LANDOWNER COMMUNICATION CHEAT SHEET

Print it and keep it in the truck.
Adapt the phrases so they sound like you — just keep the underlying policy.

Display Empathy

Validate before educating.

"I hear your concern about the tree."
"I can see why that would be frustrating."
"I appreciate you taking the time to talk with me about this."

Respond Sincerely

When you don't know, when asked for unauthorized work, or when asked about rates.

"To be honest, I don't have the exact answer — let me check the specifications or call my supervisor."
"Let me make sure I understand your concern correctly..."
"I appreciate the offer, but I'm not authorized to perform work outside the utility plan."
"I'm not authorized to discuss rates, but customer service can answer your questions. Their number is on your bill."
"This work is required for safety — I'd be happy to explain the process in more detail."

⚠ Red Line — you leave, now

⚠ **Triggers:** A weapon held, cocked, or brandished. A direct threat of violence. An aggressive unleashed animal.
⚠ **What you do:** Say only "Thank you for your time. We are leaving now." Turn around and walk to the truck. Drive away. Call 911 from a safe distance, then notify your supervisor.
⚠ **Do NOT** try to de-escalate, argue, cite easements, or retrieve gear.

Core Reminders for Maintaining Professionalism

Awareness and Respect
Professional Appearance
Confident Body Language
Tone of Voice
Be Honest

Core Reminders for Explaining the Work

Watch Your Vocabulary
Use Handouts as a Visual Anchor
Avoid the "Legal Trap"
Set Firm, Honest Expectations
Be Human, Not a Robot

The Standard Pitch

Before you arrive, and the first 30 seconds at the door.

Call ahead: When you have the number, let the owner know you're coming before you arrive.

Identify: "I'm [Name] with [Contractor]. We're the vegetation management crew working with [Utility]."

Explain briefly: What, and why (safety + reliability). Keep it high-level.

Listen first: Let them express concerns fully before defending the work.

Body language: Open posture, steady tone, eye contact.

Plain-Language Scripts

Swap jargon for collaborative vocabulary. Frame work as a safety measure.

Directional pruning: "We're pruning the branches back so they grow away from the lines. It keeps the neighborhood safe and the tree healthy."

Hazard tree removal: "This tree has structural issues and is dying. We need to remove it before it falls onto the lines during a storm. You'll get written notice before the work is done."

Replanting: "Pick something that stays low near the lines. Taller trees do best well away from the wires."

Wood cleanup: "We'll chip the small brush, or cut it up and spread it out if the chipper can't get to it. The large wood is your call. You can keep it, or we can remove it, as long as our equipment can reach it."

The 1/3 proper lateral rule: "If there's no proper lateral to cut to at the clearance mark, we go back to the next one — otherwise the cut is slow to seal and weak regrowth comes right back into the line."

Pines and firs: "They don't regrow from bare wood, so we take the branch off at the trunk. That side will look bare, but the rest of the tree keeps growing."

If Things Escalate (C.A.L.M.)

- **C** Control Your Response
- **A** Acknowledge Their Feelings
- **L** Listen Actively
- **M** Move to Solutions

Pivot to the shared goal of community safety.

"I hear what you're saying, and I want to help find a solution."

"I can see this is important to you. Our main goal is safety and reliability for the neighborhood."

✖ Never say "Calm down," "That's not my problem," or "You're wrong."

Core Reminders for De-Escalation and Boundaries

Validate Before You Educate

Never Make Unauthorized Deals

Set Boundaries, Not Excuses

Recognize the Red Lines

Evacuate First, Report Later