



Tree
Wise
by MTE



Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child has received a seedling tree from Tree Wise Middle Tennessee. The seedlings have been given in conjunction with Arbor Day, a holiday which promotes a healthy, sustainable planet. Middle Tennessee Electric's goal is to teach your children the importance of caring for and conserving our natural environment, starting with trees.

If you don't have a place to plant the seedling, consider asking your apartment complex, your school or a local park for permission to plant the tree on their grounds.

Selecting the right trees and planting them in the right places means you can enjoy them for a lifetime. Middle Tennessee Electric wants you to have the tools and resources you need to choose, plant and care for your trees.

When deciding what kind of trees to plant in your yard, choose trees you like, but think carefully about where you're going to plant them. The taller the mature tree, the farther you'll want to plant it from power lines. Properly placed trees live longer, healthier lives and reduce maintenance costs for utility companies.

Teaching our children to care for and respect trees in our community will benefit all of us. MTE hopes sharing this experience with your child will give you both an opportunity to learn about your environment. If you would like to find out more about Tree Wise Middle Tennessee, visit our website at mte.com/TreeWise.

Sincerely,
Vegetation Management



Who do you think started Arbor day?

In the 1800s, pioneers moving west to the Great Plains were often surprised by the flat, treeless wilderness that spread before them. One of these settlers, a newspaperman from Detroit named J. Sterling Morton, made Nebraska his home and planting trees his mission.

Morton and his wife were nature lovers who simply enjoyed trees and flowers, but they also recognized that trees played an important part in holding on to prairie soil, breaking up harsh winds and providing lumber for building.

They were so passionate about their new cause that Morton used his newspaper editorials to encourage the entire community to plant more trees. His efforts gained wide recognition, and in 1858 Morton was appointed acting governor of the Nebraska Territory.

As years passed, Morton abandoned politics in favor of promoting environmental conservation. He served on Nebraska's state board of agriculture, where in 1872 he proposed that a tree-planting holiday be established and celebrated in the month of April.

The first unofficial Arbor Day was a huge success, with over one million trees planted

during festivities, and the idea quickly spread to other states. In 1885, Arbor Day became an official legal holiday in Nebraska. The celebration date was changed to April 22, Morton's birthday, to honor him for his efforts.

Today, the date of Arbor Day varies across the nation to accommodate proper planting times for trees. The right time to plant trees is during the dormant season, which ranges from January and February in the South to May in the North. Trees have the best chance of survival when they're planted in cool weather and can establish their roots before summer heat and drought take their toll.

This year, MTE wants to celebrate Arbor Day by planting seedling trees throughout our community. We invite you to join our continuing efforts to improve our environment and make Middle Tennessee a better place to live.

For more information about Arbor Day, visit the National Arbor Day Foundation's website at arborday.org.



The Importance of Trees

WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

MTE cares very much about preserving and caring for the natural world, and there's no better place to start than with trees. Planting new trees and taking good care of existing trees can make a huge impact on the quality of our environment.

We often take them for granted because we see them every day, but trees make important contributions to the planet's well-being. Consider all the valuable resources that come from trees:

SHADE | Trees provide cool spaces where we can retreat from the heat of the summer. In fact, having shade trees around your house can even help lower your air conditioning bill.

SHELTER | Trees provide wild animals with protection from predators and harsh weather conditions.

OXYGEN | A vital component of the air we breathe, oxygen is released by trees and plants through a process called photosynthesis, which converts carbon dioxide, water and light energy into oxygen and food.

FOOD | Many of your favorite fruits, nuts and spices, not to mention maple syrup, come from trees.

WOOD PRODUCTS | Look around you, how many items do you see made of wood? The list of uses for wood is almost endless: chairs, baseball bats, tables, pencils, doors, picture frames, musical instruments and so much more.

PAPER PRODUCTS | Fibers from hardwood trees (like oak and maple) and softwood trees (like pine and spruce) are combined with water to make paper for writing, printing and packaging.

SYNTHETIC FIBERS | Did you know that cloth can be made from trees? The natural fibers of wood can be broken down and re-formed into artificial materials like rayon, which is used to make clothing and other items, and cellophane, which is used for packaging material.

RUBBER | Rubber comes from trees that produce a milky sap called latex. The latex is combined with other materials to form rubber.



These are just a few of the ways that trees improve our health, our leisure time and our economy. **We encourage you to plant a tree.**



How to plant a bare-root seedling.

Before planting your tree, it's important to choose the right location. If you don't have a yard, ask your apartment complex, your school or a local park for permission to plant on their property. You can also plant your new tree in a large pot temporarily, but it will need to be replanted once it outgrows the container.

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Keep the roots of the seedling moist and cool until the tree can be planted.
2. Select a sunny or partly sunny location away from power lines. The mature tree should be no closer than 20 feet to a power line.
3. Dig a hole only as deep as the seedling's roots and twice as wide.
4. Remove the seedling from the plastic bag and discard the paper towels.
5. Gently hold the seedling upright as you fill the hole with soil. Pack the soil around the roots firmly but not too tightly with your hands. Don't tamp soil down with your feet.
6. Water the tree thoroughly and slowly.
7. Place a ring of mulch around the tree about 2 inches deep and 3 feet in diameter. Make sure the mulch does not touch the trunk of the tree, or else it may cause insect and/or disease problems.
8. Be sure to water your tree twice a week.
9. Be proud of yourself for a successful planting and enjoy your tree for many years to come! Every tree planted has a positive effect on the natural environment, so if we all work together, we can make a significant difference. That's MTE's goal – a better environment through teamwork. For more information about planting trees, visit arborday.org/trees/planting.

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MTE's Residential Tree Trimming Policies

RESIDENTIAL TREE TRIMMING

Trees and falling limbs that come in contact with power lines are by far the most common cause of power outages for Middle Tennessee Electric members. That's why MTE has one of the most carefully planned tree trimming programs among electric providers in the nation. Service interruptions are costly and inconvenient for cooperative members as well as for Middle Tennessee Electric employees.

Remember that when you see crews out trimming trees around power lines, it's one of the most difficult and critical jobs your cooperative has.

RIGHT OF WAY

Middle Tennessee Electric's right of way extends 20 feet on both sides of the lines.

TREE TRIMMING METHODS

Middle Tennessee Electric's tree trimming guidelines are designed to reflect recommendations of urban foresters and experts from the National Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture. Tree removal may be necessary because repetitive trimming of fast-growing trees in or near electric rights-of-way is costly and temporary. Trees that are heavily trimmed in an attempt to avoid removal often develop extensive internal decay.

SIDE PRUNING

Side pruning trims the branches growing toward lines on one side of the tree. Trees 20 feet or more away from the center power line may be side pruned.

CROWN REDUCTION

Crown reduction removes the main leader or leaders to a suitable lateral branch. This method is suited to slow-growing trees located under the power line. Fast-growing trees should be removed.

TREE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

We will not remove trees unless they pose a threat to your electric service. If we do so, you may qualify for our tree replacement program, where we will replace the tree at no charge to you. Call for more information.