

Overview

This standard covers all the activities that may be required to carry out the planned maintenance of trees and vegetation in proximity to utilities, on behalf of the utility, in accordance with the utility owner's and licence holder's requirements.

Activities could include some or all of the following:

- Surveying trees and vegetation in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities to identify the maintenance required
- Carrying out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to above- ground utilities and utility structures
- Carrying out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to below- ground utilities

You could be working to a given specification that defines the methods to be used but you will be expected to determine how to carry out these methods on site.

You must be aware of the hazards associated with the work and the utilities.

When working with equipment and machinery, you must be appropriately trained, competent to carry out the activity being undertaken, and hold current certification where required, in line with the relevant legislation, codes of practice, industry guidance and the utility/licence holder's requirements.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice, industry standards and guidance, and the utility/licence holder's requirements.

This standard is for utility arborists under written authorisation of the utility owner.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

Core requirements and responsibilities

1. obtain the relevant information to carry out the work activities in accordance with organisational procedures
2. confirm all required permissions and licences have been obtained
3. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
4. assess the risks associated with the site and the work to be carried out, before starting work and throughout the activity, checking and confirming the findings of any existing risk assessments
5. confirm that sufficient control measures are implemented and that emergency planning and procedures relevant to the site have been established and recorded
6. select the safest working methods, making use of mechanical methods where this is safer, in accordance with the assessed risks and organisational procedures, and plan work accordingly
7. confirm that relevant training, experience and certification is in place to undertake the work to be carried out and recognise your own competence limitations
8. use appropriate methods to maintain effective communication with other workers and anyone else involved in, or affected by, the work, in accordance with industry guidance and organisational procedures
9. confirm that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work to be carried out is worn at all times
10. select, prepare, use, maintain and store the tools and equipment required safely, including specialist equipment required for utility work, in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and manufacturer's instructions
11. confirm that all equipment has been checked, tested where required, and is fit for purpose, in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and manufacturer's instructions
12. maintain the safety and security of tools and equipment on site
13. carry out the required work in accordance with the information provided and organisational procedures
14. remove all waste and surplus materials, and deal with them in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and organisational procedures

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15. minimise damage to the site and surrounding area while carrying out the work and confirm that the site is left in a safe and tidy condition

16. implement best practice approaches to sustainability that are appropriate for the work being carried out

17. deal effectively with issues that arise, within the scope and limitations of your responsibilities, and report issues which cannot be resolved in accordance with organisational procedures

18. complete and store all relevant documentation in accordance with legal and organisational requirements

Survey trees and vegetation in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities to identify the required maintenance

19. survey the site and assess the work required to maintain the trees and vegetation in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities and utility structures, in order to reduce the impact on the utility so it can continue to function safely and effectively

20. identify the types of utility-specific apparatus and the associated safety zones

21. identify the specialist equipment required for tree and vegetation maintenance operations in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities and utility structures

22. specify the resources needed to carry out the required maintenance, in accordance with the relevant legislation and industry standards

23. clearly identify when specialised workers, engaged by the utility, must be used

24. document and record survey details that are appropriate to the utility and suitable for the way the data will be used

Carry out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities

25. prepare the working area in accordance with safe working practices for utility arboriculture, confirming that the required signage and guarding controls are in place

26. confirm that the work required to maintain trees and vegetation in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities and utility structures is in accordance with organisational procedures

27. check for signs of disease, defects, decay and other hazards in the trees being worked on, and obtain advice where you are unsure

28. carry out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities and utility structures using suitable methods and equipment, in accordance with the relevant utility owner's and licence holder's requirements, industry guidance and organisational procedures

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29. carry out tree root pruning where required when trees are in proximity to below-ground utilities, and ensure trenches are reinstated using suitable ameliorated backfill
30. continually assess risks and review safety procedures during utility arboriculture work in accordance with legal requirements, industry guidance and organisational procedures

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Core requirements and responsibilities

1. how to identify and access information relevant to the required work
2. how to identify hazards and assess risks associated with the site and the work to be carried out, and the importance of site-specific risk assessment and control measures that are appropriate for your area of work
3. the relevant health and safety procedures and Safe Systems of Work (SSoW), including lone working where appropriate
4. the emergency planning and procedures relevant to the site, risk zone distances and escape routes
5. the importance of risk zone management and the correct use of warning signs and barriers to inform and protect others while the work is carried out
6. the current legislation and codes of practice, industry standards and guidance, organisational policies, procedures and protocols, business and professional ethics that are relevant to your area of work, and to which you must adhere
7. the legal, industry and organisational requirements for training, experience and certification to undertake the work activities required, and the importance of acknowledging your limitations and not undertaking work that is beyond your level of competence
8. why it is important to maintain effective communication with other workers and anyone else involved in, or affected by the work, and the methods of communication that should be used
9. the tools, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) required for utility work and how to safely prepare, use, carry out operator maintenance and store these, in accordance with the relevant legal requirements, manufacturer's instructions, and organisational procedures
10. the legal requirements for checking and testing equipment and why it is important to maintain all equipment to a high standard
11. technology used within your area of work and how to use it
12. the correct methods of dealing with waste and surplus materials in accordance with the relevant legal requirements and organisational procedures
13. the importance of checking that completed work meets requirements, in accordance with the information provided
14. the potential impact of your work on the site and surrounding area and how this

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can be minimised

15. your and the organisation's responsibility for protecting the environment and working sustainably

16. the issues that can occur when carrying out utility arboriculture, the actions to take and organisational procedures for reporting issues that cannot be resolved

17. the scope and limitations of your competence, responsibilities and accountability

18. the legal and organisational requirements for the completion and storage of documentation

Survey trees and vegetation in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities to identify the maintenance required

19. the risks to above- or below-ground utilities and utility structures posed by trees and vegetation from their condition and proximity

20. how to identify the required tree and vegetation maintenance necessary for the continued safe and effective use of the utility and what to take into account

21. the implications of different tree species, their condition, and the time of year when planning tree maintenance and how these factors will affect the work

22. the basics of tree biology and the implications of pruning and root reduction on different tree species

23. the importance of checking for signs of disease, defects, decay and other hazards in the trees being surveyed and where to obtain advice when required

24. the hazards posed by different types of utility-specific apparatus and the importance of identifying safe work zones and appropriate routing for plant, tools and equipment

25. the specialist equipment required for tree and vegetation maintenance operations in proximity to above- and below-ground utilities and structures

26. how to identify the resources needed to carry out the required maintenance

27. when specialised workers, engaged by the utility, must be used

28. how the results of the survey should be documented and what needs to be included

Carry out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities

29. the hazards and risks associated with working in close proximity to above- or below-ground utilities and utility structures, including safety distances and use of equipment

30. the relevant legislative requirements and the purpose of utility-specific safety documents

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31. the importance of identifying, demarcating and maintaining safe work zones, and the appropriate routing of plant, tools and equipment
32. the use of the appropriate safety equipment specific to the utility in question and the tools for operation
33. how to identify tree species and the implications of different tree species, their condition and time of year, on the work required
34. the importance of identifying tree hazards and any associated risks posed to the utilities and those carrying out the work
35. the importance of checking for signs of disease, defects and decay in the tree being worked on and where to obtain advice when required
36. the basic principles of tree biology and the implications of a pruning operation on different tree species
37. the importance and function of the tree root system, the implications of root reduction on different tree species and the importance of maximum root retention and careful backfilling
38. how to balance tree and vegetation aesthetics and good pruning practices with requirements of utility owners and licence holders
39. the importance of regularly assessing risks and reviewing safety procedures when carrying out utility arboriculture and why the work may need to be suspended or stopped

Scope/range

Activities could include some or all of the following:

- Surveying trees and vegetation in proximity to above- or below-ground utilities to identify the maintenance required
- Carrying out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to above- ground utilities and utility structures
- Carrying out tree and vegetation maintenance in proximity to below- ground utilities

Glossary

Above-ground utilities and utility structures include: power lines, telephone wires, electricity poles and pylons, telegraph poles, TV, radio and communications masts, electrical substations etc.

Below-ground utilities include: pipes, cables, and other equipment that are installed beneath the ground surface to carry electricity, gas, water, sewage, communications etc.

Health and safety risks from chainsaw use:

- being cut by the saw
- being hit or crushed by moving timber
- noise-induced hearing loss
- hand-arm vibration (HAV)
- exhaust fumes from petrol-driven chainsaws
- exposure to oils
- exposure to dust
- effects of fatigue/dehydration on the ability to work safely
- other work equipment or activities on site

Information required to carry out work activities could include:

- drawings
- plans
- schedules
- specifications
- method statements
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- manufacturer's instructions
- customer requirements

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- quality assurance requirements
- industry standards (e.g. British Standards)
- verbal or written instructions
- industry guidance (e.g. FISA)

Organisational procedures refer to procedures set by the organisation you are employed by or the organisation that you are doing the work on behalf of (the client or customer)

Risk zone – Also referred to as Danger zone and Exclusion zone. The Risk zone should be established before commencement of any tree work.

Safe System of Work (SSoW) – is a method of work that puts in place control measures arising from a risk assessment, in order to manage identified hazards, which are broken down into four elements: safe person; safe equipment; safe place; and safe practice.

Links to other NOS

LANTw23 Access trees by climbing to carry out treework operations

LANTw9 Fell small trees using manually controlled equipment

LANTw10 Fell medium trees using manually controlled equipment

LANTw11 Fell large trees using manually controlled equipment

LANTw25 Carry out aerial tree pruning operations

LANTw5 Maintain the health and condition of trees and woodland

LANCS58 Allocate and monitor work activities

LANTw28

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