

WAC 296-45-455 Line-clearance tree-trimming operations. This section provides additional requirements for line-clearance tree-trimming operations and for equipment used in these operations.

This section does not apply to qualified electrical employees.

(1) Before an employee climbs, enters, or works around any tree, a determination must be made of the nominal voltage of electric power lines posing a hazard to employees. However, a determination of the maximum nominal voltage to which an employee will be exposed may be made instead, if all lines are considered as energized at this maximum voltage.

(2) There must be a second line-clearance tree trimmer within normal, unassisted voice communication under any of the following conditions:

(a) If a line-clearance tree trimmer is to approach more closely than 10 feet (305 cm) any conductor or electrical apparatus energized at more than 600 volts; or

(b) If branches or limbs being removed are closer to lines energized at more than 600 volts than the distances listed in Table 2, located in WAC 296-45-325; or

(c) If roping is necessary to remove branches or limbs near such conductors or apparatus.

(3) Line-clearance tree trimmers must maintain the minimum approach distances from energized conductors given in Table 2, located in WAC 296-45-325.

(4) Branches that are contacting exposed energized conductors or equipment or that are within the distances specified in Table 2, located in WAC 296-45-325 may be removed only through the use of insulating equipment.

Note: A tool constructed of a material that the employer can demonstrate has insulating qualities meeting WAC 296-45-305(1) are considered as insulated under this section if the tool is clean and dry.

(5) Ladders, platforms, and aerial devices must not be brought closer to an energized part than the distances listed in Table 2, located in WAC 296-45-325.

(6) Line-clearance tree-trimming work cannot be performed when adverse weather conditions make the work hazardous in spite of the work practices required by this section. Each employee performing line-clearance tree-trimming work in the aftermath of a storm or under similar emergency conditions must be trained in the special hazards related to this type of work.

Note: Thunderstorms in the immediate vicinity, high winds, snow storms, and ice storms are examples of adverse weather conditions that are presumed to make line-clearance tree-trimming work too hazardous to perform safely.

(7) A tree trimmer may climb out of a basket into a tree or from a tree back into the basket so long as he is properly tied into the tree during the entire maneuver and the employer can demonstrate that this is the safest way to perform the work.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060 and chapter 49.17 RCW. WSR 19-13-083, § 296-45-455, filed 6/18/19, effective 8/1/19; WSR 16-10-082, § 296-45-455, filed 5/3/16, effective 7/1/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.040. WSR 99-09-080, § 296-45-455, filed 4/20/99, effective 8/1/99. Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, [49.17].040, [49.17].050 and [49.17].060. WSR 98-07-009, § 296-45-455, filed 3/6/98, effective 5/6/98.]