

Always Plant Smart near powerlines

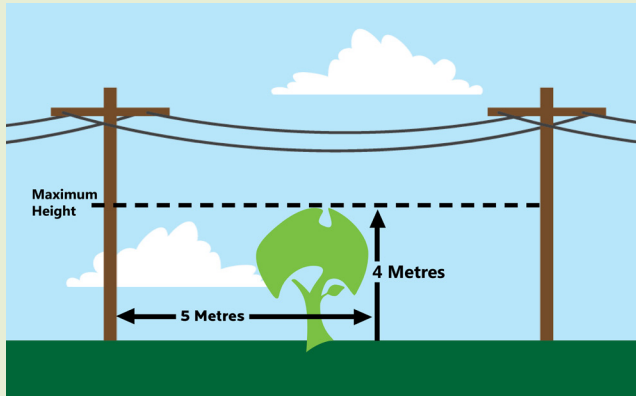
Ergon Energy maintains an electricity network throughout regional Queensland comprising around 150,000km of powerlines and one million power poles. Every year, it makes a significant investment in keeping vegetation clear of powerlines, combining sound environmental practices with the need to provide the most reliable electricity supply possible.

Trees growing close to powerlines can bring them down, disrupting power and causing a dangerous situation. Before you plant, look up for powerlines. If they are close, consider how high and how wide the tree will grow, and if necessary, plant it further away or choose a different tree or shrub.

It also pays to consider what services (electricity, gas, and telecommunications) could be below ground. Visit www.dialbeforeyoudig.com.au to request maps or call 'Dial Before You Dig' on 1100.

The diagram below shows the desired minimum distance between a pole and the trunk of a fully grown tree, and the desired maximum fully grown height of trees under powerlines (4m).

For the service line, the one that connects power to most homes, trees can safely grow quite close, even brushing it lightly, and usually not cause a problem.



So, if your tree will grow to 5m, it should be planted 5m away from the power pole. If it will grow to 10m, it should be 10m away.

Keeping trees away from powerlines helps keep the power on, and you safe.

Find out more

ergon.com.au

Search for 'Plant Smart' for a list of participating nurseries.

greeningaustralia.org.au or email

plantsmart@greeningaustralia.org.au

for more information about Greening Australia.



Think Smart, Plant Smart

Trees and Powerlines Don't Mix



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Plant Smart
A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP



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Plant Smart is a vegetation management program developed by Ergon Energy and Greening Australia to educate the community on planting appropriate trees under and around powerlines.

The Gympie Regional Council is leading the way by actively participating in the Plant Smart program to help you choose the right plants for planting near powerlines. This ensures that the trees won't grow into powerlines, potentially disrupting the power supply to you and your neighbours and bringing live powerlines to the ground in a storm or windy conditions. It also ensures Ergon Energy's tree management contractors won't have to remove a tree that you've come to love.

Following is a list of plants of various heights that are suitable for planting under and near powerlines. Your local nursery should be able to assist in identifying the right plant for you. Planting anything else near powerlines is just not worth the risk.

Native Plants up to 2 m in height

midyim (*Austromyrtus dulcis*)
mat rush (*Lomandra confertifolia*)
many-flowered mat rush (*Lomandra multiflora*)
thyme-leaved honey myrtle (*Melaleuca thymifolia*)
wallum bottlebrush (*Melaleuca pachyphylla*)
hairy pea bush (*Pultenaea villosa*)
kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*)
native rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*)

Native Plants up to 3 m in height

golden candlesticks (*Banksia spinulosa*)
coffee bush (*Breynia oblongifolia*)
blue tongue (*Melastoma malabathricum* subsp. *malabathricum*)
forest pittosporum (*Pittosporum revolutum*)

Native Plants up to 4 m in height

weeping baeckea (*Baeckea frutescens*)
wild may (*Leptospermum polygalifolium*)
baeckea (*Sannantha bidwillii* syn. *Babingtonia bidwillii*)
velvet leaf (*Callicarpa pedunculata*)
red-fruited palm lily (*Cordyline rubra*)
purple hovea (*Hovea acutifolia*)

How to Plant Smart

- Check with the council for your local planting guidelines, especially if planning to plant on your council footway.
- Consider the location of overhead and underground services, including the service line to your home.
- Call 'Dial Before You Dig' on 1100 to request information on underground cables on, or near your property.
- Consider carefully which type of tree you should plant. Is it evergreen or deciduous?
- Will its roots, branches, sap, flowers, or fruits damage buildings, fences, footpaths, roads, foundations, or vehicle paintwork?
- Check the visibility from your driveway, intersection sight lines and access to your property.
- Consider pedestrian traffic, mail service and garbage truck access.
- Check required clearance from street lights.

How to plant a tree so that it thrives

- Dig a hole 300mm from the edge of the root ball on the tree.
- Loosen up the sides of the hole to promote root penetration.
- Water crystals can aid in water retention.
- Create a well around your tree with soil to help retain water and reduce water run off.
- Place mulch to a depth of 150mm around the base of your tree, but away from the trunk to prevent rot.
- Thoroughly water each tree immediately after planting and as required.
- Once planted, water the tree regularly in dry weather (check under the mulch to see if the soil is dry). Even so-called drought-tolerant plants need to be watered regularly until their roots become established.
- Native trees can be fertilised for much better growth. Use a fertiliser that is low in phosphorus, marked as 'P' on the label of the bag. To determine if your fertiliser is suitable, check the N:P:K (nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium) composition. Use one that contains less than 3% P; those with low P but high N and K are fine, e.g. 11:2:13.