

Plant and Tree Selection Considerations

The right tree adds beauty and value to your home and requires minimal maintenance. Before choosing a tree, consider whether you're planting it for shade, to attract wildlife, to screen a view, or to add color or flowers. Then, as you're looking at your options, consider:

Space

- How tall will the tree be at maturity?
- What is the shape of the tree: upright, rounded or spreading?

Placement

- Can the tree mature without crowding buildings and other plants?
- Will the roots uplift sidewalks or driveways or damage foundations?
- Will the tree block visibility in driveways or intersections?
- Are there any possible changes in future uses of the site?
- Will the tree overhang and conflict with a neighbor's property?

Growing conditions

- Can the tree tolerate local climate and soil conditions? Does it prefer shade or sun? A wet or dry spot?
- Is there enough soil area to give the tree the nutrients it needs?
- Is the tree strong enough to endure our typical winters?

Maintenance

- Is the tree susceptible to disease or insects?
- Will the tree require frequent spraying?
- If near a walkway, deck or patio, does the tree drop fruit or seeds?

City considerations

- Is the tree approved for street use?
- Are planting permits required?
- Does the city offer assistance in selecting an appropriate tree?

Utility considerations

- Can the tree mature without growing into overhead power lines?
- Are you making sure to plant the tree away from underground lines or transformer boxes? (Call **811** before you dig to check.)



Good plants for screening a transformer

If you want to screen a transformer, one option is to plant something that can be cut down to the ground and grow back in a relatively short time. Grasses are a good choice, as well as a handful of other shrubs.

Below is a limited list of plants you might consider planting in front of a transformer. Some of these can be cut to the ground and regrow within a growing season.

<i>Pennisetum</i>	Fountain grass
<i>Calamagrostis</i>	Feather reed grass
<i>Miscanthus</i>	Silver grass or maiden grass
<i>Cornus sp.</i>	Red and yellow twig dogwoods
<i>Hydrangea</i>	Hydrangea
<i>Spirea</i>	Spirea
<i>Mahonia</i>	Oregon grape (native)
<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	Sword fern (native)
<i>Viburnum davidii</i>	David viburnum
<i>Arctostaphylos spp.</i>	Some manzanita types (native)

At minimum, plants should be **3 feet** away on all sides of the transformer to provide the space needed for cooling. Don't bury transformer in soil. That can cause the transformer to overheat.

As always, keep in mind planting conditions such as sunlight, irrigation and soil type. Remember that plants will grow, and that as they get wider, they still need to stay outside the clearance area.

Good trees to plant under power lines

For the space underneath power lines, these trees will work in most situations:

<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern redbud
<i>Cornus kousa</i>	Kousa dogwood
<i>Acer griseum</i>	Paperbark maple
<i>Acer circinatum</i>	Vine maple
<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	Some amelanchier varieties
<i>Styrax japonicus</i>	Japanese styrax
<i>Pinus flexilis</i> "Vanderwolf's pyramid"	Vanderwolf pine

Many other trees are suitable under power lines, assuming they are no taller than **30 feet** at their mature height (or **15 feet** if under transmission lines). Many cities and counties also have recommended street trees under power lines.



Remember

PGE has the right to remove a plant or other object to gain access to safely inspect, operate and maintain equipment at any time.

The clearance for transformers is **3 feet** on all sides and **10 feet** in front.

Please note

Just because a tree is on one of these lists, it doesn't mean it's exempt from our maintenance. These lists are meant to give you some options that work well for a variety of scenarios.

