

City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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Holiday Closings

Most City of Ames offices will be closed Tuesday, Dec. 24 and Wednesday, Dec. 25. Additionally, most City offices will be closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014 for New Year's Day.

A Big Year Ahead for Ames!

Plans are being made to commemorate the 150th anniversary of our community, which will be celebrated throughout 2014 with events, educational opportunities, and recognition of Ames' history. The Ames Sesquicentennial marks the platting of the original 12 blocks of the city, which was recorded on Dec. 17, 1864. In 1863, John Insley Blair and Massachusetts Congressman Oakes Ames traveled into Iowa as far as the railroad line went, then traveled by stagecoach further west. Blair was with the railroad, and Ames was a stockholder in the company. During this trip, Blair kept careful notes and selected the marshy land between the Skunk River and Squaw Creek as a future train depot location.



In 1864, Blair was deeded land from a local resident, Cynthia Duff. The original town was bordered by Duff Avenue at the east, the railroad at the south, Burnett Avenue at the west, and Eighth Street at the north. Blair named the town after his railroad friend, Oakes Ames, who never actually set foot in town. Ames did donate a bell to the first church, the Congregational Church, which was completed in 1866. In 2014, we celebrate Ames' history by remembering our past. Look for a variety of events recognizing this significant milestone!

Resource Recovery Lowers Electric Use

The Resource Recovery Plant has been processing garbage into fuel for more than 35 years. The plant receives garbage from Ames and surrounding communities in Story County and sends it through a series of conveyors and shredders. Any metal is removed and sold for recycling. The burnable portion of the garbage becomes Refuse Derived Fuel, or RDF,



which is piped to the City's power plant. RDF is used as an alternative, supplemental fuel in the coal boilers to generate electricity. The remaining non-burnable material is sent to the landfill. Since it is shredded, it takes up much less volume, which is better for the environment.

Recent lighting improvements at the plant, combined with a power factor correction, have resulted in lower electric usage. Incandescent and sodium vapor lighting

throughout the tipping floor, processing area, and office were replaced by high-efficiency LED lighting. This upgrade produces more light at a lower cost. Because the facility operates around the clock, high-efficiency lighting reduces electric usage. Additionally, the plant installed power factor correction equipment to make the most efficient use of electricity. Having a poor power factor wastes energy. Power factor correction allows commercial customers to use electricity as efficiently as possible. More information about high-efficiency lighting and power factor correction rebates is available at www.cityofames.org/SmartEnergy.

Calendar

City Council Meetings

The following meetings will be held in the Council Chambers, 515 Clark Ave.:

7 p.m. December 10

7 p.m. December 17

There will be no City Council workshop in December. For the most current information, go to: www.cityofames.org.

CyRide Ridership Continues to Climb!

Ames' public transit system, CyRide, continues to provide an attractive alternative to driving. Since the start of the Iowa State University academic year, CyRide ridership for the first two weeks of class averaged 37,495 rides. This compares to 31,265 rides for the same time period in 2012 - an increase of nearly 20 percent! The first Wednesday of class broke ridership records by exceeding 40,000 rides, which topped the previous high ridership of 36,000. Based on current data, CyRide could provide between 6.3 and 6.5 million rides this fiscal year. Also, construction on CyRide's building addition is nearing completion and is anticipated to open soon.

Do You Park on a Snow Route? Stay Informed this Winter!

Winter weather is just around the corner, and that means snow, snow plowing, and moving your vehicle if you live on a snow route and park in the street. How do you know when the snow ordinance is in effect? Pay attention to local media, check the City's website (www.cityofames.org), watch City Channel 12, and join the City of Ames on Facebook and Twitter! All of these sources will help you get updates and notifications.



The Ames snow removal policy was established by the City Council and states that plowing will begin after two inches of snow accumulates on the city's major streets (Grand Avenue, Lincoln Way, Duff Avenue, etc.). Reaching two inches on these streets also activates the snow ordinance. The best way to know if the snow ordinance will be in effect is to watch the weather!

When the snow ordinance is in effect, drivers parked along snow routes – marked with red and white signs – need to move their vehicles to avoid ticketing and/or towing. Vehicles may return to the street when it has stopped snowing, no additional snow is forecasted, and the street has been plowed from curb to curb. Since this happens at different times throughout the city, there is no official notice that the parking ban is lifted.

For questions or concerns about snow removal on city streets, call the Snow Desk at 515.239.5543 or email the Public Works Department at snowstreets@city.ames.ia.us. For concerns about sidewalks that aren't cleared, call the Snow Walks hotline at 515.239.5468 or email snowwalks@city.ames.ia.us.

Progress Ahead: Work Begins on Storm Water Management Project

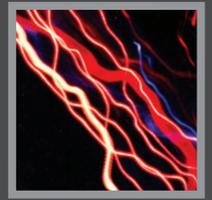
In response to flooding concerns in the Northridge neighborhood, City of Ames Public Works staff has spent the past three years meeting with stakeholders to develop a solution to protect this northwest Ames subdivision. After considering many options, a plan was recently approved by the Ames City Council, and the project is moving forward.

Improvements to reduce flooding in the area include installing new storm sewer pipe, culvert and intakes, creating a vegetated swale between two electrical substations, grading property to create more efficient surface water flow, and modifying the storm sewer.

The Moore Memorial Park Pond will be drained, cleaned of excess silt, and reshaped to accommodate additional flood storage. Existing trees within the water line of the pond will be removed. The outlet will be modified to reduce current flows, an inlet forebay will be created, and native landscaping will be planted to improve water quality. This project is one of many on-going storm water management projects being studied or implemented across the community.



This modified aerial image shows how the reshaped Moore Memorial Park pond will look when the project is complete.



Project Share Helps Those In Need Pay Winter Utility Bills

A simple way to share the warmth with those in need is to make a monthly pledge or a one-time contribution to Project Share. Project Share is a program developed by Ames Electric Services to assist low-income customers with the payment of their winter time utility bills. The program continues to be successful because of your compassion and generosity. Through your support, Ames Electric Services has been able to provide \$339,438 in assistance to 2,856 families since the program's inception in 1990. Last winter we were able to provide \$18,106 in assistance to 155 families.

The purpose of the Project Share program is to solicit and accept contributions to assist low-income customers. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines the permissible uses of the funds donated to Project Share.

The committee has established guidelines which guarantee that at least 95¢ out of every \$1 contributed is used to assist low-income customers. Ames Electric Services helps ensure contributions go to those in need by providing staff and materials to reduce the cost of administering the program.

Last year, Ames Electric Services contributed \$5,011 toward the administration of the program. Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) also assists in the administration of the program by determining the eligibility of households for Project Share funds.

Please Consider a Contribution to Project Share

I wish to make a monthly contribution to Project Share. I understand this amount will be listed on my monthly utility bill and that I can cancel my pledge at any time by contacting the City of Ames Utility Customer Service office.

\$1/month \$2/month \$5/month \$10/month other \$____/month

I wish to make a one-time contribution to Project Share rather than making a monthly pledge. I have enclosed a \$_____ donation to Project Share.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please return this form with your utility bill payment or mail to: Ames Electric Services, Attn: Project Share Committee, P.O. Box 811, Ames, IA 50010-0811.

Holiday Lighting Safety Tips

It's the time of year when beautiful lighting displays adorn our homes and businesses. Use common sense and caution to ensure a safe and happy holiday season!

- Check all light strands and cords for worn insulation, bare wires, lights with broken or cracked sockets, or loose connections. Don't try to fix old or deteriorated decorations. Throw them away.
- If you must use an extension cord, make sure it's of adequate size and power capacity. Use a grounded cord that is rated #16 or greater.
- For outside lighting, only use lights and extension cords that are specifically listed for outdoor use by Underwriters Laboratories.
- If you are using a ladder to hang decorations or work on your roof, avoid contact with overhead lines.



Ask the Energy Guy

Q: What can I do to lower my energy bills this winter?

A: Good question and timely! Winter will be here before we know it. During an average winter in Ames, we would see snow on 17.3 days with an average snowfall total of 31.6 inches. The average wintertime temperature is 39 degrees. Did you know January 17 is considered the coldest day of winter? The average high temperature on this day is 29 degrees, with a low of 12 degrees.

Ames will typically have about 6,500 “Heating Degree Days” each winter. (You may have noticed the tables at the bottom of this page every month.) Degree days are based on the assumption that when the outside temperature is 65°F, we don’t need heating or cooling to be comfortable. Degree days are the difference between the daily mean temperature and 65°F. If the mean temperature is below 65°F, we must add degrees of heat to reach 65°F. If we experience an average of 6,500 heating degree days each winter, this means our furnaces will run about 1,600 hours and cost somewhere around \$1,000. The Department of Energy estimates that the average homeowner wastes \$350 a year on heating bills because of inefficient furnaces, leaky ductwork, and homes inadequately weather-stripped.

So, what can we do? Below are some no cost and low cost ways you can save energy and be comfortable this winter:

- o Turn off lights when leaving a room.
- o Set thermostats to 68°F in winter when you’re home, and down to 55°F when you go to bed or when you’re away. (Programmable thermostats do this automatically.)
- o Don’t block air registers and keep them clean.
- o Don’t waste water, hot or cold, inside or outside your home.
- o Clean below and behind your refrigerator once a year.
- o Air-dry your clothes.
- o Close registers and doors in unused rooms.
- o Open blinds and drapes during the day to capture the sun’s heat. Close them after sunset.
- o Match pan and burner size and use lids.

Numbers to Know

Power out515.239.5240

Street light out515.239.5500

Utility bill

questions515.239.5120

Energy questions..515.239.5177

Tree growing too close to an electric line515.239.5500

Going to be digging?

Iowa One Call: 811

Heating Degree Days

September			Season to date		
2013	2012	31-year Average	12/13	11/11	31-year Average
42	106	101	50	117	111

Cooling Degree Days

September			Season to date		
2013	2012	31-year Average	2013	2012	31-year Average
185	87	107	1172	1334	1026

Degree Days are tabulated from hourly temperature data recorded at the Electric Services Power Plant. Monthly and seasonal degree days are averages since 1982. More degree day information is available on our Web site: www.cityofames.org

Steve Wilson

“The Energy Guy”

Energy Services Coordinator
515.239.5177

Energy Tips

- Don’t forget to insulate and weather-strip your attic access door.
- Save 1 to 2 percent on your energy bill by using foam gaskets under all exterior wall switch and outlet covers.
- Use bathroom and range hood fans sparingly. They exhaust conditioned air and create a suction that pulls in outdoor air.
- Insulate pipes and ducts in unheated areas to reduce heat loss.
- Tape all the joints in your furnace ductwork to reduce air leakage.

City Side is a publication of the City of Ames, Iowa

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Questions?

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