towers were being slowly drained, and the towers lost their energy. We were not able to communicate with our phones at all, so we had to find different ways to communicate and check in with each other.

Since all the crews were going to work in different locations, we kept tabs on where each crew was going to be working each day. We also created rallying points and check-in times, so we would know that everybody was accounted for and safe.

When Wright Tree Service responded to the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico, the check-in/check-out process was intensified. I arrived on the island at the end of February 2017 and spent 20 weeks cutting vines away from downed powerlines and navigating through steep mountains and narrow, winding roads. Housing options were limited, so we stayed in rooms on a barge guarded by security. We were able to keep tabs on everyone's whereabouts because we had to check out when we left the barge and check in when we returned.

It was difficult being away from our families on an isolated island, but the Puerto Rican people were very friendly. In Puerto Rico, Sunday is reserved for family. However, it was very common for crew members to be invited into people's homes for lunch on Sunday. Getting to know the people living on the island was the best part of being there.

Storm restoration can be very challenging and the only way to get through it successfully and safely is by taking care of each other. One of my favorite sayings is that, "It's a marathon, not a sprint." You have to get to the finish line, and the way to do that is by looking out for each other, having plans and back-up plans, and staying safe.

## UAA Finance Committee Update



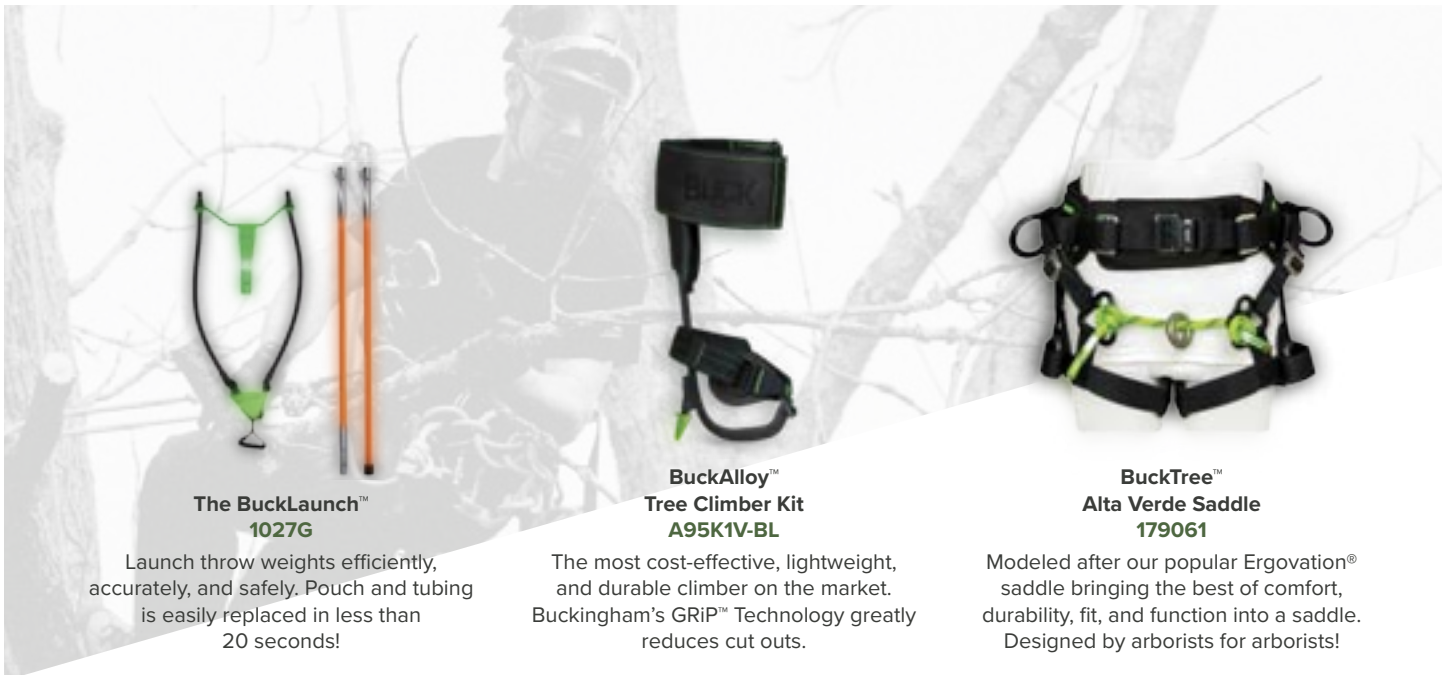
*By Lynn Grayson, Marketing Manager, Aerial Solutions; Phil Charlton, Executive Director, UAA; and Jim Neeser, Business Developer, Davey Resource Group.*

The UAA is the leading organization promoting quality utility arboricultural practices and vegetation management (VM). The UAA sponsors research, continuing education, various publications, and regional and national conferences—all of this requires funding. Financing these important events comes from membership dues,

publication sales, and any excess receipts remaining after sponsoring events such as safety summits, national, and regional meetings. It is the Finance Committee's responsibility to ensure that the necessary funding is available and that it is used in a fiscally responsible way to maintain the solvency of the UAA.

The Finance Committee must ensure that the UAA remains in good financial standing in accordance with accepted accounting practices. In addition to being monitored by the Finance Committee, the UAA's financial statements must also undergo an annual external audit. The latest audit results confirmed that the UAA continues to be on sound financial footing.

Each year, the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and UAA staff develops a detailed budget of anticipated income and expenses. A reserve is held to manage any unanticipated emergencies. In addition, special funding for projects such as the Trees & Utilities (T&U)



**The BuckLaunch™  
1027G**

Launch throw weights efficiently, accurately, and safely. Pouch and tubing is easily replaced in less than 20 seconds!

**BuckAlloy™  
Tree Climber Kit  
A95K1V-BL**

The most cost-effective, lightweight, and durable climber on the market. Buckingham's GRiP™ Technology greatly reduces cut outs.

**BuckTree™  
Alta Verde Saddle  
179061**

Modeled after our popular Ergovation® saddle bringing the best of comfort, durability, fit, and function into a saddle. Designed by arborists for arborists!

**NEW**

**F  
R  
O  
M**

**BUCKINGHAM  
BUCK  
1896**



**BUCK TREE  
BUCKINGHAM MFG**

[BuckinghamMFG.com](http://BuckinghamMFG.com)



Conference and the Right-of-Way (ROW) Symposium is held in designated accounts. The committee meets monthly to review the finances of the organization and offers any necessary advice and recommendations to the Executive Board. Thanks to the current financial solvency, the Committee elected to purchase certificates of deposit (CDs) to increase the return on these funds. The CDs can readily be returned to the budget if required.

Another responsibility of the committee is to establish and maintain Board policies. UAA policies are reviewed on an annual basis to maintain relevancy and currency with the overall goals of the organization. During this fiscal year, all policies have been reviewed with very few changes required to the current policies.

Also, during this year, the Committee reviewed all Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with other organizations. Most significantly, the Committee recommended

continuing the MOU with the Arbor Day Foundation thanks to the success of the T&U Conference. The Committee also recommended termination of the MOU with the Southern Chapter ISA following the 2020 conference due to a number of reasons, including fiscal policy differences.

The UAA staff has been able to focus on managing payrolls, adjusting cash reserves, and overseeing the budgets for national and regional meetings. The T&U Conference has provided the UAA with the potential to realize additional revenue that can be used for future research, training, and education. In addition, the ROW Symposium, which is held every three years, offers the same opportunities.

The Finance Committee will continue efforts to ensure that the UAA is managed with excellence so that our organization will remain at the top in promoting quality VM practices through research, education, and training.

BACKGROUND BY WOLFGANG ECKERT – PIXABAY



# PROTECTING THE REPUTATION OF THE UTILITIES WE SERVE FOR 100 YEARS

IT'S PART OF OUR JOB



800-522-4311  
[www.nelsontree.com](http://www.nelsontree.com)

©2019 Nelson Tree Service, LLC. All rights reserved.



Vegetation Management Specialists





In the spirit of this communications issue, PSE&G would like to provide an example of how effective communication can prevent public relations issues and foster positive relationships with the communities the utilities serve.

## Win-Win Customer Service Relations: Statue Retrieval

*By Jay Kaplan, Supervisor of VM, PSE&G*



As part of an upgrade project, we were trimming and removing trees on Madison Street in Hoboken, New Jersey. We were performing the removal of the trees in two stages: (1) removal of the top of the tree, then (2) removal of the stalk with a log loader at a later date. After removing the top of one of the trees, I received a call from the regional public affairs manager and local councilman about a complaint on social media. The complaint mentioned that a family member (many years ago) had put a statue of a saint at an opening of the tree base years ago. The regional public affairs manager wanted to know if I would be able to retrieve the statue from the tree before we removed the rest.

I met with the contractor, Tuff Greens, on site and examined the tree. We were able to find the statue of the saint that was in the cavity of the tree. It was about a foot tall and covered in a plastic bag. Unfortunately, the tree had grown around the statue to the point where we could not simply pull it out.

After some discussion and brain-storming, we had a plan to try and retrieve the statue. The customer and councilman were notified by the regional public affairs manager that we would try our best to retrieve the statue intact.



Once we were able to post “no parking” signs, we attempted to retrieve the statue. First, we had to remove as much of the stalk as possible while not cutting too close to the top of the statue. We cut low enough that we could see the top of the statue, but it was still not loose enough to retrieve. We then proceeded to cut a triangular piece of the tree to clear out decaying wood in order to loosen the statue. The tree was infested with carpenter ants, which actually aided us by helping the decomposition of the cavity, creating loose wood. Once we were able to pull out some of the loose and decaying wood, the statue was retrieved in one piece. The statue was then sent to the regional public affairs manager, who gave it to the councilman the following day.



# SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

SILVER  
LEVEL

Headquartered in Akron, Ohio, FirstEnergy Corp.'s 10 utility companies serve six million customers in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland, and New York. Because FirstEnergy's service area includes large urban centers, remote mountainous areas, and every terrain in between, the company's vegetation management (VM) practices must consider the varied geography of its broad service territory.

## FirstEnergy®

Excellence in tree care and VM programs has earned FirstEnergy and its utilities' designation as National Arbor Day Foundation "Tree Line USA utilities" for many years. The recognition reflects the company's commitment to enhancing service reliability while maintaining the beauty of trees in the communities it serves.

As good stewards of the environment, FirstEnergy is involved in a growing number of pollinator projects designed to control vegetation in transmission rights-of-way (ROW) while promoting healthy populations of bees and other pollinators. These programs have gained importance as bee populations have dropped in recent years.

FirstEnergy's VM team is also remarkable because of its diversity. While many utility VM (UVM) groups are the domain of male foresters, FirstEnergy's team includes a significant number of women, many in key leadership positions. The FirstEnergy team also includes individuals with diverse backgrounds, including forestry, utility arboriculture, biology, wildlife and fisheries science, sustainability, environmental science, and the law.

This diverse group not only contributes to better outcomes for the company and its customers, but also helps reinforce FirstEnergy's commitment to its core values and behaviors, which include a safety culture that encourages teamwork, innovation, and social responsibility. Driven by these principles, FirstEnergy and its VM team are committed to achieving the company's mission of making customers' lives brighter, the environment better, and its communities stronger.

GWIN DWYER - PIVABAY

www.pennline.com  
724.887.9110

## PennLine®

**TREE AND RIGHT-OF-WAY**  
100% Employee Owned

Utility Line Maintenance // Right-of-Way Clearing // Herbicide Application // Storm Restoration // Mowing

# We Appreciate Our UAA Utility Supporters and Corporate Sponsors



The Utility Arborist Association is pleased to have an outstanding group of utility supporters and corporate sponsors. We encourage you to visit their websites to explore their products, services, and mission.

Many creative sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available to reach the 4,700+ vegetation management professionals in North America. Onsite, online, or print advertising options can increase visibility and build brands.

There are also other sponsorship opportunities that include any or all of the following options throughout the year:

- Regional Meetings
- Safety Summit
- Webinars

If you are interested in advertising with the UAA, our Media Guide includes advertising rates and sponsorship information. The guide is available via a link on the sponsors page at [www.gotouaa.org](http://www.gotouaa.org).

If your company is interested in sponsoring the UAA in one of many possibilities, please contact us today.

## UAA Utility Supporters

### GOLD LEVEL



### SILVER LEVEL



## UAA Corporate Sponsors

### GOLD LEVEL



### SILVER LEVEL



### BRONZE LEVEL



## Webinar Sponsors



### CONTRIBUTOR LEVEL







# Partners in Excellence Program

The Utility Arborist Association is the leading North American organization for the enhancement of quality utility arboriculture and right-of-way management. Our success relies on the support we receive from all of our members, sponsors, and volunteers.

Companies that go above and beyond to support our mission will be recognized annually through our Partners in Excellence (PinE) Program.

Membership, sponsorship, advertising, active committee volunteerism, and many other means have been quantified and assigned a value, all adding up to equal a PinE Score.

All applications and supporting material of qualifying companies are reviewed and selected by the PinE Committee.

We want to take this time to congratulate and thank our 2018 PinE Award Recipients.

Your continued support of the Utility Arborist Association is greatly appreciated on many levels.

## 2018 PinE Award Recipients



PLATINUM AWARD



PLATINUM AWARD



GOLD AWARD



GOLD AWARD



SILVER AWARD



SILVER AWARD



SILVER AWARD



SILVER AWARD



LEWIS  
TREE SERVICE

Job Done Right®

SILVER AWARD



SILVER AWARD



SILVER AWARD



Environmental Consultants

BRONZE AWARD



BRONZE AWARD



BRONZE AWARD



Trees, Inc.

BRONZE AWARD

## Caring for Employees and Customers

*Based on the Communications chapter of the Utility Arboriculture: The ISA Utility Specialist Certification Study Guide.*

*By Geoff Kempter, Manager, Asplundh Technical Services*

**A**s utility arborists work their way along millions of miles of overhead transmission and distribution circuits, leaving behind vistas of utility infrastructure and misshapen trees, they have more face-to-face contact with customers than other utility industry employees. This means that there is ample opportunity for things to go right—or wrong! Which begs the question: is it even possible for utility vegetation management (UVM) services to actually benefit utility public relations efforts?

For the benefits of UVM to be appreciated, good communication is required between the many stakeholders in the industry. This starts with better customer relations training for employees, and a greater understanding of what is at stake on the part of utility management. The effort must reach beyond just the utility and contractor workforce, though. With better communication among all stakeholders, appreciation of the work can be improved, and UVM operations can have a net benefit on utility customer relations.

### Understanding Stakeholder Interests

Identifying various stakeholders and establishing appropriate communication strategies is essential. Internal stakeholders include utility and contractor employees, as well as utility

owners and investors. External stakeholders include the communities served—residential and commercial utility customers, landowners with property adjacent to utility facilities, media outlets, and governments, including regulators. These are all very different groups that require unique messaging.

### Utility Employees

Perhaps surprisingly, many utility employees—including upper management—have limited understanding of either the value of VM or the expertise required to complete it successfully. This is despite the fact that UVM has a direct effect on critical areas such as safety, service reliability, power quality, maintenance costs, and public relations. Ensuring that the value and benefits of UVM is communicated to other utility departments improves understanding and support for programs.

### Contract Employees

Most front-line workers—the ambassadors for our industry—are contract employees. Whether they patrol the lines or wield a saw, they must fully understand the work and be prepared to answer myriad questions from the public about why it is performed. Unfortunately, these employees are seldom recognized by anyone for either the value of their work or their expertise. On the

contrary, they are often dismissed as “just tree trimmers,” even though their skills may take years to acquire.

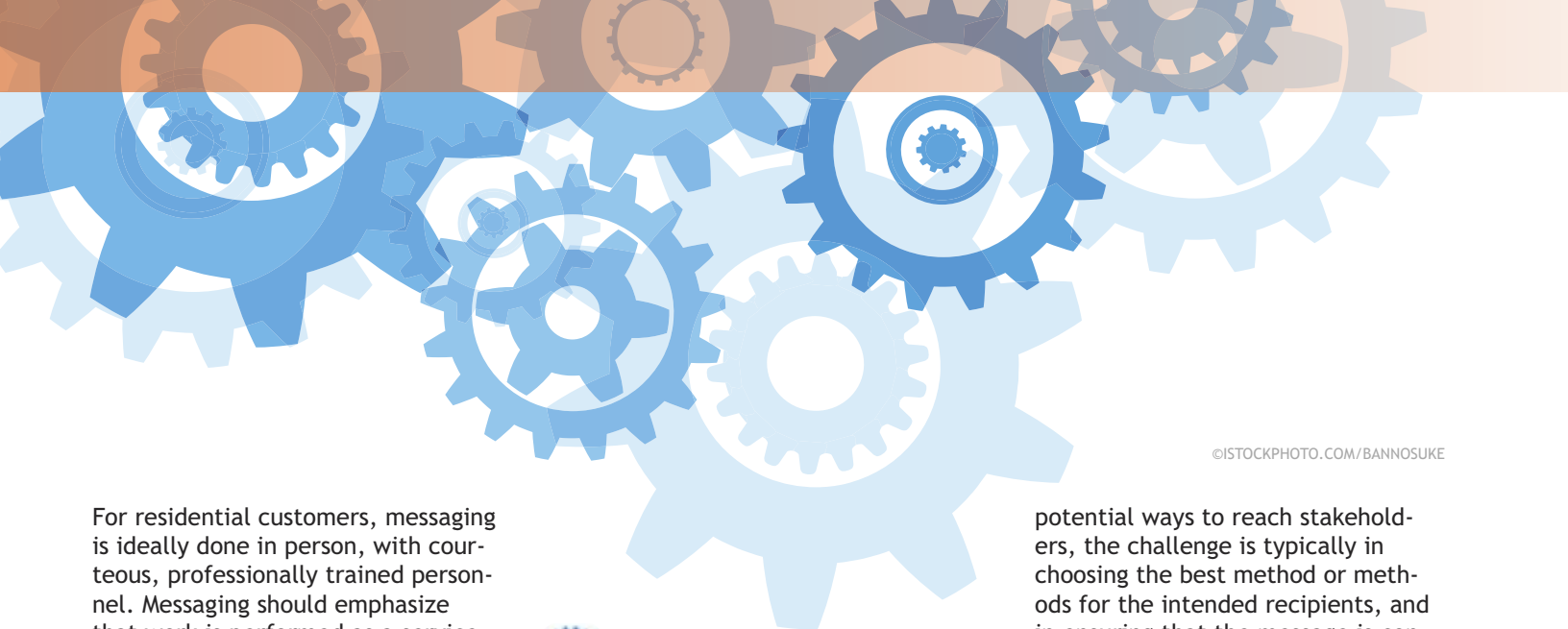
Job satisfaction is a critical component in keeping employees. Lack of appreciation can undermine morale and increase employee turnover. Providing these employees with additional training and recognizing their efforts with competitive compensation can improve retention, productivity, and customer relations.

Many UVM contracts do not encourage good public relations. Contracts should be designed to reward performance in customer relations as well as safety, productivity, and quality. Longer-term contracts create a more stable environment, which also improves employee retention. These contracts are also better suited to encourage professional development such as ISA Arborist and Utility Specialist Certifications.

### Utility Customers

Utility arborists provide a service to customers that is seldom requested and often misunderstood. Customers generally view trees as amenities, which, like utility services, improve their quality of life. Not surprisingly, they desire both unmolested trees and reliable electric service. On the other hand, utilities tend to see trees as problems—they spend a lot of money pruning and removing them, and tree failures cost even more in damage and customer down time. However, with the right messaging, most customers at least understand the need for UVM, and the reputation of the utility need not suffer.





©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/BANNOSUKE

For residential customers, messaging is ideally done in person, with courteous, professionally trained personnel. Messaging should emphasize that work is performed as a service for the customer to improve the safety and reliability of their utility service, as opposed to the idea that trees are problems that threaten the utility's lines.

Because customers are often not at home, information must also be provided with printed door hangers and brochures, and be available online. Regardless of the source, the information should be presented simply and clearly, without using jargon, and should not contradict other sources of information. Printed and online information should answer common customer questions. Most commercial customers rely on electricity to stay in business. The business community may be more inclined to support programs that enhance reliability, such as UVM, if they are provided with information that demonstrates the value.

### Media

News media thrive on stories of conflict, while utilities and their employees generally want to avoid controversy. Unfortunately, utility pruning and removal efforts are often just the kind of stories that attract attention and generate negative publicity. Employees should be advised not to provide information to representatives of the media unless authorized by the utility.

To avoid unwanted negative coverage, utilities should provide press releases to media outlets about the benefits of utility pruning programs, emphasizing safety, reliability, and fire prevention. When making significant changes or initiating a new program, messaging should be proactive, again emphasizing benefits and keeping the potential for negative coverage to a minimum.

potential ways to reach stakeholders, the challenge is typically in choosing the best method or methods for the intended recipients, and in ensuring that the message is consistent across all platforms.

Printed information, such as brochures and door hangers, can be created and mailed, left with customers, or provided at community meetings. However, this is usually a one-way communication, with little interaction, and no way to know whether the message was received and understood.

Electronic media has the advantage of being relatively inexpensive to create and update (no printing or mailing costs), and it is also interactive. During emergencies, real-time updates can be posted about restoration efforts, including UVM. However, information must be updated frequently (e.g., events removed once they have occurred to avoid becoming stale), platforms must be monitored constantly, and responses generated as needed.

### Communities

Communities served by utilities benefit from safe and reliable power. They also increasingly recognize the value of urban forests as critical infrastructure. Common ground can be found in the need for well-maintained trees planted in the right place for maximum benefit (e.g., minimal maintenance costs while reducing heat island and peak demand). Utilities should be represented on local urban and community forestry committees, and utility personnel should maintain good relations with local city forestry staff.

### Regulators

Utilities must justify their maintenance expenditures often by making "rate cases" before state or provincial regulatory agencies. It is important for utilities to make regulators aware the benefits of well-run UVM programs to ratepayers.

Community meetings provide an opportunity to meet with stakeholders and answer questions directly. Meetings can be promoted with printed material and using electronic media. Utilities should be prepared to answer all kinds of questions and expect news media to be present.

### Outreach

Outreach can take the form of printed materials, face-to-face meetings, or it can be electronic, using social media, e-mail, websites, and text messaging. With so many

### Talking to Customers

Employees should recognize that they will talk to all kinds of customers, most of whom are pleasant or indifferent, but a few who are not nice in any circumstance. Those who recognize this fact will take each



customer as they come, learning to enjoy some interactions while not letting negative encounters get under their skin. To ensure that more interactions go well, certain guidelines should be followed.

### First Impressions

An employee only gets one chance to make a first impression. And those first few minutes—or even seconds—can make all the difference. Where they park, how they approach the property, their appearance, and demeanor all can make an impression before any words are exchanged. Smoking, spitting, foul language, and horseplay all undermine credibility.

### Attitude

A good attitude brings customers (and fellow employees) up, while a bad attitude brings everyone down. Employees should bring a fresh face to each customer.

### Integrity

Employees should always explain the who, what, when, where, and why of UVM activities on customer properties. If they make promises or commitments, they must make good on them (e.g., calling back with more information or following up on requests).

### Active Listening

Even though UVM personnel may hear the same questions over and over, customers still deserve to be heard. By practicing active listening (i.e., not interrupting, nodding, and repeating back key information), employees show that they are actually hearing what the customer has to say.

Once the customer’s concerns are conveyed, employees can answer their questions, provide better information about what is going to happen on their property, or explain why certain requests may or may not be accommodated (e.g., why a tree will be pruned and not removed, or vice versa).

Active listening allows employees to dialog with customers about how trees can affect powerlines, and to emphasize that UVM work is part of the utility’s service to the customer.

### Angry Customers

Inevitably, employees will find themselves dealing with angry customers. At any time, if an employee feels threatened or unsafe, they should leave immediately. But most of the time, an employee can use certain tactics to diffuse the situation.

- Recognize the anger and be empathetic (e.g., say “I understand” or “I can see that,” and nod in agreement).
- Do not be dismissive of the customer or be overly concerned about foul language—understand that angry people will say awful or foolish things.
- Be patient and allow the customer to blow off steam. In most cases,

they will quickly calm down on their own, and even offer an apology.

- If the customer is justifiably angry (e.g., the crew just dropped a branch through their windshield), make every effort to assure the customer that they will be made whole, then act quickly to make sure it happens. Successfully correcting a mistake is a mark of great customer service.

While it may seem obvious that trees should be kept away from high-voltage powerlines, the public and most media outlets seldom appreciate the value of UVM until after a power outage, major storm, or wildfire occurs. Unfortunately, few outside of the industry understand the complexity and technical expertise required to do the work properly and the need to attract and retain skilled professionals. This often includes utility management and the regulators who approve funding for UVM programs.

Too often, this lack of understanding results in inadequate or erratic program budgets, which in turn leads to high rates of employee turnover, overly long maintenance intervals, poor system performance, and many dissatisfied customers. After all, it is much easier to make a good impression when the power stays on and the customers’ trees are still mostly intact.

To overcome this lack of understanding requires better communication among the many stakeholders in the industry about the benefits of the work, and the requirements of UVM. UVM professionals must make strong business cases for funding, and for building alliances among other stakeholders in support of UVM programs.

Every day, thousands of utility arborists talk to thousands of utility customers. We know that customers want both attractive trees and safe, reliable electric service. With good communication and adequate support, it is possible for our industry to deliver both, and to benefit utility public relations efforts.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

*Extend Pruning Cycles and  
Increase System Reliability*

*Healthier Trees with  
Darker Leaves*

*Increase Drought  
Tolerance and  
Disease Resistance*

*Improve Safety  
and Increase  
Customer Satisfaction*

*Increase Fibrous Roots*



**FREE**  
POSTER OFFER!  
Get a FREE 36x24" art print at  
[www.treecarescience.com/utilityposter](http://www.treecarescience.com/utilityposter)

# Transform The Way Trees Are Cared For Near Powerlines

A Proven Science That Changes The Game Of Vegetation Management

# Cambistat<sup>®</sup>

## TREE GROWTH MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

Rainbow Treecare Scientific Advancements

[www.treecarescience.com/utility](http://www.treecarescience.com/utility) | 11571 K-Tel Drive Minnetonka, MN 55343 | P: 855-922-3810 | F: 952-252-0504





## Using Surveys for Better Customer Satisfaction

By Jenna Paul, Technical Writer, Davey Resource Group (DRG)

Joel Smith, a supervisor for Pacific Gas and Electric's (PG&E) electric vegetation management (VM) has been refining the company surveys and Regional Operations Manager Rob Toney of Davey Resource Group (DRG) aided in analyzing the data from the surveys and distilling insights from them for better customer satisfaction. They provided insight into how they improved their survey use and turned that data into results.

Customer satisfaction surveys can be effective tools to improve the communication between a utility's VM program and the customers it serves. A well-crafted survey streamlines the focus of the client onto the items with which the utility is most concerned. With careful analysis, the data can then be used to construct a plan with actionable steps to better improve communication with the customer and positively impact customer satisfaction.

Targeting what is important to the homeowners affected by VM work is essential for improving customer satisfaction, and surveys are a useful communication tool in gathering the holistic feedback necessary to understand what improvement efforts should be prioritized. Surveys can capture a wide range of responses, from positive to constructive criticism, in detail, face-to-face and in situations where direct communication is not possible. However, the feedback a survey yields is great only when the questions have been tuned to specific customer and utility concerns and polished for clarity and brevity.

PG&E recently overhauled their previous survey to this end. Smith and other collaborators on the project found

that many homeowners would be confused by the lengthy, complex questions or dissuaded from completing it due to the large number of them. To make an efficient, refined survey, they parsed what was most important and the questions that will lead people to talk on those points. When Smith was reformulating PG&E's survey, he decided to "narrow the survey to four or five question themes centered around the 'big ticket items' that customers care about." These themes included safety, interaction with the tree crew, quality of work, and debris clean-up.

When deciding what items should be included in the survey, Smith had specific goals in mind as to what customers should experience with their service. "The homeowner being treated with respect was a major concern," Smith said. "Everyone deserves to be treated with respect." His perspective is that a home is the occupants' "castle" and that it needs to be viewed as such when working on the property. The themes center around this concept, aiming to improve the homeowner's experience with how the work is completed on their property.

Another way the survey was streamlined was by making most questions multiple choice, with numbers scaling how much customers agreed with the statement. This narrowed the focus to PG&E's main goals and made the survey much shorter. They deviated from this for the last question, which is an open field for comments. Maintaining this final open-ended question is vital for capturing more specific or easily overlooked input.

After using surveys to obtain the data, Smith enlisted the help of Toney to analyze it and create a plan of action to improve their customer service via better communication



SILVER  
LEVEL

with PG&E's customers. DRG analyzed the data using industry-leading data analytics software to identify the main themes that would yield the greatest improvement. Once clear trends were identified in the data, DRG curated a list of the most valuable improvements that could be made while training pre-inspectors to improve PG&E customer interactions.

For DRG, training field personnel to be customer service specialists continued to be a priority in training and ongoing field support. The data showed that customers cared most about being informed concerning the work to be done on their property ahead of time and wanted to have a full understanding of what the site's aesthetics would be after work was completed. Even a simple introduction with a smile yielded better satisfaction. They targeted these points of interest and took the time to roleplay potential scenarios in a controlled environment and modeled positive customer interaction in the field.

Besides fine-tuning how field personnel spoke to customers, there was also an added focus on seeking out opportunities to notify and educate the utility's customers. An emphasis was placed on increased conversation around the importance of the work performed, as people were largely more accepting of personnel on their property and the VM work they performed if they understood that the work reduced outages and increased safety in the community.

DRG's analysis also revealed that people were far less likely to say they understood that work was to be performed, and were therefore less satisfied with the work, if they received a door hanger as notification rather than a personal phone call or in-person notice. The data showed a straight-line correlation between the type of notification and customer's satisfaction with the work performed. Robotic calls were the worst performer, followed by door hanger notification, and then phone calls. Personal interaction with a knowledgeable pre-inspector proved to have the greatest positive impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, more effort was made to reach customers in a person. In a case study conducted by PG&E's Smith and DRG's Toney, these gestures and greater engagement with the customer resulted in more than a 20 percent positive swing in customer satisfaction in less than six months.

Through PG&E and DRG's partnership and experience, surveys proved to be an essential form of communication that gave insight into how the utility and its contractors can more effectively engage with customers. They were able to help PG&E capture a wider breadth of opinions, both positive and constructive, to gain clarity on peoples' overall opinions of their VM program. This has translated into valuable improvements in contractor interactions with the utility's customers and continues to yield valuable information in PG&E and DRG's continual efforts to improve customer satisfaction.

**Have you ever been on a job site where no incidents were occurring, but unsafe practices were present?**



**Job Done Right®**

*Accidents may represent a lack of safety, but a lack of accidents does NOT represent safety.*

At Lewis Tree Service, we track OSHA recordables and incident rates as lagging indicators, but we know they do not tell the entire story. Because of that, we're redefining safety by its presence—not its absence—and learning how to improve safety by studying situations where it is present. By learning from what goes well and from teams who excel, and applying those learnings, we will continue to increase both safety and productivity.

As utility arborists, our work environments are complex and highly variable. **Surprises will happen.** Seemingly healthy ash trees may be riddled by emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agrilus planipennis*) presenting extreme danger to a climber. A tiny limb may brush a wire in poor condition and explode, causing an outage. An inexperienced worker may enter the drop zone to drag brush and be directly in the line of fire. Unfortunately, the possibilities are endless.

Industry-wide, we need to adapt to a wide variety of uncertain situations while ensuring that the number of successful outcomes in these varying conditions is as high as possible. It's not enough to prevent "something bad" from happening; we must also make sure that "something good" happens often. In our new view, safety is achieved by making sure that as much as possible goes right.

We encourage everyone who reads this to ask their workers routinely what they need to work safely, reliably, and productively. The answers may surprise you.



# SUPERIOR CUTTING ON EVERY LEVEL.

© 2019 Husqvarna AB. All rights reserved.



## THE NEW BENCHMARKS IN PROFESSIONAL FORESTRY



572 XP®

565

550 XP® MARK II

545 MARK II

T525

Our professional chainsaws are designed to help you get the most out of every shift – even in the toughest situations. Constructed for extreme durability, their ergonomic designs minimize fatigue, so you can be more productive for longer periods. Whether you're felling large trees, normal-sized trees or simply require a saw for some smooth limbing, Husqvarna has a pro saw for you. For high-performance, impressive power and rapid acceleration, reach for a Husqvarna. [HUSQVARNA.COM](https://www.husqvarna.com)



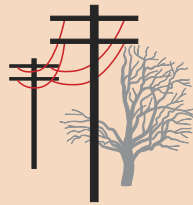
Connect with HusqvarnaUSA    

  
**Husqvarna**  
READY WHEN YOU ARE



## The Role of a Public Relations Firm in VM Communications

By Jessica Luternauer, Vice President, Southwest Strategies



Vegetation management (VM) work brings with it a number of potential questions and concerns from customers and landowners. Depending on the location, a tree may have sentimental or historical significance, generate income, or increase property value. Clear, concise, and proactive communication is critical to keeping stakeholders informed about upcoming work in their neighborhood. Answering questions up front helps minimize questions and ensure the smooth completion of VM activities. A public relations firm can help craft impactful communications by following these simple guidelines:

**1. Keep it simple.** Like any field, VM uses jargon that may seem obvious to arborists and other professionals, but is not clearly understandable to the general public. Incorporating this technical language into communications may result in confusion and negate the purpose of disseminating information in advance. A public relations firm can help develop messaging and materials that take this issue into consideration and use simple, straightforward language to describe the tree work being performed.

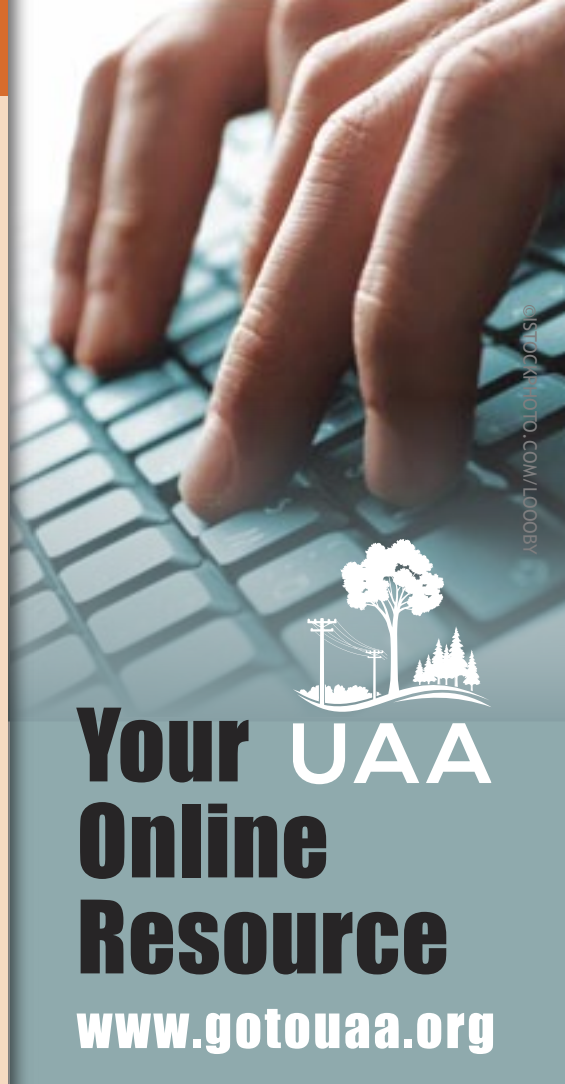
**2. Be sensitive.** Many customers feel connected to their trees, which can hold happy memories in addition to providing beauty and shade. Fruit and nut trees also contribute toward some property owners' livelihoods. As a result, communications must be crafted in a sensitive manner that demonstrates the utility's understanding of a tree's importance. This approach not only involves appropriate messaging for door hangers, postcards, fact sheets, talking points, and other materials, but also a clear plan that identifies specific methods of communication. Public relations agencies frequently develop this type of plan to ensure affected stakeholders understand what to expect, have sufficient time to prepare, and know who to contact for questions.

**3. Use visuals.** Pruning can result in unusual tree shapes that customers may find aesthetically displeasing. Collateral materials that include photographs or images of various tree-trimming techniques will help prepare property owners for these modifications. Providing visuals will also help reduce questions and concerns during the work by allowing customers to contact the utility in advance. Public relations professionals can help by recommending specific visuals that accurately depict various tree-trimming techniques without raising unnecessary concerns. In addition, a background in public relations can assist in creating clear and sensitive responses to frequently asked questions that may arise.



**4. Explain the need.** Property owners may question the need for VM work, particularly if it will dramatically impact the aesthetics of their land. Communications should briefly and succinctly explain the reasons why this work is needed. Whether VM activities are driven by regulatory requirements, general safety and reliability, or an emergency situation, a public relations agency can help ensure that messaging and materials convey the necessity of this work and how it benefits customers.

A compelling communications program can help ensure the smooth completion of routine VM work while minimizing stakeholders' concerns. Working together with a public relations firm will assist you in crafting messages, materials, and a strategic approach that are simple, sensitive, and informative.



## Your UAA Online Resource

[www.gotouaa.org](http://www.gotouaa.org)

- Join or renew your UAA membership
- Member Resources
- *Newsline* archives
- Safety and Tree Pruning brochures
- UAA Fact Sheets
- UAA news updates
- Public outreach information
- View and post jobs
- UAA event calendar
- Webinar calendar
- Link to the ISA catalog
- Research abstract area
- Member directory
- Learn about event sponsorship and advertising
- Sign up for paperless *Newsline*
- UAA members can earn ten or more ISA CEUs per year with free online quizzes
- More is in development!

# Learning to Learn: How You Can Help the Different Generations of Your Business Succeed

By Kevin Jones, Business Development Manager, ACRT, Inc.; and Keith Pancake, Safety Manager, ACRT, Inc. and Bermex.

**H**ow many generations can you name right now? You'd probably be able to name a few, particularly those that came before and after your generation. You might even be able to name all six that are still living in America today. Some are still growing into adulthood, while others are living out their golden years. But what's more challenging than naming the generations is understanding the key differences between them.

A lot is already considered common knowledge knowledge when it comes to generational differences: Baby Boomers that are entering retirement are impacting the economy. The individualism of Generation X contrasts with the team-minded nature of Millennials. Millennials grew up using digital channels to learn and interact, which is shadowed only by Generation Y using technology from a much earlier age.

Despite what we already know about the living generations, there are far more differences in how they enter the workforce and learn and use skills. Because a person's age cannot legally be considered in a hiring decision, generational differences often don't factor into training programs for employees. However, it's not a matter of determining age, but a matter of understanding how people learn so they can be successful in their jobs.

This is critical in the utility services industry, where training—particularly in workplace safety—is paramount to the success of individuals, the utility or services company they work for, and that company's customers. What your employees know or don't know has a far-reaching effect, so helping them learn in a way they're familiar with and responsive to translates into success (and safety) for everyone involved.

Let's take a look at how three major working generations learn (and how to prepare for the current Gen Z) and what you can do to ensure they're successful in their roles.

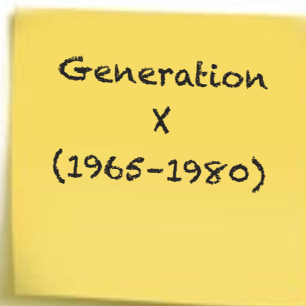
## Baby Boomers (1946-1964)



As Baby Boomers learned in a structured, linear fashion, those that remain in the workforce and are required to undergo continuing education or gain field experience will be best served through classroom and workshop settings. The technology they grew up with was overhead projectors and film strips with some video. This passive learning style was more effective in teacher/student settings. They favor in-class participation, time for reflection, and appreciate getting feedback. They'll also be more open to reading material.

Boomers represent about 33 percent of today's workforce. While they're still actively working, as many as 10,000 are expected to retire on average each day until 2020. This generation is exiting the full-time workforce, but with a couple years to go (or more), the challenge isn't training Boomers. It's helping them understand the training needs of later generations, as they (and Generation X) will be developing or providing the training.

## Generation X (1965-1980)



This generation is often the most misunderstood by other generations. Raised by career-driven parents, Xers grew up on their own—resulting in individualistic learners that had barely any interaction with early computers, but still had a





# SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

GOLD  
LEVEL



## Protecting Critical Habitat Along Duke Energy's ROWs

The National Wild Turkey Federation's (NWTf) Energy for Wildlife program received a financial boost, thanks to a \$500,000 Duke Energy Foundation grant to conserve or enhance more than 6,000 acres of critical habitat across Indiana, the Carolinas, and Florida..

The project is designed to benefit imperiled pollinators and birds, as well as numerous other wildlife species. Conservation efforts are focused on establishing or enhancing habitat on public lands, such as state or national forests, and nearby areas where Duke Energy's transmission rights-of-way (ROW) split large areas of forested habitat. The enhanced habitat conditions will provide cover and a sustainable food source, while serving as a protective travel corridor for wildlife species that need it most.

"The NWTf has worked with Duke Energy to enhance habitat along numerous ROWs, but this partnership takes our efforts for wildlife and habitat improvement to an entirely new level," said Steve Barlow, director of energy partnerships, NWTf. "We are leveraging this funding and the dedication of our volunteers to directly benefit some of the most significant habitats across Duke Energy's coverage areas."

Funding is also supporting education efforts for Duke Energy customers—landowners and regional stakeholders—about the benefits of adopting conservation practices on their own properties. In addition, Duke Energy is offering in-kind support for the project, including coordinating in-house vegetation management (VM) professionals to help with the location and implementation of the projects.

"We're taking action now to ensure that our kids and grandkids can enjoy the benefits of natural habitat and wildlife that we now enjoy," said Jeff Racey, director of transmission vegetation, Duke Energy. "Beyond this donation, we are rolling up our sleeves and working with NWTf to conserve the natural habitat that wildlife and future generations will depend on."

Conservation practices, which include integrated VM (IVM), timber management practices, and targeted herbicide treatments, aim to provide enhanced feeding and nesting environments for wildlife species.



desire to learn and make a contribution. Whereas Boomers had greater loyalty to organizations and stayed in positions for years (if not their entire careers), Xers had more distrust of the government and of organizations, leading to more frequent career changes and a general skepticism.

For organizations training Xers, it's important to understand that they prefer self-directed educational opportunities that allow them to learn at their own pace—and on their own schedule. Unlike Boomers, Xers didn't read books cover to cover. Instead, they utilized group activities and lecture. For organizations, opportunities for Xers to choose their path is critical. Unique training methods will be useful, along with making training available on demand. Clear paths for growth, mentoring opportunities, and coaching from external sources will also be helpful in moving Xers throughout their careers and roles.

Generation  
Y/  
Millennials  
(1981-1996)

**Generation Y/Millennials  
(1981-1996)**

While Xers grew up with parents who were rarely at home, Millennials have grown up with much more present and involved parents. They have more respect for authority. They are also the first to grow up with significant digital opportunity—computers becoming common

household items and the rise of mobile devices both gave way to immediate access to information and a shift in interaction from personal to personal-via-digital.

Generation  
Z/iGen  
(1997-  
Present)

**Generation Z/iGen  
(1997-Present)**

This generation has just started entering the workforce. With the oldest among them in their early 20s, many are still in college, but those that graduated early or started early careers are still building the foundation of their experience. This presents an opportunity for organizations to fine-tune their training methods for Gen Z professionals who will soon be applying for their positions.

More so than the on-demand learning needs of Xers and Millennials, the iGen will expect and benefit from flexible learning opportunities over a wide variety of technology, with mobile taking the lead. They will be fast movers and will thrive in fast-paced environments. Training should make use of various forms of media, with imagery making a fast impact that engages learners. While much will be digital and individual, collaboration and connections between people should be encouraged.

Moreso than the on-demand learning needs of Xers and Millennials, the iGen will expect and benefit from flexible learning opportunities over a wide variety of technology, with mobile taking the lead. They will be fast movers and will thrive in fast-paced environments. Training should make use of various forms of media, with imagery making a fast impact that engages learners. While much will be digital and individual, collaboration and connections between people should be encouraged.

**Bridging the Gaps Between Generations**

For organizations with multiple generations of workers, it's important to develop training methods suited to the different learning styles of each generation. Earlier generations preferred an individualized approach, with guided instruction from an educator and opportunities to read and learn separately. Later generations focused on group learning and activities, while current generations are trending toward self-learning outside of the classroom and in a digital space.

Despite this, the human connection remains. Millennials enjoy working and learning in teams though digital learning abounds, and while the iGen is expected to focus more on quick-hit digital channels for learning, many of the platforms they use now focus on collaboration between people.

With one generation transitioning out of the workforce, three active generations spanning a range of learning and workplace preferences, and one generation stepping into place, it has never been more critical for businesses in our industry to take a hard look at how we're providing learning opportunities. In all, learning styles can be boiled down to three types: *(Continued on page 39)*







# I am CNUC.

DEDICATED TO YOU AND YOUR CUSTOMERS.

INSPECTION + AUDITING  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE  
CONSULTING  
RESEARCH

CNUTILITY.COM



FieldNote™ is built to handle whatever workflow you throw at it.

We provide the platform, you determine the rest.



Visit [terra-spectrum.com](http://terra-spectrum.com) to learn more.

# PROMISE KEPT

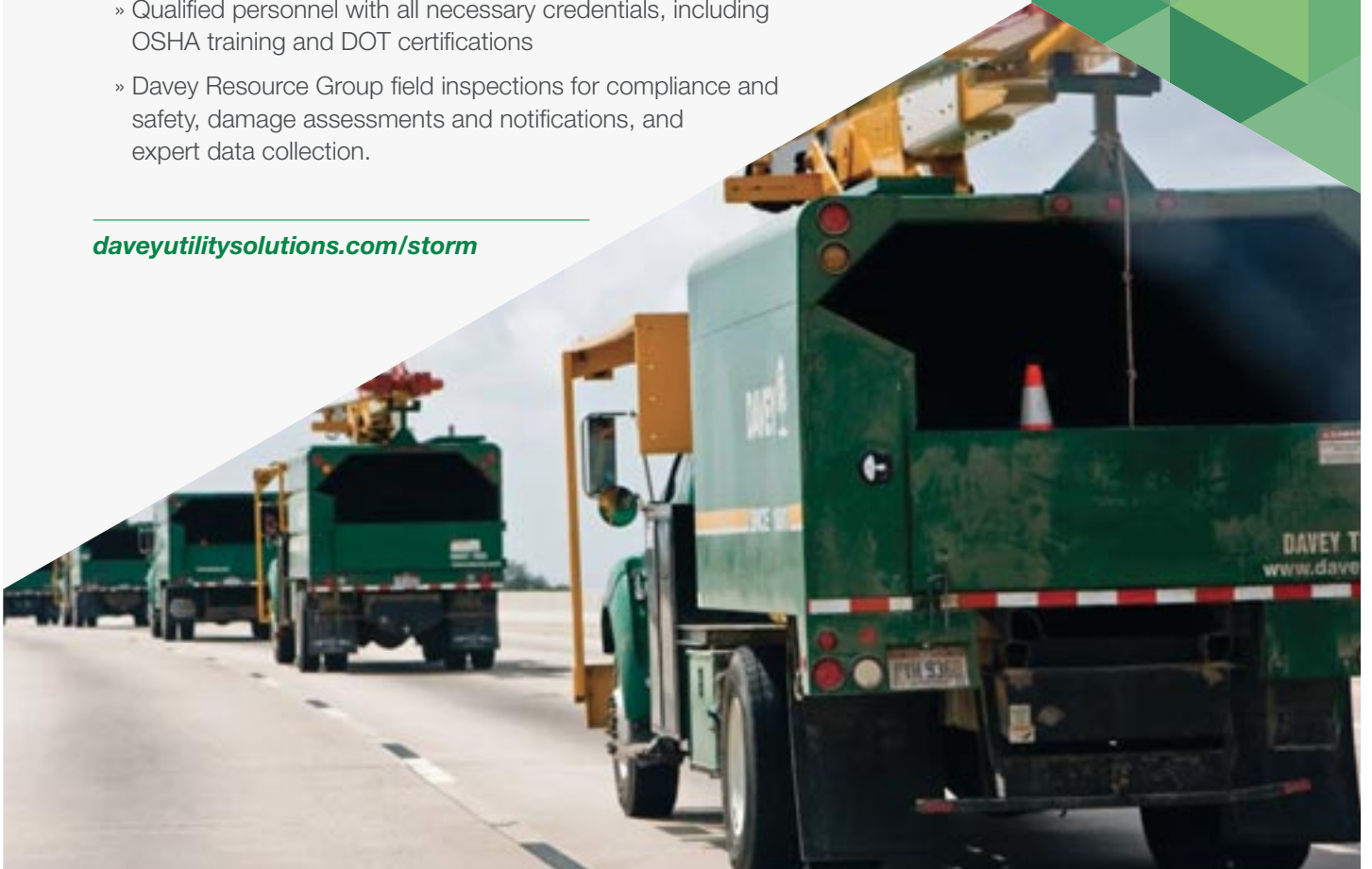


## DAVEY DELIVERS ON OUR PROMISES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS.

Our depth of resources ensures quick and reliable service delivery, including:

- » Designating a storm situation “war room” to expedite dispatch
- » GPS-enabled vehicles tracked en route to improve emergency response efficiency and provide real-time production data to operations management
- » Strategic planning options such as storm restoration contracts
- » Qualified personnel with all necessary credentials, including OSHA training and DOT certifications
- » Davey Resource Group field inspections for compliance and safety, damage assessments and notifications, and expert data collection.

[daveyutilitiesolutions.com/storm](http://daveyutilitiesolutions.com/storm)



ASSET  
MANAGEMENT



ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONSULTING



LINE  
CLEARANCE



STORM  
RESPONSE



VEGETATION  
MANAGEMENT



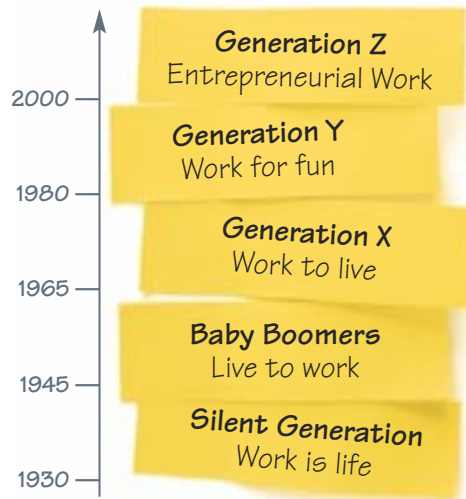
TELECOM  
CONSTRUCTION



(Continued from page 36)

- **Individual**—standard classrooms, reading materials, individual exercises
- **Collaborative**—workshops, group activities, interactive projects
- **Digital**—eLearning, online workshops and courses, video, mobile apps

While just three are listed, the amount of work required for training, safety, and other educational departments to satisfy them would be tremendous. That’s why it’s important to consider the generational makeup of your teams, departments, divisions, and organization as a whole. This may be as simple as running a report through your human resources department to identify the most prevalent generations in your business. Or, consider the use of an organizational survey to identify preferred learning opportunities.



Whatever method you use to identify the generations, look for the common ground between them. Remember, we all use digital channels for various reasons nowadays. Xers, Millennials, and the iGen are all digitally connected outside of the workplace. But what about learning through collaboration? Xers and

Millennials are open to it, and with the iGen just now coming into the picture, using collaborative learning from the start can help to establish teamwork as a learning mechanism for the future.

Individual learning should be utilized across the board. After all, we can’t accomplish everything together at once. Courses and videos can be digested individually, with deeper learning and “sinking in” occurring through collaboration. And it can all be done digitally, providing learners that need flexibility or remote access an opportunity to keep up.

Remember, generations will change, and your organization will change with them. Make sure you’re adapting your learning opportunities to give current generations what they need to succeed—and to lay the educational foundation for the generations to come.

**Services Include:**

- Right-of-Way Brush Treatments
- Bare Ground Herbicide Applications
- Tree Growth Regulators
- Consulting Services

**Testimonial:**

“The magic of our new TGR program look hold this past fall. Moving forward, less work will need to be performed which ultimately extends our trimming cycle. Overall, the program lessens the harsh footprint of trimming and is better for the member/owner, the tree, and also helps our bottom line.”

- Scott Somers - Vegetation Management Supervisor  
Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative

**Industries We Serve:**

- Utility Right-of-Way + Electrical Substations
- DOTs + Airports
- Municipalities
- Quarries + Pipelines

Contact Info: (540) 491-2690 - [aanderson@weedcontrolinc.com](mailto:aanderson@weedcontrolinc.com) - [www.weedcontrolinc.com](http://www.weedcontrolinc.com)

**GUARANTEED CONTROL**



## Is There Anybody Still Out There?

*Opinion Editorial by Andrew Donnachie,  
Contract Supervisor, CNUC*

The Pacific Northwest has often been described as one of the many wonders of the world. It boasts the greatest biomass per acre of anywhere on earth and facilitates innumerable hydroelectric power generation locations across Washington, Oregon, north Idaho, and northwest Montana. It also has spectacular scenery year round, which can be photographed on a smartphone and instantly uploaded to social media to invoke the envy of all—or it will, once you travel the hour or so back to an area with cell phone service. Despite the marvel of modern technology and its capabilities, the land of Lewis and Clark may still be the final frontier for the cell phone network. Yet, depend on our cellphones we must!

Staying in communication with each other when we're in the field working without cell service is one of the greatest challenges we face working in the utility vegetation management (UVM) industry. With more than 15,000 miles of hydro-generated high voltage transmission circuits spanning from West Yellowstone to the Olympic Peninsula and down to California, CNUC's team of 11 consulting utility foresters (CUFs) brave the unyielding Pacific Northwest terrain every day to conduct their vegetation compliance inspections and quality control. Our work zone is as vast as it is dissuasive and cellular network coverage is predictably absent where it is needed most—and good communication is almost as critical as regular communication.

Our team members work remotely, starting every day from their homes. It's practical, efficient,

and somewhat unavoidable given the geography of the transmission network. Knowing the procedures for communication and making them habitual is an essential best practice that is taught during onboarding. Communication protocols are reinforced routinely with safety meetings and job briefings and are part of the methodology that helps ensure we all return home safely every day.

The check-in/check-out procedure is the foundation of our safety policy and is the crucial first step in the communication routine. CUFs will send their work plan to their lead/supervisor via e-mail each morning, which states their starting location and the direction in which they will proceed with their assignment. Thanks to the utility's planimetric system of naming their circuits and numbering each transmission tower by its distance (in miles) from the initial substation, we have a powerful and intuitive navigational tool to plot the movement of our CUFs throughout the day.

For example, a starting location e-mail will state, "OrangePH-Red-Valley-2 179/3 working AHOL." This code tells us that our inspector is working in the transmission corridor that starts at the Orange Power House and ends at the Red Valley substation and they will be in the third span of the 179<sup>th</sup> mile from the Orange Power House. "AHOL" tells us that they are proceeding Ahead-On-Line, starting from mile 179 and proceeding to mile 180. Or they may state "BOL," Back-On-Line, starting from mile 179 and proceeding to mile 178. From this simple string of names and numbers, so much can be known about the location of our CUF who will undoubtedly be out of cellular network


coverage for most of the day at that location.

More detailed information can be supplied with the check-in notification, such as weather and potential travel condition impediments, wildfire areas and current conditions, logging operations, corridor construction projects, and wildlife and sensitive habitat restrictions. By checking the multitude of apps on our smartphones, which offer notifications about almost everything these days, from wildfires to storms and road closures, the diligent CUF will know before they go and have alternative plans which will be regularly communicated as their specific conditions and circumstances change.

Check-out is the concluding part of our daily communication routine that confirms our team members have made it home safely from their intrepid excursions into the wild. But again, this is reliant on the cell phone network. Though some CUFs reside in rural locations where there is little network coverage, everyone has a means by which they will send a text message to a group thread that simply states "I'm home." Each team member's home text is confirmed on a checklist as the working day slowly concludes. This helps to keep track of everyone checking in without having to rely on remembering who is home already and who is still out there. And, to avoid unnecessary concern, any team members who find themselves in traffic delays or situations of this nature will report that they will be checking in late.

But, what if someone hasn't checked in by the evening's deadline and they haven't reported any unusual change in





*But, what if someone hasn't checked in by the evening's deadline...*

*We are, after all, working on our own in the remote wilderness and forested areas of the Pacific Northwest where encounters with predatory animals, poisonous plants, changing weather, and road conditions are regular occurrences.*

circumstances for that day, such as a health issue or equipment failure? We are, after all, working on our own in the remote wilderness and forested areas of the Pacific Northwest where encounters with predatory animals, poisonous plants, changing weather, and road conditions are regular occurrences. This is when supervisors will follow the next stage of the communication policy, which consists of a multi-step process of investigation and discovery and concludes with contacting emergency services if necessary.

When direct contact cannot be made via phone call and text message with an indeterminate team member, the location of their vehicle will be searched using our vehicle global positioning system (GPS) tracking system dashboard, which is visible to the team leads as well as the supervisor. The importance of a high-quality GPS tracking system, properly installed, cannot be overstated. Many of these systems in the market today also rely to some degree on the cellular network and are not impervious to the dead zone phenomena. Therefore, accuracy in location reporting may not be guaranteed from some remote locations.

To counterbalance these uncertainties and give our team members a definitive means of sending an emergency message that does not utilize the cellular network, all our CUFs are issued with a 406-MHz Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) as part of their personal protective equipment. These beacons are registered with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) system database by the

individual user and their registration will contain their personal information, as well as the contact information for their team supervisor as the emergency contact. The beacons are compact, lightweight, and easy to carry, as well as simple to test and activate. When activated, they send an emergency message with GPS location data via the Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking (SARSAT) system to NOAA, which then notifies the closest authorities to the reported location and a search and rescue mission will be launched.

Thankfully, none of us have encountered a situation where the supposed 100-yard accuracy of the PLB was put to the test, but the PLB is yet another essential means of communication our team members carry with them in the wilderness that can be depended on when all other methods cannot.

When it comes to ensuring the safety, reliability, and integrity of the bulk electric system as it strides a complex path throughout the Pacific Northwest, regular and concise communication is paramount for any team charged with such a responsibility. Decision-making can be greatly expedited by many factors, which include giving team members control in their working environment and providing the means and opportunity to communicate about their changing environment. Supervisors and team leads can set the tone for the ongoing dialogue, but ultimately, it is up to each one of us to engage frequently in the ongoing conversation that establishes a best practice as an unconscious habit.





## Building Company Culture with Human Resources & Marketing

*Opinion Editorial by Katie Long, HR Recruiter, & Katie Moehn, Marketing Communications Specialist, Wright Service Corp.*

A recruiter’s dream is finding the answer to the question, “How did you hear about us?” In today’s economy, with the lowest unemployment rate in decades (according to the U.S. Labor Department), we have more jobs available than we have people to fill them, which can be a blessing and a curse. Employees are comfortable in their current roles so, as recruiters, we have to actively seek out potential candidates that may not be happy with their current position, manager, or company in the future.

When they decide to start looking at other opportunities, we need job seekers to think of us. Often, we focus on

recruitment marketing, which refers to the strategies a company uses to find, attract, nurture, and engage passive talent by reinforcing the employer brand. This can include posting ads in industry publications, flyers on job boards, posting on social media, and being active participants at career fairs. As potential candidates continue to see a logo multiple times in different locations, it starts to build brand recognition for the company—meaning they recognize it by the logo.

Marketing and human resources (HR) departments traditionally have separate job functions, with marketing

**GREEN RUNS DEEP**

“Our foundation is based on family, character and values. These values play directly into our culture. It’s a feeling... a way of life – not something you can necessarily put into words. Being a Brother’s or Sister’s Keeper is more than a title. It’s a responsibility that everyone takes pride in. In our world, green runs deep.”

Vegetation Management • Storm Restoration • Work Planning      Since 1933. Employee Owned.      **1.800.882.1216** [www.wrighttree.com](http://www.wrighttree.com)





Katie Long



Katie Moehn

©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/ANDREYPOPOV

focused on the consumer and HR on the employee. However, the lines between marketing and HR are blurring because, although they have different audiences, they both have similar objectives.

“Just as organizations compete for customers by differentiating product value, they too must compete for talent by differentiating the employee experience,” said Erik Samdahl, the vice president of marketing for the Institute for Corporate Productivity, in a Forbes blog post. “A critical piece of this differentiation is employer brand—your organization’s story, the message communicated about its reason for existing, its purpose, and what it aspires to be.”

Our marketing and HR departments recently developed recruitment videos for Wright Tree Service to do just that—bring our company’s culture to life!

By working together, we were able to align our goals and develop videos that speak to our audience. We interviewed our employees to get real, candid answers to the many questions focused on why they like their job. Every answer was a little bit different, but they all related back to our culture.

We produced two recruiting videos—a general video highlighting our culture and a “Day in the Life” video describing each job role within the company. The likelihood of losing employees shortly after they are hired increases if they don’t have a full understanding of their job roles and expectations prior to accepting the position. According to statistics provided by LinkedIn’s Ultimate List of Employer Brand Statistics, job candidates trust a company’s employees three times more than the company to provide credible information on what it’s like to work there. With our collaboration, we plan to see a higher retention rate by educating our applicants using candid responses from company employees who participated in our recruiting video.

This project is just the start of a shift in our strategy to leverage the talents of both departments to work together on company initiatives.

# HE’LL DO MORE IN ONE DAY with a Jarraff All-Terrain Tree Trimmer Than the Entire Crew Will in One Week and Go Home Safe

Manufactured in the USA, the Jarraff All-Terrain Tree Trimmer is designed for Right-of-Way maintenance operations in the most difficult to the most sensitive terrain. The Jarraff is simply the smartest way to trim trees. Contact Jarraff Industries today.



**JARRAFF ALL-TERRAIN  
TREE TRIMMER**  
**SAFER**  
**EASIER**  
**FASTER**  
**ACCURATE**  
**PROFITABLE**  
**OR THE SMARTER  
WAY TO TRIM TREES**



**JARRAFF**  
Industries, Inc.

**JARRAFF.COM | 800-767-7112**





## REC Update 2019

*Opinion Editorial by Cindy Devlin Musick, Director of VM Services, REC*

Things can change quickly in just a few years! The last time Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC) was featured by the UAA was three years ago, when we were breezing through our second cycle of a newly acquired territory that had been initially cleared five years prior. Our contracts were fully staffed and we had experienced commercial driver's license (CDL) certified drivers and climbers who were able to rise to any tricky line clearance situation.

Shortly after, there was a presidential election, the economy strengthened, and unemployment began to slide into the lowest rates in recent history. Those factors, coupled with immigration restrictions and the tightening of border control, soon started to chip away at our contract workforce. A bidding war for climbers and CDL drivers began across the Eastern U.S. and we began to lose our best workers. As a result, the goals of our department were not reached in 2016, 2017, or



no exception. Scheduled maintenance is at the core of our program and it was imperative that we got back to a five-year schedule as soon as possible. REC made the decision in early 2018 to allow mechanical trimming in off-road areas and added two additional crews that featured a

Jaraff. A third crew was added in late 2018 with a Skytrim device. Not only do the mechanical trimmers reduce climbing and allow for a safer trimming experience, but it has reduced our reliance on personnel adept in climbing and pruning.

Our contractor team doubled. This increased the number of workers in two service areas by 30 percent. The increased crew necessitated an increase in forestry staff to audit the work. For this, we turned to a contract forester company and were

2018. In addition, the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) (EAB) began to assault the ash trees in the western part of our territory. Multiple circuits required remediation work simply to stay ahead of imminent failures. There was the potential for catastrophic failures to our system, which caused us to reassign an entire crew to EAB work.

In late 2018, it was readily apparent that we needed to make drastic changes. Trees caused two-thirds of outages at most utilities and REC was







*The rock star Xylem crew out of our Culpeper District after a breakfast and receiving their gift card bonuses. Two of our foresters are on either end—Daniel Ricotta and Donald MocarSKI.*

able to add two degreed natural resource professionals who primarily inspect completed work but also assist in working with property owners and marking hazard trees ahead of the crews.

Employee retention among each of our crews was an issue, so we met several times to identify ways to set ourselves apart not only from other workplaces, but neighboring utilities. We structured our bonus program to award short-term, local goals for production. We celebrate with our crews when they meet their goals by taking them to breakfast or dinner, in addition to a cash incentive. We are quick to praise and slow to scold. We have found that positive feedback goes a long way to encouraging winning behavior. Our contract crews are at the core of our team and we try to make sure they know they are appreciated and valued. Qualified line clearance tree trimming is a noble, honorable profession. It's hot, cold, tough work and certainly not for the faint of heart.

The entire team recently gathered for the annual Day of Safety. Anyone can strap on a pair of chaps and put on a hardhat and safety glasses and call themselves a tree trimmer. What our tree trimmers do is different; it's tremendously dangerous, and it really matters. It matters to the dad making his kids breakfast before school. It matters to the elderly veteran on dialysis. It matters to the little boy who can't wait to get home from school to watch the big game. It matters to our linemen during storm restoration. Every day, our tree trimmers help prevent tree-

caused outages and that's something that makes us proud.

Reducing and eliminating tree-caused outages and improving metrics such as SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIDI has always been a focus of REC's program. However, in 2019, REC has launched a renewed effort to reduce tree-caused outages. Every contract employee is trained to look for potential "cycle buster" trees or other trees that may cause issues for members before we return in five years.

High reliability zones (HRZs) are examined in-depth to see if a different prescription for integrated vegetation management (IVM) is necessary between the substation and the first downstream recloser. One of our mantras this year is to "look externally, not internally." There is a great deal of knowledge and experience in other departments, such as Operations and Construction, Dispatch, Engineering, and Analytics; partnering with internal departments to find ways to lower tree-caused outages is not only crucial to our success, but it recognizes that we are all working towards common goals and can complement each other. For example, we have learned to use analytics software, such as Power BI, to examine the outage history of circuits, to focus on areas of a circuit that have the most issues related to trees, and deal with them head on—in the field with our contractor partners.

"Every outage matters, because every member matters," has become another mantra. Finally, we have started a practice of examining every

tree-caused outage that affects more than 100 members. It is helping us to start to identify patterns—of species, soil type, and other site conditions. Laying eyes on trees that cause REC outages also helps us to sharpen our hazard tree assessment skills and "find the one that got us."

All of this renewed focus has been carried out by REC's VM services (VMS) team. The VMS team is a truly dedicated group of natural resources professionals. We are very fortunate to have a range of experience, from as little as six months to more than 30 years. We come from different areas of the country and world, and have different education levels and experiences, which is a strength. We don't view situations through the same lens (life experiences), which is also a strength. However, we share a common goal. The VMS team has stepped up to the plate even more this year, with added responsibilities, volume of work, and changes to how we do things. They have been training new contract foresters, dealing with fluctuating crew levels and work (which happened to occur during the highest precipitation year on record), they have interacted with hundreds of members, completed multiple community engagement projects, and have kept their sense of humor, handling everything with grace.

Finally, the support of our supervisors and our executive team has been unwavering. Not only have they supported the VMS team financially, but have also been quick to provide moral support. I'm proud to work at an electric cooperative with the focus on members and not shareholders. I'm proud to be able to say integrity, service, caring, and respect are our core values. I see them in action every day.



PHOTO BY ERIN CREEKMUR, ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Regional Reports include responses to the following survey questions regarding communications:

1. What has been the most challenging communication aspect for your team?
2. How do you proceed with work when you cannot reach or contact your customers?
3. What other means of communication do you use in your utility (e.g., social media, call-out systems, hotlines, etc.)?

**Northwest Region**

By Frank McGraw, Forestry Supervisor, The Illuminating Company  
Response also by Frank McGraw

1. The Illuminating Company strives to proactively establish working relationships with municipal

foresters and service directors in order to communicate our pruning schedules and explain the purpose for our work, namely public safety and the reliability of our electric service. We encounter challenges when our message, which is really the Arbor Day Foundation’s message, of “Right Tree, Right Place” is misunderstood. In these cases, we tend to lean on our Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry state foresters in working through these issues.

2. Notifying our customers is a courtesy, but we do make an effort to let them know when our crews will be in the area and what they can expect during the clearing process. If we are not able to contact a customer, we will proceed with pruning as necessary. However, we must secure permission from the property owner before any trees or brush can be removed.

3. We share our plans with affected municipalities and, at times, the municipality may publish communications about our pruning program in local newspapers or mailings, or municipal representatives may share information via social media. Also, if electric service must be suspended to complete a particularly difficult job, we will notify our customers via a reverse interacted voice response (IVR) using the phone number on file.

**UAA needs your help!** Every two months, UAA Regional Representatives can provide a report for the *Utility Arborist Newsline*. Let them know what is going on in your company or in your region.

**2018-2019 Regional Representatives**

International (Brazil) .....	Pedro Mendes Castro ..	pedro@cemig.com.br
Midwest .....	Nate Carlisle.....	ncarlisle@wrighttree.com
	Dylan Evans .....	dylanevans@rockymountainpower.net
	Mike Greer .....	mgreer@interhop.net
	Donald Lovato.....	dlovato@treesinc.com
	Tim Mackey .....	tmackey2@ameren.com
	Frank McGraw .....	fmcgraw@firstenergycorp.com
	J. Michael O’Connor ..	jmoconnor@cmsenergy.com
	Andy Olson.....	andy.olson@ecemn.com
	Scott Skopec.....	sskopec@cuivre.com
	J.M. Sparkman .....	jmspark@eci-consulting.com
Northeast .....	Guy Vogt .....	guy.vogt@pseg.com
	Nathan Wright.....	nathan.wright@us.ngrid.com
Northwest/Western .....	James McKendry .....	james.mckendry@bchydro.com
Pacific Northwest .....	Brett Huet .....	brett@southerndr.com
Southeast .....	Dennis S. Detar .....	dennis.s.detar@dominionenergy.com
	Jess Mason .....	jmason@acrtinc.com
Southern .....	Steve Bostock .....	ssbostock@aol.com
	Steve White .....	steve.white@davey.com
Southwest/West Coast .....	Krassimir Piperkov .....	kp@enview.com





# AN EXPERT APPROACH TO BEST-IN-CLASS PERFORMANCE.

We have expanded our team of experts to bring you the next generation of consulting and field services for utility vegetation management that have made ECI the industry leader for the past 45 years.

## OPERATIONS

- › Program development and optimization
- › Insect infestations (emerald ash borer, western bark beetles)
- › Professional field personnel
  - Contractor safety
  - Work planning
  - Customer notification
  - Work auditing
- › Federal and state regulatory compliance

## TECHNOLOGY

- › Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) program development
- › Remote sensing (LiDAR, imagery) program analysis
- › Software selection and implementation
- › Geospatial and statistical analysis

---

Since 1972 ECI has helped hundreds of clients in North America realize dramatic improvements in public & employee safety, service reliability, cost savings, risk, regulatory compliance, and overall operational effectiveness while improving the public's perception of utility vegetation management.

UTILITY ARBORIST ASSOCIATION

A Professional Affiliation of the  
International Society of Arboriculture

# Utility Arborist Newsline

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
MOS

2009 W. Broadway Avenue, Suite 400, PMB 315  
Forest Lake, MN 55025



## WE BUILD INDUSTRY LEADERS AND EXPERTS

**We're constantly sharpening our skills** to build the safest, most efficient, and most capable workforce in the industry, featuring advanced **SafeProduction** training protocols, including:

- Industry-Leading Apprenticeship Program
- Computer Based Training
- Tree Felling Training

### ASPLUNDH®

A BETTER WAY

ASPLUNDH.COM ■ 1-800-248-TREE