

**DENR Administrative Order
No. 97-34
November 27, 1997**

**SUBJECT : Guidelines on Tree Planting Near
Electric Power Line Systems**

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Agreement entered into by and among the DENR and other government and non-government agencies/organizations on 21 May 1997 hereto attached as Annex A, for the purpose of reducing non-technical losses particularly on electric power distribution, the following guidelines are hereby promulgated for the information and guidance of all concerned.

Section 1. Objectives

This Administrative Order shall have the following objectives:

- 1.1 to establish active linkages and proper coordination among agencies involved in the tree planting and electric power distribution;
- 1.2 to promote an organized and systematic tree planting activity within the electric power line system areas to reduce power distribution losses, particularly non-technical losses;
- 1.3 to ensure public safety and continuous electric services; and
- 1.4 to promote aesthetic surroundings.

Section 2. Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this Order, the following terms are defined:

- 2.1 Distribution line — power lines designed to distribute power within a populated area.
- 2.2 Infrastructure — a structure constructed in the project site, such as waiting sheds, roads, alleys and pathwalks, etc.
- 2.3 Non-technical losses — refers to wastages due to power interruptions caused by outside factors/element such as typhoons, overtopping trees, entangled kites, etc.
- 2.4 Program — the Tree Planting Activities within power line distribution systems.
- 2.5 Project Site — the designated area within power line distribution systems planted/to be planted with trees.
- 2.6 Transmission line — kind of electric/power lines designed to distribute power within a populated area.
- 2.7 Utility line — type of distribution/transmission line designed for a particular use/purpose.

Section 3. Procedures

3.1 Identification of Suitable Species

The species to be planted shall be determined by the DENR with the concurrence of the cooperating agencies/organizations based on the project site's size, location and climatic and edaphic conditions.

The following tree/plant species are recommended for the project sites:

- e. Ornamental Trees/Plants. These ornamental trees/plants can be planted along the side of the utility line using at least three (3) meters distance.

Candle Tree (*Parmentiera cerifera*)
Buttercup Tree (*Cochlospermum vitifolium*)
Hongkong Tree (*Bauhinia blakeana*)
Pencil Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
Portuguese Cypress (*Cupressus lusitanica*)
McArthur Palm (*Actinophloeus macarthurii*)
Balitbitan (*Cynometra ramiflora*)
Bottle Palm (*Mascarena lagenicaulis*)
Palmera (*Chrysalidocarpus lutescens*)
Kalachuche (*Plumeria spp.*)
Pink shower (*Cassia nodosa*)
Katmon (*Dillenia philippinensis*)
Malakatmon (*D. luzoniensis*)
Dungo/Balete (*Ficus pubinervis*)

- b. Shrubs/Garden Plants. These can be planted along the line and on alleys and pathways.

Fireball (*Calliandra haematacephala*)
Buddha bamboo (*Bambusa ventricosa*)
Baston de San Jose (*Cordyline terminalis*)
Tigre (*Sansevieria prain var. laurentii*)
Yellow Plantain (*Heliconia bihai*)
Red Leaf Heliconia (*Heliconia metallica*)
False Bird of Paradise (*Heliconia platystachys*)
Narrow Leaf Heliconia (*Heliconia psittacorum*)
Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*)
Gumamela (*Hibiscus spp.*)
Yellow Bell (*Solandra pulcherrima*)
Bougainvillea spp.
Sampaguita (*Jasminium sampac*)
Rubia (*Rubia*)
Balatbat /B. bilog (*Licuala spp.*)

Trees/plants which are hosts to insects and diseases attacking crops and orchards should not be used as planting materials.

3.2 Spacing and Design/Manner of Planting

Spacing should be based on the species' full growth at maturity.

Ornamental trees may be planted along the utility line with at least 3 m distance. They should have a horizontal and vertical clearance of 3.1 meters (10 feet) from transmission lines by the time they reach maturity. Its side and over hang branches should have a clearance of 1.86 m.- 3.1 m (6-10 feet) from utility lines, its top branches about 1.24 to 1.86 m (4 to 6 ft).

Bamboos, coconuts and other high growing palms should not be planted under or within 6 meters distance opposite existing overhead lines.

Garden plants may be planted along electric lines and on alleys and pathways since they do not have primary branches and single woody stem.

For this particular purpose, planting should be in straight lines or rows to properly monitor the growth of the planted trees/shrubs and to facilitate the trimming/pruning activities to be conducted.

The Implementing Guidelines for Landscape Development in Metropolitan Manila, prepared and produced by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall serve as guide for this Program.

Planting in designated areas within subdivisions shall adopt the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) Administrative Order No. 2 dated April 12, 1994 re: Supplemental Rules and Regulations to Implement PD 953.

3.3 Protection and Maintenance

Each participating agency/organization shall be responsible for the protection and maintenance of their respective areas. However, trimming/pruning/cutting of trees including palms and shrubs which disrupt electric power distribution shall be conducted by the MERALCO for Metro Manila and by electric cooperatives/corporations for the provinces, with prior permit (for trees in public or forest lands or naturally growing trees) or certification (for trees within private lands) from the local DENR office concerned. In trimming/pruning, branches should be cut as close as possible to the outside of the branch collar. Trees should be earthballed and transferred to suitable place rather than cut or topped. Said activities shall be under the supervision of a technical DENR personnel.

As much as possible, cutting of trees in these areas shall be restricted and shall be allowed only under the following circumstances.

3.3.1 The tree is dead or defective and/or posing hazards to people

3.3.2 It poses barrier to unavoidable infrastructures being built or improved

3.3.3 Existing infrastructures such as pavements and/or fences show indications of being destroyed by the root systems of the subject tree

3.4 Sourcing of Planting Materials

The concerned DENR office shall be responsible for identifying/sourcing good quality planting stock. Participating agencies shall produce their own planting materials. When and where available, DENR shall provide tree seedlings.

3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting

Monitoring and evaluation of project areas established/developed under the program shall be conducted periodically by the concerned DENR offices. Status report on the program implementation shall be submitted quarterly to DENR Secretary, copy furnished DOE.

Sec. 4. Roles of Involved Agencies/Organizations

4.1 The DENR shall be the spearhead of the Program. It shall provide technical assistance in the choice of suitable species, proper planting techniques, etc. and planting materials, when and where available. It shall likewise issue necessary permit to trim/prune/cut trees including palms and shrubs.

4.2 Each participating agency/organization shall be responsible for the protection and maintenance of their respective areas. Likewise, the concerned sectors shall protect naturally-grown trees found in their designated planting area. Appropriate silvicultural treatments and techniques shall be adopted to both planted and naturally-grown trees.

- 4.3 The MERALCO and the members of Philippine Rural Electric Cooperative Association (PHILRECA) and Philippine Electric Plant Owners Association (PEPOA) with the assistance of Department of Energy (DOE), National Electrification Administration (NEA), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Philippine Information Agency (PIA) shall conduct information campaign regarding this Tree Planting Guidelines. MERALCO and members of PHILRECA and PEPOA shall submit to the DOE quarterly status report pertaining to the implementation of the information campaign on the tree planting guidelines.
- 4.4 The DILG, with the assistance of the NEA, shall facilitate coordination between utilities and LGUs as well as mandate LGUs to circulate copies of this guidelines on the tree planting guidelines.
- 4.5 The DPWH shall endeavor to comply with this guidelines in the design and construction of national roads and other infrastructure project.
- 4.6 The Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS), in coordination with DOE, NEA, PHILRECA, PEPOA and MERALCO shall give emphasis on the importance of citizen's cooperation/contributions for a "Safe Electricity Distribution Operations" in the teaching of relevant science subjects, as well as prepare modules for the ready use of elementary and secondary school teachers and students in the field.

Sec. 5. Penalty Clause

Any person who cuts, destroys, damages, injures naturally growing or planted trees of any kind, flowering or ornamental plants and shrubs, plants of scenic or aesthetic and ecological values within identified

established project sites shall be punished in accordance with Section 3 of PD 953, except when the cutting, destroying, damaging or injuring is necessary to enhance the beauty or as provided under Section 3.3 of this Order. If the offender is a public officer or employee, he shall in addition, be dismissed from the public service and disqualified perpetually to hold office.

Sec. 6. Repealing Cause

This Order supersedes all Department Orders, Circulars and/or Memoranda inconsistent herewith.

Sec. 7. Effectivity

This Order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

(Sgd.) VICTOR O. RAMOS
Secretary