Trees, large bushes and structures are not permitted within the pipeline right-of-way.

Keeping the right-of-way clear maintains the integrity of the pipeline and increases public safety.

Trees and their potential to damage pipelines

Questar is an integrated natural gas company headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. Through subsidiaries Questar Gas, Questar Pipeline, Questar Southern Trails Pipeline, and Questar Overthrust Pipeline, the corporation owns and operates 29,000 miles of transmission and distribution pipelines in the western United States.

This brochure explains why planting deep-rooted vegetation, specifically trees, in Questar’s pipeline rights-of-way is not permitted.
THE TRUTH ABOUT ROOTS

Tree roots are commonly depicted as a mirror image of the branches above. This is not an accurate picture of how tree roots actually grow. In fact, a tree's roots typically spread much further than its branches. Tree roots are also generally shallower than expected, with 90 percent of the roots contained in the first three feet of soil depth. However, if tree roots can get oxygen, they will reach deeper in search of water and nutrients. These deeper roots pose potential risks for pipeline safety.

PIPEDLINE SAFETY VS. ROOTS

Trees planted too close to a pipeline can cause several potential safety-related problems. Roots follow the path of least resistance and grow easily in the less compact soils that typically surround a buried pipeline.

As roots continue to grow around the pipeline, they can damage the protective coating on the pipe. The protective coating helps to minimize corrosion on the pipeline.

As the trees and roots grow larger the risk to the pipeline increases.

If the tree is uprooted in a storm, it could rupture or severely damage the pipeline.

These are the most common examples of how trees planted too near a pipeline can cause damage and leaks that put the community at risk and may possibly disrupt service to our customers.

MAINTENANCE AND EMERGENCY ACCESS

In order for maintenance or emergency response equipment to investigate or remedy a problem, trees, large bushes and shrubs, and structures including landscaping (e.g. rock walls) and fences that limit access to the pipeline or our rights-of-way must be removed. Obstacles like these can increase the time it takes to access the pipeline if there’s a problem and may make the situation more dangerous.

LANDSCAPING

Deep-rooted plants and trees, and retaining walls, are not permitted within the right-of-way. Grasses, low-growing plants and shrubs, and gardens may be planted within the right-of-way. If landscaping is disturbed during Questar’s maintenance activities, the property owner is responsible for restoration.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

Before doing any digging or excavating, always dial 811 at least 48 hours ahead of time. Someone will come and mark the location of buried pipelines and other utilities for no charge.