

# City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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## Holiday Closings

Most City of Ames offices will be closed Thursday, Dec. 25 and Friday, Dec. 26. Additionally, most City offices will be closed on Thursday, Jan. 1, 2015 for New Year's Day.



## Reforestation and Diversification Plan Developed for Ash Tree Removals

With Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) confirmed in nearby communities, the future for ash trees looks uncertain. To be prepared for the arrival of this destructive insect, the City of Ames is pursuing an EAB Response Plan that balances public safety with a commitment to replanting trees on public land. There are more than 2,300 public ash trees in City rights-of-way, in maintained areas of City's parks (including along paved trails), and at City-owned facilities. Ash trees represent 16 percent of all public trees in Ames, which is higher than the 10 percent recommended for optimum diversity.

The Ames City Council approved the EAB Response Plan to extend the environmental, social, and economic benefits of ash trees, and to increase the diversity of the urban forest, while being fiscally responsible to Ames citizens. The plan pursues a phased treatment and removal process for public ash trees. In the first five years, a predetermined number of ash trees would be removed based on public safety, tree defects, size, and costs. The annual removal process would spread costs over a longer time period, allow staff to reevaluate the plan regularly, and limit the visual impact on streets lined with ash trees. Some ash trees will be treated, but only to keep EAB from killing the tree before it can be removed.

Although EAB will have a major detrimental impact on our community over the next several years, this challenge also presents Ames with an unexpected opportunity to bring greater diversity to the public trees in our urban forest. Through the one-to-one replacement program, a variety of saplings will be planted at a size of 1-1/2 inch, which is optimal for establishment and survival of new trees. Since most tree removals will occur during the winter, there will be a time gap between removals and the replanting of new trees. More information about EAB, the EAB Response Plan, and options for property owners with ash trees on private property will be posted at [www.cityofames.org/trees](http://www.cityofames.org/trees).

## Historic Year Comes to an End

As the year 2014 draws to a close, so does the celebration of the community's sesquicentennial anniversary. On Dec. 17, 1864, the first 12 blocks of Ames were platted. The boundaries were the railroad on the south, Duff Avenue on the east, Eight Street on the north, and Burnett Avenue to the west. On Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2014, the public is encouraged to celebrate this historic milestone through a series of events. A daytime ceremony is planned at 11:45 a.m. on the corner of Douglas Avenue and Fifth Street. Historical information will be presented, and a time capsule will be dedicated. Cookies and punch will be served at nearby organizations from noon to 1 p.m. That evening, the public is invited to a reception hosted at four historic locations along Fifth Street. Appetizers and

historic information will be available at each location, culminating in a celebratory toast and birthday cake at City Hall. Look for more information at [www.ames150.com](http://www.ames150.com).



# Calendar

## City Council Meetings

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

7 p.m. December 9  
7 p.m. December 23

There will be no City Council workshop in December. For the most current information, go to: [www.cityofames.org](http://www.cityofames.org).

## Last Free Day on December 6

This fall's Yard Waste Free Days have been held on a revised schedule. The days have been extended longer into the season and the new days avoid conflicts with Iowa State home football games. Remaining Saturdays are Nov. 8 (includes brush), Nov. 15, and Dec. 6, at Chamness Technology, 26107 530th Ave. Hours are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. To get to the site, travel south on University Boulevard and continue along the gravel road for almost two miles. The yard waste site is located on the west side of the road. (University Boulevard becomes 530th Avenue.)

For additional information or questions, call the yard waste site at 515.450.0450 and leave a message.

## 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:snowwalks@city.ames.ia.us).

## Repair and Care Program Can Help!

The Ames Repair and Care program provides assistance to homeowners who are unable to maintain their property due to age, disability, or lack of financial resources. Through the use of volunteer assistance, residents in need can avoid the risk of citations for nuisance or maintenance violations. The Repair and Care program also provides neighbors the opportunity to work together to maintain and improve the condition of residential, owner-occupied property for the betterment of the neighborhood and Ames community.

For those wishing to volunteer, typical activities include removal of yard debris and outdoor storage, trimming trees and shrubs, mowing tall grass and controlling weeds, snow removal, minor painting, and repairing or installing exterior handrails and guardrails. The volunteer program is divided into three sub-categories:

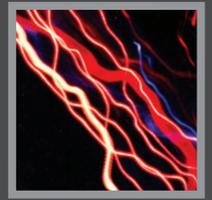
**Volunteers Repair and Care** - One-on-One pairing of an individual volunteer with a home-owner

**Clubs Repair and Care** - Clubs or organizations may be paired with a home-owner who needs ongoing assistance

**Neighborhoods Repair and Care** - An entire neighborhood may organize a "work day" to help with property maintenance

To get involved as a volunteer, contact the Volunteer Center of Story County at 515.268.5323. To apply for assistance, contact Jeff Benson, Planning and Housing Department, at 515.239.5400 or [jbenson@city.ames.ia.us](mailto:jbenson@city.ames.ia.us).

When It's Snowing, Avoid Towing!



# 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 \$355,887 in assistance to 2,990 families since the program's inception in 1990. Last winter we were able to provide \$16,449 in assistance to 134 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 \$5,013 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: I try to save energy but my bill keeps going up. What can I do?**

**A:** I get this question a lot. While it's impractical to paint every situation with the same brush, there are studies that indicate while Americans strive to conserve energy they are adding more energy-using devices.

According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), growth of electricity demand has slowed in each decade since the 1950s, from 9.8 percent per year from 1949 to 1959 to only 0.7 percent per year since 2000. The EIA points out that electricity demand growth remains relatively low, as rising demand for electric services is offset by efficiency gains from new appliance standards and investments in energy-efficient equipment. However, the demand for electricity does still grow by 0.9 percent every year. The average U.S. household is using more consumer electronics such as personal computers, televisions and related devices. For instance, in 1978, personal computers were expensive and not typically used by U.S. households. However, by 2009, 76 percent of U.S. homes had at least one computer, and 35 percent had multiple computers.

Part of the reason for this increase is a relatively short five-year life expectancy on consumer electronics. In addition, in an effort to keep up with developing technology, many of us own two or more of the same thing. There are homes with more than one TV, computer, and DVD player. Many gamers find themselves spending long hours in front of their consoles. Also, our mobile lifestyle finds us charging portable devices, so we can take them with us when we leave our homes. In Ames, the average home uses about 650 kWh of electricity each month. Consumer electronics account for about 98 kWh, which means each year we will spend around \$120 to power our home electronics. Here are some things you can do to save energy:

- Stand-by power can be avoided by unplugging the device or using a power strip and using the switch on the power strip to cut all power to the device.
- Unplug battery chargers when batteries are fully charged or chargers are not in use.
- Using rechargeable batteries for often-used products is more cost effective than throwaway batteries.
- It is a common misconception that leaving on electronic equipment makes it last longer. Not true. Turn off equipment when not in use.

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?

515 Clark Ave.  
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[www.cityofames.org](http://www.cityofames.org)

## Numbers to Know

Power out .....515.239.5240

Street light out ....515.239.5500

Utility bill questions .....515.239.5120

Renting security lights.....515.239.5437

Energy questions..515.239.5177

Tree growing too close to an electric line .....515.239-5500

Going to be digging?  
Iowa One Call: ..... 811

## Power Plant Renewable Energy Use

For September 2014

Wind purchased: 3,803,799 kWh

Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Used: 27,318 tons

## Heating Degree Days

September			Season to date		
2014	2013	32-year Average	13/14	12/13	32-year Average
114	42	102	121	50	111

## Cooling Degree Days

September			Season to date		
2014	2013	32-year Average	2014	2013	32-year Average
84	185	106	890	1172	1030

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](http://www.cityofames.org)

