

City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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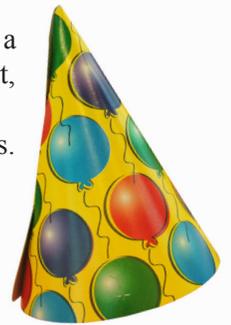
Discounts Available

Purchase a new summer season pass to Furman Aquatic Center by May 15 and receive a 10 percent discount. Renew your 2014 summer pass and receive a 20 percent discount. Purchase your pass at the Community Center, 515 Clark Ave., or by telephone with a credit card at 515.239.5650.

Be a Good Host & Good Neighbor When Throwing a Party

When the weather warms, many gravitate to the outdoors to enjoy the weather. This is the time of year for barbecues, get-togethers, and parties! Whatever the reason for your social gathering, two basic rules apply. First, it should be a pleasant experience for those in attendance. Second, it should not be an unpleasant experience for your neighbors.

Here are some tips to make sure your event goes as planned. It's always a good idea to tell your neighbors you are having a party, when it will start, and when it should end. Give them your phone number and encourage them to call you first if they have a complaint. Don't have "open" parties. Make attendance by invitation only and don't invite too many guests. Consider parking and the amount of room you have to accommodate your guests without having them spill out into your neighborhood.



If you serve alcohol, make it part of the event and not the event itself. Stay sober yourself because it's hard to be a good host when you are impaired, and you never know when you might have to handle an emergency. Finally, after everyone has left or early the next morning, be a good neighbor and clean up after your guests. This means going around the neighborhood and picking up any trash or cans that may have been left behind. Your neighbors will appreciate it!

Squaw Creek Watershed Update

All Ames residents live in the southern edge of the Squaw Creek Watershed, and the waterways that pass through this community provide habitat for surrounding plants and animals. Although Ames drinking water is pulled from aquifers deep below the surface, residents have a vested interest in keeping pollution, chemicals, and run-off out of local streams and rivers.



The Squaw Creek Watershed Management Authority Board is a partnership of Boone, Story, Hamilton, and Webster counties. The organization is committed to improving water quality, diversifying habitat, and creating recreational opportunities in the Squaw Creek Watershed. Over the last year, the Board has worked with a consultant to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan with goals, targets, and guidance for watershed activities over the next 20 years. The plan addresses extreme variations in flow, erosion and sedimentation, elevated nutrients levels (nitrate and phosphate), and loss of biodiversity both with wildlife and plant communities.

Next steps are to begin educating the public in order to carry out a variety of solutions that range from simple, cost effective nutrient management strategies to more complex approaches. Look for more information in the future about how you can participate!



Calendar

City Council Meetings

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

7 p.m. May 12

7 p.m. May 26

A Council workshop will be held at 7 p.m. May 19. For the most current information, go to: www.cityofames.org.

Backflow Testing Email Notification

There are over 2,500 backflow prevention assemblies installed in homes and businesses in Ames. These assemblies play an important role in protecting our drinking water. Every year, these assemblies are tested to ensure they are working properly. Notices are sent to customers with backflow prevention assemblies to remind them when it is time to have the assemblies tested. Those notices have been paper notices mailed to the customer. Now notices can be sent to the customer by email.

If you have a backflow prevention assembly and would like to receive paperless notices, send an email to backflow@city.ames.ia.us from the email address you would like to use for your notices. Be sure to include your name and home or business address.

Flood Insurance Protects Property and Belongings

Even with efforts to stop it, nothing can guarantee an Ames residence or business will never flood. To minimize loss, consider obtaining flood insurance for your property and belongings. Because Ames participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), all property owners in the city are eligible to purchase flood insurance to cover structural damage and content loss. Renters may buy coverage for damage to contents.

Coverage is available for homes, condominiums, mobile homes, commercial buildings, and nearly any walled and roofed structure. You need not own property in a flood plain to be eligible for this insurance. Insurance is available from most agents that offer homeowners insurance. Please see one for further details.

The City's participation in the NFIP requires us to adopt ordinances governing development in the flood plain and to monitor flood plain activities through a Flood Plain Development Permit. Nearly all activities, such as grading, construction, excavation, or filling in the flood plain require a permit. The regulations are designed to reduce the potential for loss of life and personal injury and to minimize property damage in the event of a flood.

Please contact Charlie Kuester, Planning and Housing Department, at 515.239.5400, for information on the location of the flood plain and to discuss any proposed activities.

Flood Monitoring

If you own property or live in a flood prone area, a big storm can keep you up at night. The City of Ames, along with many other agencies, monitors river levels and watches for signs of rising water. However, nobody understands how flooding affects your property better than you do. Never let a prediction by an 'expert' talk you out of what your own common sense tells you.

The Ames Water and Pollution Control Department routinely checks gages on the Skunk River and Squaw Creek and checks flood modeling software to predict peak water flow. Yet, each weather event is unique. If you think your property may be impacted by flooding, it is never too early to begin making preparations. Above all, never put your safety in jeopardy to protect physical possessions!

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Be Prepared for Future Flooding

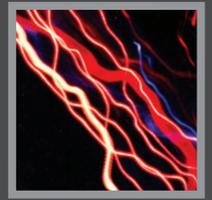
Reserve the Block Party Trailer

Strong neighborhoods are the building blocks of strong communities. The Street 'N' Greet Block Party Trailer is a great tool to build connections in your neighborhood. This is the first year that reservations for the Block Party Trailer can be submitted online by going to www.cityofames.org/trailer.

The online form will allow you to submit your contact information, and someone from the City will follow up with you about your reservation. Those with questions about the form or who prefer to register via telephone should contact the Department of Planning and Housing at 515.239.5400.

The trailer makes having a block party convenient and easy. Inside the trailer you'll find tables, chairs, road barricades, games for children and adults, an audio system, and more. A block party event can bring neighbors together, build connections, and create great memories for everyone!





Know What To Do if You Lose Power

With the spring weather, thunderstorms may cause an interruption of your electric service. Although we can't guarantee that your power will never go out, we always do our best to restore service as quickly as possible. In fact, one of our greatest strengths as your local community-owned electric utility is our ability to respond quickly in case of a power outage. Here's what to do when your power goes out:

- Check if the power is off in the whole house or just part of it.
- Check your main electric panel to see if a breaker has tripped or fuse has blown.
- If the problem is not in your panel, check to see if neighbors have been affected.
- Call 515.239.5240 to report your outage. You may be asked to provide your name, address of the outage, and phone number at the outage address.
- If you have a smart phone, check the electric outage map at www.cityofames.org/ElectricOutage to learn real-time information about outages throughout the community

Your outage reporting service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A crew will be dispatched to restore power safely and as quickly as possible. With the ability to take numerous calls at once, you should be able to report your outage immediately. Your call is important to us because it indicates the number of customers affected and often helps pinpoint the cause. This allows us to restore power sooner.

Plant a Tree!

Tree Planting Vouchers Offered

City of Ames Electric Services, City of Ames Public Works, and Ames Trees Forever are offering a tree-planting program for Ames residents and businesses on Saturday, May 2. Participating garden centers include Country Landscapes and Lowe's. Participants are asked to attend a brief program on proper tree selection and planting before receiving a \$50 tree voucher and a bag of mulch.



Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., and the program will start at 10 a.m. at both Country Landscapes, 56985 Lincoln Highway and Lowe's, 120 Airport Road.

Participants may pick up an application in advance at the Ames Public Library, City Hall, Country Landscapes, or Earl May. Vouchers will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. This program is made possible by a

donation from Ames Electric Services and the Smart Watersheds program. For more information, contact Dianne Brotherson of Ames Trees Forever at 515.292.8613.

Getting Ready for Cooling

- Clean or replace your furnace filter. Clean, free-flowing air is necessary for efficient operation.
- Clean your outdoor compressor unit each spring, and make sure it is not blocked with debris.
- Seal ducts so more cool air gets where you want it to go.
- Keep your registers free of obstructions such as furniture, rugs, and drapes, so cool air can do its job.
- Keep your cooling system well-tuned with periodic maintenance by a professional service person.

Iowa One Call Phone Number

Always remember to call before you dig. The Iowa One Call number is even easier to remember. Just dial 811!



Ask the Energy Guy

Q: My bills seem pretty high. I try to conserve but my energy costs keep going up. Is there anything I can do?

A: There is nothing more frustrating than to work to save energy only to have your bills go up. So, is there anything that can be

done? Short answer, yes. Sign up for a free Smart Energy energy audit. While there are many things that can help bring high bills down, it starts with knowing what is using the energy in your home. A Smart Energy Residential Energy Audit is free and is performed by a trained professional using specialized equipment who is knowledgeable in efficient construction practices.

More than simply identifying the sources of energy use, the residential energy audit seeks to prioritize opportunities -- from greatest to least cost effective -- for energy savings. An energy audit looks at the building envelope including the walls, ceilings, floors, doors, and windows. It considers insulation levels and the general condition of the home and will also look at the lighting, appliances, water heater, thermostat, furnace, and air conditioner.



According to the Department of Energy, air leaks in homes can drive up heating and cooling costs by 20 percent or more. The Smart Energy audit includes a blower door test for homes built in 2000 or before. The test pulls air from the home to slightly change the indoor air pressure, which forces outside air through unsealed areas. This tells you how leaky your home is and identifies the main causes. The audit includes a comprehensive written report outlining the home's performance and making recommendations to improve efficiency, comfort, and ongoing sustainability. According to the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, an energy audit can save the average homeowner about \$600 a year by addressing the recommendations.

How do you get a free audit? This is the easiest part of all! Call 515.239.5177 or visit www.cityofames.org/smartenergy.

Steve Wilson
"The Energy Guy"

Energy Services Coordinator
515.239.5177

Prime Time Power

The Prime Time Power program is available to all homeowners and small businesses with central air conditioners. You do not need to reapply for Prime Time Power if you've signed up before. The \$5 credit during each of the four summer months is automatically applied to your account. To sign up or receive additional information about the program, call Utility Customer Service at 515.239.5120 or Steve Wilson at 515.239.5177.

Call for a Free Energy Conservation Packet

Need to improve your home's energy efficiency? Call 515.239.5177 for a free energy conservation packet. You'll receive booklets from the Iowa Energy Center, a home self audit, and information on Smart Energy.

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

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Questions?

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www.cityofames.org

Numbers to Know

Power out515.239.5240
Street light out515.239.5500
Utility bills.....515.239.5120
Renting
Security lights515.239.5437
Energy questions ..515.239.5177
Tree growing too close to an electric line515.239.5500
Going to be digging?
Iowa One Call: 811

Power Plant Renewable Energy Use
For February 2015
Wind purchased: 4,088,688 kWh
Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Used: 29,485 tons

Heating Degree Days

February			Season to date		
2015	2014	33-year Average	14/15	13/14	33-year Average
1407	1396	1116	5336	5774	5039

Cooling Degree Days

February			Season to date		
2015	2014	33-year Average	2015	2014	33-year Average
0	0	0	0	0	0

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

