

News Release

Eversource Protects Reliability by Removing Dead, Hazardous Roadside Trees *Tree-related threats continue to raise concerns across Connecticut*

BERLIN, Conn. (July 14, 2020) – First was the Emerald Ash Borer, then the drought of 2016/2017 along with the Gypsy Moth infestation and now – more dry conditions for trees in New England. As these devastating issues continue to plague Connecticut’s landscape, Eversource is working closely with community leaders to address the dead, hazardous trees along roads across the state that threaten overhead electric lines while continuing to operate under its COVID-19 pandemic plan.



“This year, we’re investing more than \$83 million, trimming branches and removing hazardous trees along more than 4,200 miles of roads before they come down on our electric lines and disrupt power to our customers,” said Eversource Vegetation Management Manager Alan Carey. “But the reality is, a perfect storm of invasive species and weather conditions over the last several years has devastated our trees and there’s an increasing amount of work to do. We’re constantly finding trees that were damaged in the last year or so and are now dead or dying, and there’s no indication when the problem will stop.”

The concern about the large number of dead and dying trees also has the attention of researchers at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and the University of Connecticut. UConn Associate Extension Professor of Forestry Thomas Worthley says the affected trees are slowly “collapsing,” beginning with the loss of twigs and small branches. Over time, larger branches then break off and fall.

“Eventually, the trunks of these trees, if not removed, will topple and fall in whatever direction they are leaning,” said Professor Worthley. “We must recognize the potential public safety hazard represented by so many large dead trees, and acknowledge that the longer we wait, the more dangerous these trees will become.”

Community leaders across the state are raising concerns about the dire situation:

- “There are many declining and defective trees in town, and the threat of unforeseen insect decimation is real.” – Cheshire Deputy Tree Warden Don Nolte
- “We currently have an increased concern with ash tree failure caused by the Emerald Ash Borer throughout our city (and) many of our street trees are potentially capable of disturbing electrical power.” - New London Public Works Superintendent David DeNoia
- “Our budget is not enough to handle all of our removal needs.” - Former Weston Tree Warden Bill Lomas

“There’s so much more trimming and removal that must be done to ensure reliability and we need to continue working with the towns and municipalities to stay on top of the problem,” adds Carey.

The necessary tree work is being done while following state guidelines and adhering to strict social distancing, hygiene and enhanced sanitation measures under the energy company’s pandemic plan to safeguard the health and well-being of workers, contractors and customers.

Click [here](#) to see how Eversource arborists identify dead or dying trees and for details on the company’s comprehensive vegetation management program, please visit Eversource.com.

Eversource (NYSE: ES), celebrated as a national leader for its corporate citizenship, is the #1 energy company in [Newsweek](#)’s list of America’s Most Responsible Companies for 2020 and recognized as one of America’s Most JUST Companies and the #1 utility by [Forbes](#) and [JUST Capital](#). Eversource transmits and delivers electricity to 1.25 million customers in 149 cities and towns, provides natural gas to 237,000 customers in 74 communities, and supplies water to approximately 198,000 customers in 52 communities across Connecticut. Eversource harnesses the commitment of approximately 8,300 employees across three states to build a single, united company around the mission of safely delivering reliable energy and water with superior customer service. The #1 energy efficiency provider in the nation, the company is empowering a clean energy future in the Northeast, with nationally-recognized energy efficiency solutions and successful programs to integrate new clean energy resources like solar, offshore wind, electric vehicles and battery storage, into the electric system. For more information, please visit eversource.com, and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#). For more information on our water services, visit aquarionwater.com.

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