

City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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Labor Day Closings

City Hall and most City of Ames offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 7, for the Labor Day holiday.

Resource Recovery Plant Celebrates 40 Years of Waste-To-Energy

Four decades ago, Ames residents opened the doors on the first-in-the nation, municipal waste-to-energy facility. The Arnold O. Chantland Resource Recovery System showcased leading technology to address two important concerns: reducing the amount of valuable Iowa farmland being used for landfills and decreasing our dependency on fossil fuels. From 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Sept. 19, join the Resource Recovery Plant, along with current employees, former staff, and special guests in celebrating the facility's 40th anniversary. There will be displays, exhibits, tours, and refreshments.



Resource Recovery, 110 Center Ave., celebrates its 40th anniversary on Sat., Sept. 19.

Since opening in August 1975, the Resource Recovery Plant, 110 Center Ave., has used garbage to produce refuse-derived fuel (RDF) for the Ames Power Plant.

Garbage arrives on the tipping floor, and the separation process begins. A series of shredders and conveyors breaks down the garbage. Eventually, the smaller pieces pass under an electro-magnet to remove ferrous metals, and an eddy current system removes non-ferrous metals. Metals are recycled for reuse. The burnable garbage is sent to the Ames Power Plant where it replaces 10 percent of the coal. Even after the Power Plant converts to natural gas in 2016, RDF will continue to provide a renewable fuel source.

City, Foundation Partner for Trees

The Ames Foundation recently joined forces with the City of Ames to combat the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). EAB has been discovered near Ames, and this insect will have a devastating effect on our community's ash trees. To be prepared, the City of Ames launched its multi-year EAB Response Plan at the end of 2014. This plan includes removing thousands of ash trees on public land and replanting with a variety of species to create a more diversified urban forest. The Foundation is raising funds to defray the cost of new trees and to organize interested citizens who want to help plant and maintain these trees in community parks, green spaces, and rights-of-way. It is estimated the cost to purchase and replant a new tree is \$250.

Ash trees are common in Ames and can be found in practically every neighborhood. Their loss, coupled with costs associated with replacing them, presents a huge challenge. On Saturday, Sept. 26, a volunteer tree planting will be bringing new trees to a few Ames neighborhoods. The Ames Foundation is seeking both donations to pay for trees and volunteers willing to assist with replanting. To be involved in this effort, send donations to "The Ames Foundation," c/o Ames Community Tree Program, P.O. Box 213, Ames, IA 50010. To volunteer for the tree planting, sign up at: www.amesfoundation.org/trees.



Calendar

City Council Meetings

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

6 p.m. Sept. 8

6 p.m. Sept. 22

A Council workshop will be held at 6 p.m. on Sept. 15. For the most current information, go to: www.cityofames.org.

Proper Disposal of Batteries

Batteries come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and they are composed of different chemicals and metals. That's why proper battery disposal is important for protecting the environment.

Rechargeable batteries have grown in popularity alongside the number of personal electronics. But rechargeable batteries don't belong in the waste stream. The Resource Recovery Plant, 110 Center Ave., will take your rechargeable batteries free of charge for safe disposal. What's the best way to dispose of other batteries? Check the battery disposal page on our city website: www.cityofames.org/batteries.

Follow the 'Rules of the Road' For Transportation Safety

For pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists, navigating around Ames can be tricky when transportation routes intersect, but following the "rules of the road" makes the journey easier for all. Obeying traffic laws, signs and signals makes anticipating how others act more predictable and increases safety. "Safety can't be delegated to one person," said Commander Geoff Huff, Ames Police Department. "Whether you're walking, running, skate boarding, biking, or driving, you play a role that includes being aware of your surroundings and following the law."



With students soon returning to classrooms, traffic patterns change. More students will be walking, biking, riding buses, and being transported to and from school. Drivers, in particular, must be more attentive to the change. Pedestrians have the right of way in crosswalks, so drivers must be prepared to yield. Yet, pedestrians should never assume a driver will give you the right of way. "Always make eye contact with the driver of a stopped or approaching vehicle before crossing the street," Huff warned.

While many crosswalks are at intersections, Ames has crossings located mid-block including pedestrian-activated crossings on Duff Avenue near Mary Greeley Medical Center and on 13th Street near Frederiksen Court. When the lights are flashing and a pedestrian is in or entering the crosswalk, vehicles must stop. There are other mid-block crosswalks in front of City Hall and near schools, so drivers should use caution in these areas. Also, on-street bicyclists must follow the same traffic rules as drivers.

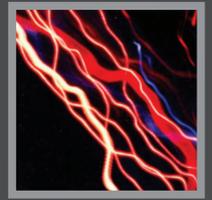
Ames Water Tastes Great, Always Safe!

There have been several news reports recently regarding nitrate in drinking water. This has prompted questions about the presence of nitrate in Ames water. Rest assured, Ames water is very safe and tested regularly to detect the presence of any regulated contaminants.

The Ames Water Plant uses 22 groundwater wells as its water source. These wells are regularly tested for nitrates, and the results are reported to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Water is tested each winter as it enters the Water Plant for treatment. Additionally, each spring all 22 wells are tested individually. The maximum contaminant level for nitrate is 10 milligrams per liter. In all cases, Ames water has tested less than the detection limit for nitrate, which is only 1 milligram per liter.

Ames residents are fortunate to have a safe supply of drinking water, free from the presence of nitrate that other communities and water utilities have discovered. For more information on City of Ames water, please refer to our annual consumer confidence report. A link for this report can be found www.cityofames.org/waterreport.





Ceiling Fans Lower Electric Use

During summer, turning up your thermostat and using ceiling fans can make you comfortable and reduce your electric bill. Ceiling fans can improve comfort at a given room temperature by creating a wind chill effect when they blow air across the skin. But because fans cool people and not stuff, it pays to switch the fan off when you leave the room.

During the hottest part of the summer, an air conditioner can cost about \$3 dollars a day to operate, but a fan only cost about 10 cents a day. For each eight-hour period you turn your thermostat up five degrees, you can save 20 percent of your cooling energy. We might spend 10 cents a day running a fan, but we might also save 60 cents by turning our thermostat up. Using a fan together with a thermostat turn up consistently can reduce air conditioning bills by as much as 40 percent. But remember, if you don't adjust your thermostat and turn on several fans, you'll end up adding to your bill.

A good ceiling fan should create enough air movement to keep you comfortable at 82 degrees and 80-percent relative humidity. The sizing the fan is important, so use the following as a guide:

Room Area (square feet)	Minimum Fan Diameter
100	36 inches
150	42 inches
225	48 inches
375	52 inches
400+	2 fans needed

Source: U. S. Department of Energy

Do We Have Your Number?

Although Ames Electric Services can't guarantee that your power will never go off, 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. City of Ames Electric Services has upgraded its Outage Management System (OMS) to assist the restoration of power to our customers. The OMS pinpoints the outage and provides mapping for line crews. This saves precious time and reduces the duration of the outage.

How does it do this? The system identifies your phone number when you call, associates it with your address, and automatically adds your home to the outage list. Two telephone numbers can be associated with your account, such as a home phone number and a cell phone number or two cell phone numbers. Due to the increase in cell phone use and the problems with using cordless phones during a power outage, associating a cell phone number with your address is the safe and smart way to help ensure your electricity is reconnected in a timely manner

How can you help? Contact Utility Customer Service at 515.239.5120 and make sure they have two current phone numbers for your home or fill out the form at www.cityofames.org/outage.

Smart Energy Saves Everyone

Since its beginning in 2007, Smart Energy has put up some impressive numbers. Ames citizens have participated in Smart Energy programs 14,529 times, and about 9,600 customers have a PrimeTime Power switch on their central air conditioner.

The rebate and audit program saves Ames about 24 million kilowatt-hours (kWhs) of electricity per year, reduces the summer-time demand for electricity by 16 megawatts (MWs), and has removed 20,000 tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. These savings reduce future costs to the utility by about \$15 million!

For more information visit, www.cityofames.org/smartenergy.



Q: My air conditioner is pretty old. How much will it save me to get a new one?

A: Like just about every other energy question out there the answer is: It depends. Savings will be affected by outdoor temperature and humidity, the size and efficiency of old and new air conditioners, and thermostat setting. But assuming no major lifestyle changes and average weather, one should be able to get a rough idea of savings.

First, figure out how much you spend on air conditioning. Subtract your April electric bill from each of your July, August, September, and October electric bills. Total them and add 8 percent. This will give you a rough idea of your cooling costs.

Next, estimate your old and new air conditioner efficiencies. Cooling equipment is tested by the Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) and given a seasonal energy efficiency rating (SEER). The SEER represents the cooling energy output per watt of electricity input, so the higher the SEER, the more efficient the air conditioner. Your new air conditioner will have the SEER identified on the unit. If not, ask your installer. Estimating the SEER of the old unit depends on its age. For an air conditioner older than 20 years, the SEER would be about 6. A 10 to 20 year old air conditioner will have a SEER of around 8. Newer than 10 years would be around 10.

Let's say you are replacing a 20 year old air conditioner and estimate the old unit SEER to be 8. You made sure your new system has a SEER of 15, which qualifies for a Smart Energy rebate. The new air conditioner will save you 47 percent ($8/15 = .53$, 100 percent - 53 percent = 47 percent savings). From your bill analysis, you found that you spent about \$392 a summer for air conditioning. Taking this times .47 will give you an estimate of savings, \$184. The new unit will cost about \$208 a season to operate. When considering an air conditioner upgrade, factor in the cost of the new unit (minus your Smart Energy air conditioner rebate) to determine if the return on investment is worth it to you!



Steve Wilson
"The Energy Guy"
 Energy Services Coordinator
 515.239.5177

Energy Information

According to the Iowa Energy Center:

- Test to see if you need weather stripping by placing a dollar bill in the crack around a door or window. If the dollar falls out, the gap is too large and needs weather stripping.
- Without adequate attic ventilation, moisture may collect on your ceiling and walls. Make sure you have enough attic vents, and they are not blocked.
- Let your air conditioner run while you're on vacation. Set your thermostat to 85 degrees so the system will occasionally run preventing mold and mildew.

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

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Questions?
 515 Clark Ave.
 Ames, IA 50010
 Phone: 515.239.5204
 www.cityofames.org

Numbers to Know

Power out515.239.5240
Street light out515.239.5500
Utility bill questions515.239.5120
Renting security lights.....515.239.5437
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 June 2015
 Wind purchased: 4,373,058 kWh
 Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Used: 29,069 tons

Heating Degree Days

June			Season to date		
2015	2014	33-year Average	14/15	13/14	33-year Average
7	1	18	5064	7464	6497

Cooling Degree Days

June			Season to date		
2015	2014	33-year Average	2015	2014	33-year Average
216	213	225	272	322	308

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

