



Department of Environment and Natural Resources

FOREST MANAGEMENT BUREAU

FMB Bldg. Visayas Avenue, Vasra 1128 Quezon City, PHILIPPINES

Tel No. (63-2) 927-4788 ■ Fax No. (63-2) 920-0374

Website: <http://forestry.denr.gov.ph> ■ E-mail Address: fmbdenr@mozcom.com

MEMORANDUM

FOR/TO : All Regional Directors
Assistant Regional Director Technical Services
All PENROs and CENROs

FROM : The Director

SUBJECT : **TECHNICAL BULLETIN NO. 14 GUIDELINES ON TREE CUTTING, TRIMMING AND PRUNING WITHIN AREAS COVERED BY 69 kV TO 500 kV TRANSMISSION LINE FACILITIES/PROJECTS**

DATE :

A. Technical Bulletin

This Technical Bulletin provides guidelines and procedures on tree cutting, trimming and pruning of affected trees (natural and planted) on the construction of transmission lines, telecommunication sites and other power generation projects, including maintenance activities on existing lines. In addition, this would also serve as a mechanism for the protection of the environment as well as the reliability of power transmission facilities in the country.

B. Scope and Coverage

The user of this Technical Bulletin is for the use of DENR Personnel who are involve in the conduct of tree inventory in forest land, plantation forest and all other areas that have tree vegetation. This involves the pruning/trimming, or cutting as may be allowed, of danger trees of premium or non-premium species in 69 kV to 500 kV existing, new and future transmission projects, either in public or private lands in compliance with various forestry laws, rules and regulations, including relevant environmental laws, and regulations to ensure protection and conservation of natural resources for national interest.

C. Definition of Terms. For the purpose of this Circular, the following terms are defined as:

1. Clearing Zone – the space within the right-of-way of a transmission structure or facility wherein tree cutting/pruning/trimming is allowed based on conditions cited in Section 7, hereof.
2. Danger Tree – tree that poses threat to transmission line, lives and properties, whether growing inside or outside the ROW width prescribed for each of the voltage levels.
3. Pruning/Trimming – the cutting of major or minor branches of trees that breach the safe clearance of transmission line or facilities.
4. Tower – a structure usually made up of steel lattice carrying line hardware to support conductors and provide safe clearance between high voltage live conductors from its surrounding.
5. Transmission Line – an overhead power line which consists mainly of conductor or cables supported by structures for transmitting electric power from generating power plants to substation, from substation to another substation, and from a substation to a customer’s load-end station.
6. Transmission Facilities – include project construction areas, substation, repeater station, cable terminal station, converter station, transmission line, and other transmission assets.

D. Route and Site Selection for Transmission Facilities.

Route and site selection for transmission facilities shall be undertaken in coordination with concerned CENR Office to minimize or avoid the environmental impacts of building new transmission facilities. The criteria to be considered in route and site selection should include environmental, cultural and social factors to be balanced with the technical (engineering, construction and maintenance factors) and economic factors.

E. Clearing Zone. This Technical Bulletin allows the applicant to cut/prune/trim for the following conditions:

1. **Transmission line** – the ROW width/easement shall be consistent with DENR’s policy to minimize the trees to be affected by the construction and maintenance of transmission facilities, the applicant shall adopt the Tree Clearing and Safe Vertical Clearance Schemes as illustrated/attached in Annex “A”.
 - a. **For Tower sites** – the applicant shall be allowed to cut trees within the footprints of tower sites with maximum dimension of 50 meters x 50 meters or 2,500 sq. meters per tower site.

b. For in-between Tower sites – the applicant shall implement the appropriate pruning/trimming of trees, as shown in Annex “B” hereof, within the ROW width as illustrated in Figure 1 of Annex A., **except** for planted trees within private lands where cutting is allowed. The applicant may apply environment-friendly growth retardant after pruning/trimming to ensure safe clearance is maintained before the next clearing activity.

2. Clearing zone for other transmission facilities (substation, repeater station, cable terminal station, and converter station sites) – the applicant shall be allowed to cut, prune and/or trim trees, as may be deemed necessary subject to item E hereof and the issuance of permit by DENR. The area to be subjected to cutting of trees for these facilities will depend on the design and specification of the structure/s. However, only pruning/trimming shall be allowed for trees within the vicinity of the working areas.

F. Issuance of Tree Cutting Permit. DENR shall issue the clearance and permit in accordance with delineation of authority in the issuance of tree cutting clearance and permits, as attached in Annex C.

G. Mechanism and Protocol in Tree Cutting, Trimming and Pruning within areas covered by New and/or Existing Transmission Line Projects. The applicant and concerned DENR Office shall have the following duties and responsibilities;

1. The Applicant shall:

- a. Apply for Tree Cutting Permit based on existing laws and DENR rules and regulations;
- b. Cause the conduct of 100% Timber Inventory on the affected areas and submit necessary documentary requirements for the application of tree cutting permit;
- c. Submit Earth-balling and Transplanting Plan, if applicable;
- d. Be allowed to cut only on the “footprints” of the Transmission towers and facilities; and
- e. Be allowed to only trim and prune in between tower sites;

2. The DENR Office concerned shall:

- a. The DENR Office shall Receive, Evaluate and Process the application for TCP and assist in the conduct of the 100% Timber Inventory;
- b. The DENR Office shall make sure the submission of the required documents for the application of TCP is complete;
- c. The Regional Office conduct preliminary site validation of the applied area prior to endorsement to the Central Office;

- d. The DENR Central shall conduct final Process; Evaluation and issue Clearance for the Regional Office to issue Tree Cutting and Earth-balling Permit as the case may be; and
- e. The DENR Central and Regional Office shall monitor the compliance of the terms and conditions of the issued permit/s. \

Further clarifications and/or additional instructions may be issued to ensure smooth implementation of the subject tree cutting regulations.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE.

RICARDO L. CALDERON, *CESO III*

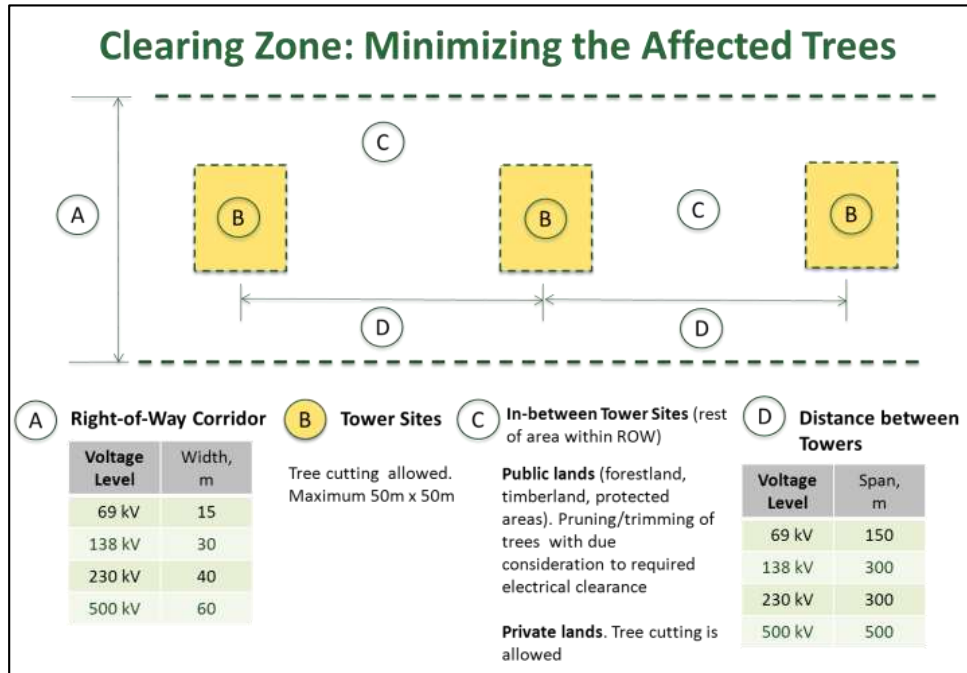


Figure 1. Tree clearing scheme

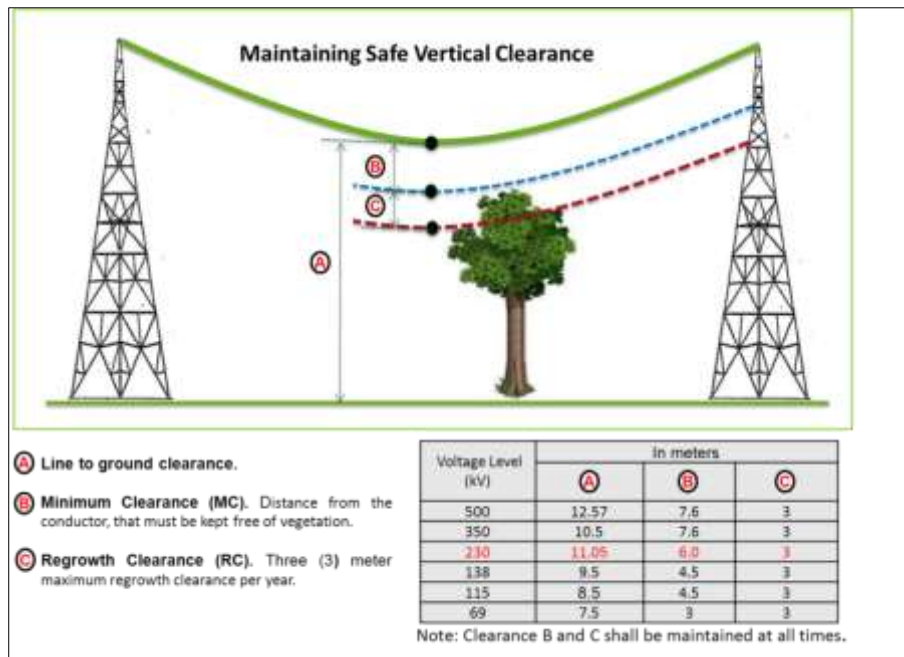
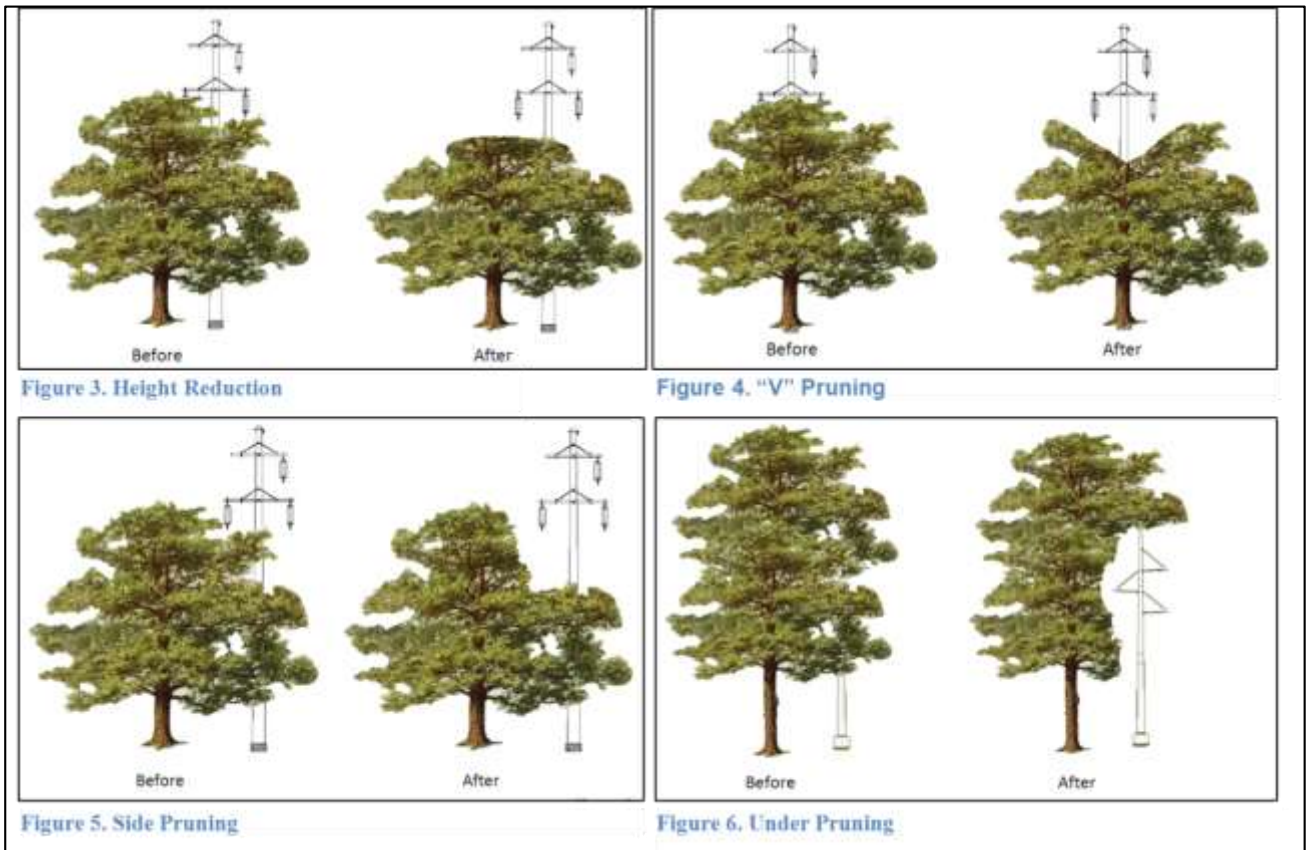


Figure 2. Safe Vertical Clearance

TYPES OF PRUNING



Annex C

Table 1. Delineation of authority in the issuance of tree cutting/pruning/trimming clearance and permits

Type of Land	Allowed Activity	Clearance	Permit
A. Forestland/Public Lands			
1. Tower Site			
a. NGT/Premium	Cutting	Usec for Field Operations	Regional Director
b. Planted Premium			
c. Planted	Cutting	Regional Director	
2. In-between tower site			
a. NGT/Premium	Pruning/Trimming	Regional Director	
b. Planted Premium			
c. Planted			
3. Other transmission facilities			
a. Area affected by the structure/s			
- NGT/Premium	Cutting	Usec for Field Operations	Regional Director
- Planted	Cutting	Regional Director	
b. Within the vicinity of the working areas	Pruning/Trimming	Regional Director	
B. Private lands			
1. Tower Site			
a. NGT/Premium	Cutting	Usec for Field Operations	Regional Director
b. Planted Premium			
c. Planted	Cutting	Regional Director	
2. In-between tower site			
a. NGT/Premium	Pruning/Trimming	Regional Director	
b. Planted Premium			
c. Planted	Cutting		
3. Other transmission facilities			
a. Area affected by the structure/s			
- NGT/Premium	Cutting	Usec for Field Operations	Regional Director
- Planted	Cutting	Regional Director	
b. Within the vicinity of the working areas			
- NGT/Premium	Pruning/Trimming	Regional Director	
- Planted	Cutting		