Along the Lines

A Publication of Rolla Municipal Utilities



Arborist Appreciation Day fell on June 16, 2026. RMU would like to recognize our hardworking Arborist Crew for their efforts managing vegetation along rights-of-way. Arborists analyze tree health, growth rates, and proximity to power lines to identify hazards before they escalate. Vegetation-related issues are one of the leading causes of power outages. A single tree branch touching a power line can result in significant disruptions and costly repairs. Utility arborists are the unsung heroes behind the power grid's safety and reliability. With increasing demands for reliable service, proactive vegetation management has become a strategic necessity, and utility arborists are at the forefront of delivering consistent service.



THE SITUATION WITH SQUIRRELS



It's a squirrelly situation and it drives utility providers nuts. Wildlife ranks among the top causes of power outages across the U.S. and of all wildlife, the squirrel is by far the worst offender. Abundant, intelligent, able to squeeze through a nickel-sized hole, seeking spots to nest or cache food and stuff to chew, squirrels cause more than half of the outages from wildlife. The critters damage electric infrastructure, aggravate utility workers, and disrupt service to customers.

Squirrels are highly active during summer months constantly foraging, nesting, chewing while using overhead utility lines and poles like personal highways, which unfortunately puts them in close proximity to high voltage danger. While squirrels cause many power interruptions, the outages are usually small and short-lived in duration.

RMU takes proactive measures to lessen the occurrence and impact of animal-related outages. We work hard to mitigate potential problems by trimming trees and maintaining our equipment. Wildlife protection covers and guards are often installed to prevent squirrels or other wildlife from climbing on poles or gnawing wires. Squirrels are the most common wildlife pest to assault power; however, they are not alone. Birds, raccoons, snakes and other rodents have all been known to cause service interruptions.

Although wildlife remains a leading cause of service interruptions, Rolla Municipal Utilities is proud to have one of the highest reliability records in the region. Our customers can depend on our rapid response to restore service as safely and quickly as possible.

DO YOU NEED AN ENERGY AUDIT?

Did you know you can conduct a *free* energy assessment on your home? It takes just minutes to answer a few questions about your home and get recommendations that could save you money. Go to our website at www.rmurolla.org and click on the Energy Advisor button to begin. Use RMU's resources to learn about energy basics or check how much your appliances are costing you each month on your energy bill. Small changes in your home could mean big savings in your future!

CLICK ON THIS BUTTON ON THE RMU HOMEPAGE TO GET STARTED

Energy Advisor



