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## 4.10. Required Vegetation Clearances

The state of California requires electric utilities to keep electric lines (i.e., high-voltage lines) cleared of vegetation. All newly constructed distribution lines and existing lines must meet these requirements.

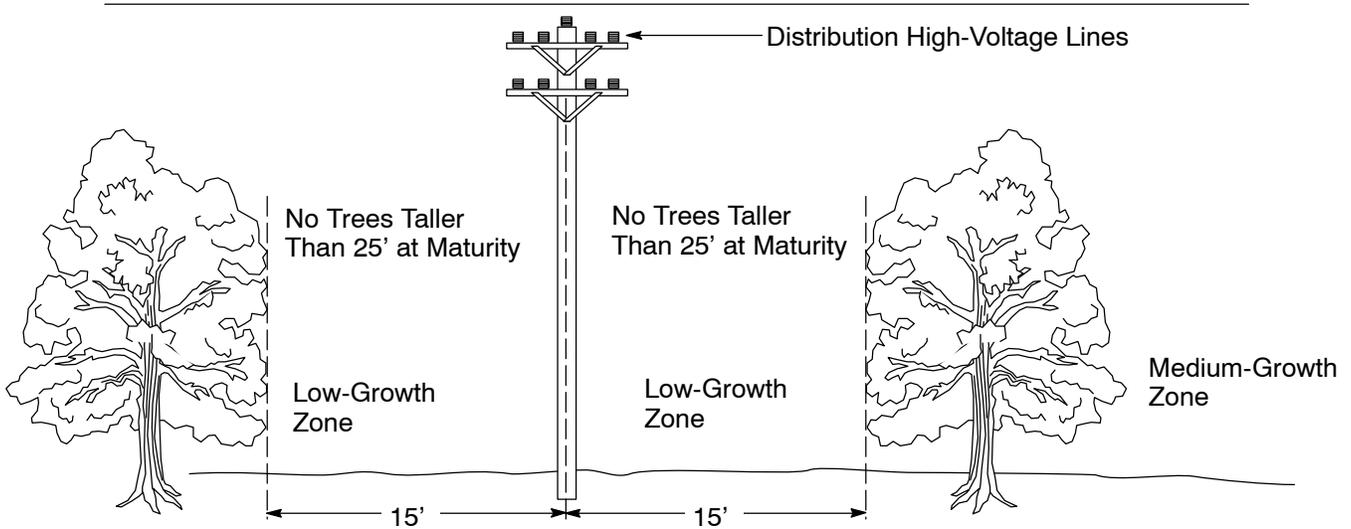
**NOTE:** PG&E may determine that the distribution line should be installed underground, or that trees should be removed, if the planned line extension does **not** meet the clearance requirements between existing trees and overhead electric lines. See new options for commercial agricultural orchards in Subsection 4.10.5. on Page 4-30.

### 4.10.1. General Requirements

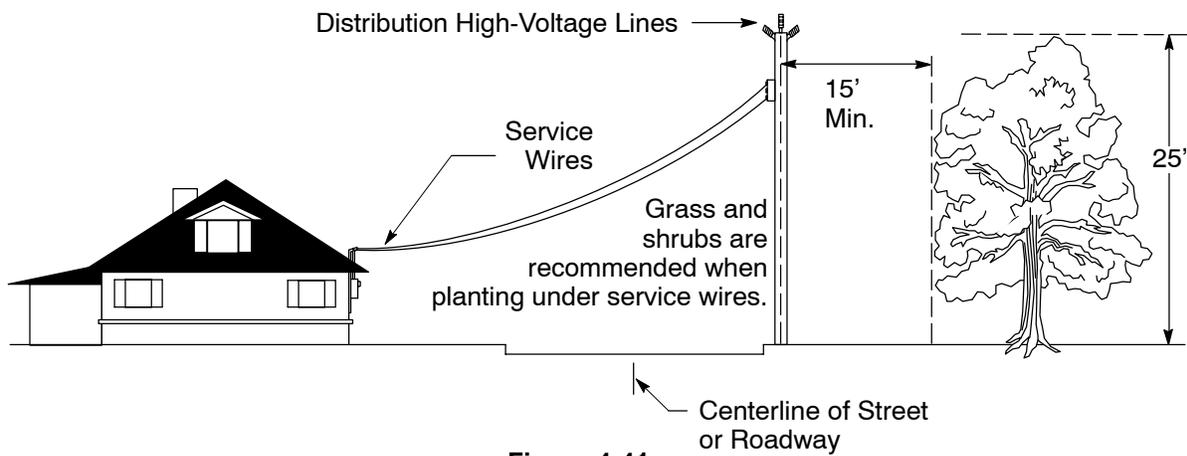
When establishing new overhead services, and/or when building or remodeling structures near high-voltage lines, poles, or towers, applicants must research planting regulations and follow the rules established here.

**NOTE:** Applicants must consider safety and access for repairs when planting near an overhead electric service.

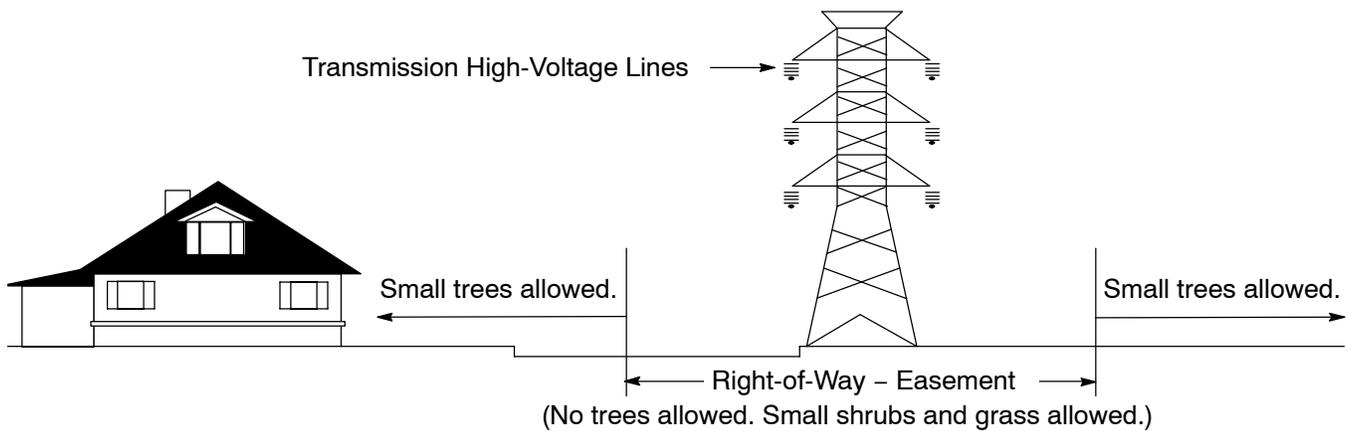
- A. Where required, applicants must establish clearances as described in California Public Resource Code (PRC) Division 4, “Forests, Forestry and Range and Forage Lands,” Part 2, Chapter 3, [Section 4292](#). PG&E can exempt applicants if the vegetation around power poles at the completed construction site will be well irrigated, low growing, and not highly flammable. In general, do **not** plant trees near power poles or towers.
- B. For electric **distribution**, high-voltage lines rated up to 60,000 volts, applicants must establish a 15-foot “low-growth” zone on both sides of all new lines. Also applicants must **not** plant trees that exceed 25 feet in height at maturity under or within 15 feet of **distribution** power poles. The zone under the electric power lines should be a low-growth, tree-planting zone and/or a shrub- and flower-planting zone. PG&E recommends planting shrubs and flowers in low-growth zones to ensure compliance. Figure 4-40, “Illustration of 15-Foot Clearance, Low-Growth Zone,” and Figure 4-41, “Grass and Shrubs Recommended Under Service Wires,” both on Page 4-27, illustrate low-growth zones and show how the 15-foot clearance is measured from the center of the pole.
- C. For all electric **transmission**, high-voltage lines rated greater than 60,000 volts, applicants must **not** plant trees within the right-of-way easement of the **transmission** poles or towers. Applicants must follow a “no-growth” zone inside rights-of-way areas, including under the electric power lines. The zone outside the rights-of-way areas is a “low-growth” zone, tree-planting zone, and/or a shrub-and-flower planting zone. Figure 4-42, “Grass and Shrubs Recommended Under Transmission Wires,” on Page 4-27, illustrates a no-growth zone.
- D. Applicants must ensure that a thorough inspection is made of proposed construction areas. Dead, dying, diseased, or hazard trees tall enough to fall into the proposed power lines must be removed. Hazard trees are defined as any tree having a structural defect that may cause the tree, or a portion of the tree, to fall either on someone or on something of value.



**Figure 4-40**  
**Illustration of 15-Foot Clearance, Low-Growth Zone**



**Figure 4-41**  
**Grass and Shrubs Recommended Under Service Wires**



**Figure 4-42**  
**Grass and Shrubs Recommended Under Transmission Wires**