Do not plant trees or shrubs in an easement. If possible, plant trees and shrubs far enough away from the edge of the easement and all Vectren equipment, including power lines, so that if a limb or tree falls, it will not come into contact with the utility equipment. Use this guide for planting distances from the edge of an easement:

- 10 feet for shrubs growing to 15 feet;
- 20 feet for trees growing to 25 feet;
- 30 feet for trees growing to 35 feet.

If you plant closer than these minimum distances, safety reasons may require severe trimming or even removal of the trees. Refer to our Responsible Tree Planting brochure for more information.

For your own personal safety, check the location of all underground cables and lines before planting trees or shrubs or digging on your property for any reason. To locate underground lines, call the Indiana Underground Plant Protection Service. The toll-free number is 1-800-382-5544. Calls should be placed two days in advance between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

May I build a fence within a utility easement?

Fences within an easement can prevent access to the utility facilities. While Vectren crews attempt to work around existing fences, occasionally a fence must be removed so that we can reach our equipment. Vectren is not liable for damages caused by removal of any part of a fence on an easement if such removal is required to gain access to our equipment.

What will happen if I encroach on a utility easement?

Erecting a building or structure or placing any other improvement within an easement is known as "encroaching." You may be required to remove any encroachments within an easement, and Vectren is not liable for damage to or the removal of any encroachments.

Encroachments may affect your ability to sell your property. Many banks and other lending institutions will not lend money to buy property which has structures or other improvements encroaching on utility easements.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding easements on your property, please call the Vectren Right of Way Department at (812) 491-4544.
If you own property, it may be subject to a utility or other type of easement, which is also known as a right of way.

Vectren Energy Delivery of Indiana (Vectren) distributes electricity and natural gas to customers in Southwestern Indiana. To safely deliver the electricity and natural gas, underground and overhead lines may be located in a utility easement to insure their protection and maintenance.

**What is a public right of way?**

A public right of way is an easement created for the use of the general public. The road or street in front of your property is probably in a public right of way. Public utilities are authorized to construct their facilities within the part of the public right of way beyond the edges of the road. In addition, the utility has certain rights to trim and remove trees and remove obstructions.

**What is a public utility easement?**

A public utility easement on your property permits Vectren to use the land within the easement in controlled ways and may permit the construction and maintenance of overhead and underground electric lines, natural gas lines, transformers, poles, transmission lines, guy wires, anchors, and other utility facilities. Easements are also used by other utility companies to provide water, sewer, cable TV, and other utility services. More than one utility may have the right to use an easement.

**Why does Vectren need easements?**

An easement allows immediate access to gas and electric lines and equipment.

In case of an interruption, Vectren must restore service as soon as possible. If you change the grade of a lot, build retaining walls, plant trees or shrubs, or place fences or other obstructions in an easement, Vectren crews may not have access to the utility facilities and equipment.

An easement provides a corridor of clear space for the construction, repair, and operation of gas and electric lines for your safety and the safety of utility crews.

Easements exist for your protection, safety, and service. They enable Vectren to provide safe and efficient gas and electric services. By observing restrictions on the use of the land within an easement, you, the property owner, can help protect yourself from property damage, as well as hazards that could cause serious injuries.

**How may I use the land within the easement on my property?**

You may not build a structure on the easement, or plant trees and shrubs around it, or place any obstruction such as a lake or pond on or around it. You may not change the slope of the ground if the change will affect Vectren’s access to its utility facilities, or if the change will violate required clearances for either underground or overhead lines.

You may plant and maintain a lawn, crops, flower beds, and vegetable gardens.

Vectren is not liable for damage resulting from the removal of obstructions within the easement, such as fences, retaining walls, terraces, etc.

Vectren is also not liable for damages due to the trimming or removal of trees on or overhanging an easement. For this reason, it is sensible to follow the guidelines below when planting trees on your property. Thoughtful planning will help to minimize the chance that Vectren must trim or remove the tree and will also help to reduce the risk of personal injury and property damage caused by a tree growing into a Vectren line.

**Examine the property carefully.** The existence of utility facilities on or over the property may indicate the existence of an unrecorded easement and should be investigated by contacting the utility whose facilities are involved.

Remember, it is easier to avoid a problem than it is to fix it after you have bought it.

**How do I know where the utility easement is located?**

Before you purchase property, construct a building, or landscape, you should

Ask the developer, builder, present owner, and/or the real estate agent if there are any easements on the property.

Have an attorney give you a title opinion based upon an examination of an abstract or title insurance commitment. The title opinion should list all easements which have been recorded and which may affect the property. You should determine the location of any easements referred to in the title opinion and understand the utility’s rights as granted by those easements.