

YOUR ROLE

You can contribute to the protection of the power system and sustainable vegetation control.



- **Plant the right tree in the right place**
- **Inform us of situations that represent a risk for the system:**
 - Dangerous trees
 - Weakened poles
 - Etc.



CLEARANCE AROUND SERVICE LOOPS

Your service loop is the portion of the line that links the distribution system to the service mast mounted on your home. This portion of the line belongs to Hydro-Québec, but the service mast belongs to the homeowner.

Hydro-Québec's cyclical pruning operations do not apply to trees that overhang service loops. Nevertheless, if a branch or a tree falls on a customer's service loop, the customer may ask Hydro-Québec for assistance.

The service masts in residential installations cannot resist the weight of a fallen tree or large branch. It is important to know that customers whose service loop is damaged due to a weather event (wet snow, strong winds or freezing rain) are among the lowest in priority to have service restored.

It is therefore in customers' best interest to remove weakened trees or branches overhanging their service loop to reduce the risk of a power outage. However, remember that pruning is a very high-risk activity that must be carried out by recognized specialists.

VEGETATION CONTROL THAT PROMOTES BIODIVERSITY

Whether along roads, in fields or in wooded areas, distribution line rights-of-way provide ideal habitats for the activities of many animal species, including resting, reproducing, feeding and traveling. Rights-of-way are also home to a large number of plant species.

To preserve the biodiversity in its rights-of-way, Hydro-Québec relies on actions such as pruning, selective clearing, snag preservation and conserving residual wood and branches on site.



CONTROLLING VEGETATION TO REDUCE THE FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF OUTAGES

Close to 40% of power outages are caused by branches or trees that fall on overhead distribution lines. Most of these outages occur due to weather events. For instance, in winter, wet snow and freezing rain significantly increase the weight of tree branches. Under this excessive weight, fragile trees or branches can give way and fall on power lines, causing major damage and many outages.

In all its activities, Hydro-Québec is concerned with the safety of individuals, the protection of the environment and the integrity of its system. Maintaining 100,000 km of overhead lines in wooded, urban and rural areas is a major challenge. Each year, Hydro-Québec takes preventive measures to control vegetation:

- 20,000 spans are cleared (a span is the portion of overhead line between two neighboring poles).
- 50,000 vulnerable or dangerous trees are cut down.
- Pruning is conducted in 150,000 spans.

www.hydroquebec.com/trees

Hydro-Québec
Coordinated by Communication avec la clientèle
for Vice-présidence – Réseau de distribution
March 2013

WET SNOW, STRONG WINDS, FREEZING RAIN...

A power system under pressure



RISKS

WET SNOW

Children love it, but anyone who has ever shoveled wet snow knows how heavy it is! A thick layer of wet snow can make conifers bend so much that they break or become uprooted, with all the risks that represents for the power system.



FREEZING RAIN

Just like wet snow, ice buildup on branches represents a heavy weight that can exceed the wood's breaking point.



STRONG WINDS

Strong winds can occur at any time of the year and may be combined with snow, freezing rain or rain. However, the risks for the power system are highest when there are leaves on the trees because they catch the wind.



OUR ACTIVITIES

CLEARING

Clearing is a process that involves cutting trees down to ground level while maintaining low-growing vegetation that will not come too close to medium-voltage lines.

Clearing is the most effective way of ensuring system security and the continuity of electricity supply. This approach is nevertheless reserved for forested areas where trees have no ornamental value.



PRUNING

Pruning consists of trimming or cutting tree branches that are in danger of touching distribution lines in order to reduce the risk of short circuits or electric shock.

Pruning is a difficult and dangerous operation that must be repeated regularly as part of carefully planned campaigns. Cutting branches before they get too close to the distribution system is an enormous, never-ending challenge given that certain tree branches can grow two metres a year!



FELLING

Tree felling consists of cutting down fragile or vulnerable trees that are in danger of touching distribution lines.

Tree felling operations are planned around the identification of hazard trees. This complex and virtually endless task is done only by arborists.

