



[Rural Life]

[what's inside]

- Tree Trimming
- Summer Reading Program
- 2015 Photo Calendar Contest

SUMMER HOURS IN EFFECT
Monday – Thursday
7 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

**SECPA OFFICES WILL BE
CLOSED MAY 26 FOR
MEMORIAL DAY**

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 521
La Junta, CO 81050-0521

LA JUNTA STREET ADDRESS
901 West Third Street
La Junta, CO 81050

LAMAR STREET ADDRESS
3601 S. Main
Lamar, CO 81052

SPRINGFIELD STREET ADDRESS
25107 Highway 160
Springfield, CO 81073

EADS STREET ADDRESS
303 East 14th
Eads, CO 81036

PHONE
719-384-2551 [La Junta]
719-336-3236 [Lamar]
719-523-4566 [Springfield]
719-438-5591 [Eads]
800-332-8634 [toll free]

FAX
719-384-7320

WEB
www.secpa.com



Touchstone Energy®

Co-ops: We Come in All Shapes and Sizes Today

BY RICH WILSON || CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER || RICHW@SECPA.COM

When you hear the word “co-op,” what comes to mind? We hope you think of your friends here at Southeast Colorado Power Association, but you may think of a local farmers’ co-op or a credit union. You might be surprised to learn that cooperatives can be found in many industries and they offer a variety of services, each designed to serve their members in the best way possible.

A cooperative is a not-for-profit organization owned by its members. Across the globe, cooperatives remain steadfast, annually generating more than \$500 billion in revenue and providing more than 2 million jobs. (Robert West, #230616)

As a member of Southeast Colorado Power Association, you have a voice. In other words, you’re not just a customer. Every annual meeting, you have the right to vote for the co-op’s board of directors.

SECPA strengthens the community by supporting economic development. As the service area grows, the distribution system grows, which makes it easy to see why strengthening the local economy makes sound business sense. For example Southeast Colorado Power started SECOM, a broadband Internet and telecommunications company bringing high speed connectivity to southeastern Colorado.

So what other kinds of co-ops are out there? Co-ops fall under a variety of categories and services, including agriculture and forestry; consumer and retail; banking



Rich Wilson

and credit unions; health and wellness; and utilities, to name a few.

Here are a few other national co-ops you might recognize:

■ **C-SPAN** (Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network): Created in 1979, the American cable television network pro-

vides public access to the political process and receives no government funding.

■ **Welch’s grape juice**: More than 1,000 family farmer-owners make up the Welch’s grape juice family, and they are located throughout the United States and Canada.

■ **Best Western**: Owned by independent operators of more than 4,000 hotels in 80 countries, Best Western is one of the world’s largest hotel chains.

■ **Ace Hardware**: More than 4,600 Ace Hardware stores are independently owned and operated by local entrepreneurs.

■ **Sunkist**: This not-for-profit company’s membership is made up of numerous growers located throughout California and Arizona.

■ **FTD florists**: The FTD membership includes thousands of growers located in the United States and Canada.

The list of cooperatives goes on and on, and as you can see, we come in all shapes and sizes. At Southeast Colorado Power Association, our mission is to provide you with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. For more information about the services we offer, visit www.secpa.com.

BASIC PRUNING CONCEPTS — Part I

BY SHELLY SIMMONS, COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE

Pruning trees isn't just about aesthetics or removing a branch that is in the way. Improper pruning can be seriously damaging to trees and create more problems than it solves. Each cut has the potential to change the growth pattern of a tree and requires substantial energy from the tree to close wounds. Thus, no branch should be removed without a reason, and proper techniques should be learned and used by those charged with tree care and management.

Proper pruning techniques are based on decades of research conducted by universities and the tree care industry. Two of the most notable researchers, Dr. Alex L. Shigo and Dr. Edward F. Gilman, have led the way in establishing protocols for proper pruning technology. These protocols are practiced by the professional tree care industry.

Proper pruning starts with proper planting. Be a proactive planter and follow these tips to avoid future problems that will require severe corrective pruning later:

- Know the mature size of a tree before planting — how tall it will get, and how far the will canopy spread.
- Look up, down and all around before planting trees; make sure they will not eventually obstruct visibility at intersections, grow into overhead power lines, cause problems with underground utilities or grow into buildings or other structures.

Pruning is an essential management tool for landscape trees. It is used to:

- Develop strong structure in young trees.
- Maintain structure in mature trees.
- Remove hazardous limbs.
- Provide safety clearance for visibility at traffic intersections, road signs and pedestrian crossings.
- Provide electric utility line clearance (always hire trained professionals for this).

Developing strong structure in young trees is one of the most important, but often overlooked, aspects of tree care. Strong structure means developing one main trunk with evenly spaced scaffold (or side) branches, selecting for branches that exhibit a "U" or "L" attachment shape where they attach to other branches or the trunk (Image 1) and maintaining a balanced canopy (Image 2). An unbalanced canopy occurs when one

Image 1



A strong branch attachment with an "L" shape: These types of attachments are much less likely to fail.

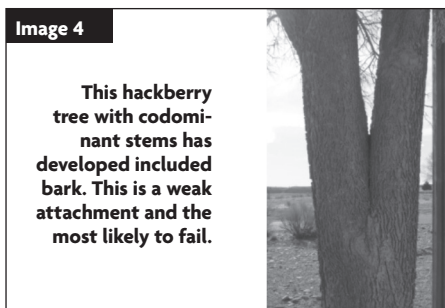
side of the tree is heavier than the other, or when most of the weight is at the tips of the branches. Why is strong structure important? Because it makes trees much more resilient to breakage from wind, snow and decay. Essentially, structural pruning early in the life of a tree helps keep surrounding areas safe for people, homes and vehicles by removing weak branches, and it also promotes good tree health and longevity.

Image 3



This honey locust tree has two large diameter competing trunks, called codominant stems. One stem should have been removed years ago when the branch diameter was small.

Image 4



This hackberry tree with codominant stems has developed included bark. This is a weak attachment and the most likely to fail.

Some trees naturally exhibit good structure and require little structural pruning, such as bur oak (Image 2). But many trees have a tendency to develop multiple main stems or trunks (Image 3) and have a tendency to grow branches that are too close together, called codominant stems. This can eventually develop into included bark (Image 4). Included bark

Image 2

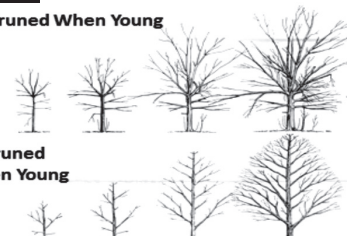


Bur oak tree exhibits good structure: one main trunk with evenly spaced side branches.

is when two stems appear to be squeezed together: These types of attachments exhibit a "V" shape. Branch attachments with included bark are the weakest branch unions; these branches are not growing together, but

Pruning

Not Pruned When Young



Pruned When Young

Developing strong structure early in the life of a tree removes weak branches and promotes tree health and longevity.

pushing against one another as they grow.

When pruning starts early in the life of the tree and good structure is developed, minimal pruning will be required as the tree matures. Early pruning also helps keep pruning wounds small, which results in much less stress and decay problems for the tree.

Pruning mature trees requires different pruning strategies that minimize live branch loss and wound size:

- Remove live tissue for only good reason. What is to be accomplished with pruning? Will tree structure and public safety be improved?
- The larger the diameter of branch removed, the more time and energy it takes from the tree to close the wound, causing more stress. It is much harder for a mature tree to close a wound than a younger, vigorously growing tree.
- Remove no more than 25 percent of the

Pruning

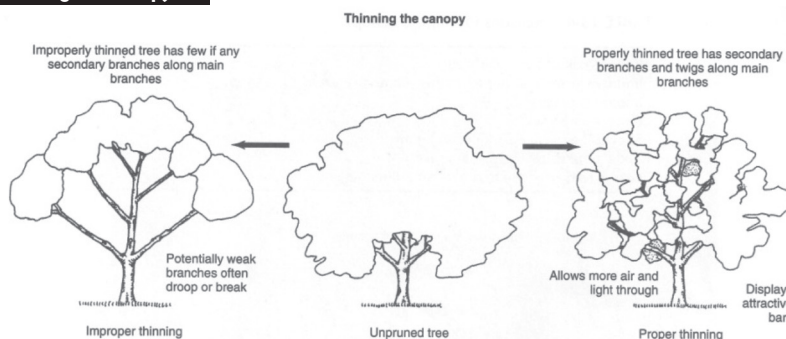
More Structurally Sound

When pruning the trunk, always keep at least half of the foliage in the lower two-thirds of the tree.



Trees with balanced canopies can withstand more load pressure from wind and snow.

Thinning the canopy



Appropriate thinning removes small branches from the edge of the canopy (right). Inappropriate thinning removes only interior branches (left).

live tissue in a year's time for healthy, medium-aged trees. Sparingly prune trees that are mature or stressed from drought or other types of damage.

- Pruning mature trees should be limited only to the removal of dead branches or to reduce the severity of a structural defect. If possible, only prune branches that are less than one-third the diameter of the trunk.
- Consider shortening branches instead of removing them; it is much less stressful on mature trees to remove large diameter branches over a period of years than all at once.
- Avoid thinning the canopy too severely. This is called "lion's tailing" and it creates an unstable tree. Proper thinning allows for better air circulation and light penetration without excessively removing secondary branches along main branches.
- Always use proper pruning cuts and avoid topping trees (these topics will be covered in Part II of this pruning series).

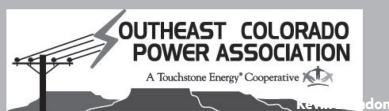
For more detailed information about developing good tree structure and proper pruning, please visit the International Society of Arboriculture's website at treesaregood.com/treecare/pruning_young.aspx, or the University of Florida's Extension website at edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/EP/EP31500.pdf.

Next month's article, "Basic Pruning Concepts, Part II," will cover basic pruning cuts and other pruning tips.

Stop Your Electric Bill from Going Up.



Tell the government you can't afford costly regulation



Visit Action.coop

Las Animas-Bent County Library Summer Reading Program

Las Animas-Bent County Library District invites children between the ages of 4 and 12 to sign up at the library for the summer reading program. Sign-up before May 30.

Please call the library at 719-456-0111 and speak with Erin or Paula for details.

2015 SECPA Photo Calendar Contest Announced

Fill out your entry form and submit your photo today

Southeast Colorado Power Association invites you to send in your photos taken within SECPA's territory and reflecting the seasons, people, lifestyle or landscape of the area. The winners will be included in the 2015 calendar. Please read the following guidelines carefully. The deadline for entry is **July 1, 2014**. If you have questions, please call Jack Wolfe or Debbie Howard at 719-384-2551.

1. Only SECPA members, directors and employees are eligible.
2. Photos will not be accepted without a completed entry form. Cut out the form below and submit with photo or go online to www.secpa.com, click on "Our Community" and then "Photo Calendar Contest." Duplicate form if necessary.
3. Only two photos per person will be accepted. Submit a separate entry form for EACH photograph.
4. **DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME OR ANY OTHER INFORMATION ON THE PHOTOGRAPH.**

5. Digital entries preferred. CDs or disks will be accepted. Both entries may be put on one CD or disk. It is not necessary to send enlargements. See note to digital camera users. May also send entry by email to Jack Wolfe at jackw@secpa.com or Debbie Howard at debbieh@secpa.com.

6. Photos must have horizontal/landscape orientation.
7. DO NOT SUBMIT ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS. PHOTOS BECOME THE PROPERTY OF SECPA AND WILL NOT BE RETURNED. NO EXCEPTIONS.

8. **Deadline: July 1, 2014.** Mail to: Southeast Colorado Power Association, Attn.: PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST, PO Box 521, La Junta, CO 81050. Or email to jackw@secpa.com or debbieh@secpa.com.

Note to digital camera users: Resolution of digital photos printed on home printers is too low for commercial printing. Minimum resolution is 300 dpi.

ENTRY FORM — 2015 SECPA PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Best contact phone number: _____

SECPA account number: _____

Email address: _____

Please title your entry, including location. This will appear with your photo if selected: _____

Limit 2 entries per person. Send a completed form with each entry. **Deadline is July 1, 2014.** Photocopy form for additional entries. Mail to: Southeast Colorado Power Association, Attn.: PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST, PO Box 521, La Junta, CO 81050. Or email your photos (with a resolution of 300 dpi) to jackw@secpa.com or debbieh@secpa.com.

You Could Be A Winner This Month

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN* your name, your account number), please contact Paige Horn at Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill. Last month's winner was Truett Carroll from La Junta.



USELESS FACT:

The short-term memory capacity for most people is between five and nine items or digits.

ENERGY TIP

A well-designed landscape provides both energy efficiency and curb appeal for your home. The types of vegetation you choose are as important as where they are planted. Sunlight streaming through windows and bearing down on the roof can drive up air conditioner use. Using shade trees and shrubs in your landscaping plan can help reduce cooling costs. In the winter, deciduous trees lose their leaves and let in warmth.

