

City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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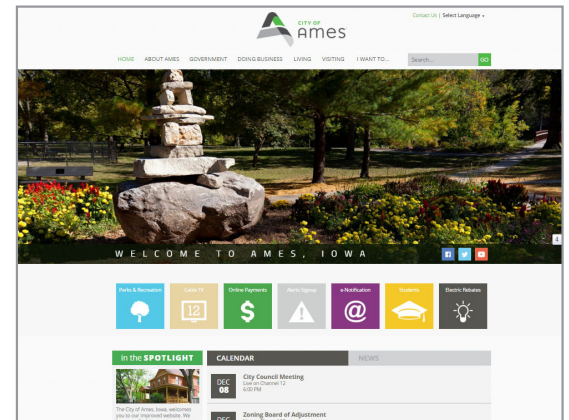
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City Offices Closed

City Hall and most City of Ames departments will be closed on Monday, Feb. 15, in recognition of Presidents' Day. For more information about the City of Ames, go to www.cityofames.org.

New City of Ames Website Features Improved Design

City of Ames website users may have noticed a change in the design of www.cityofames.org. The improved website sports a clean, modern look with fewer buttons and easier navigation. With the new look, users will discover finding information is faster and more intuitive. Features include pull-down menus that lock in place for easy scrolling, one-click social media buttons, and attractive department home pages. It's important to note the website does more than just look good. The new system was built with responsive design, which means the pages adjust to fit mobile devices like cell phones and tablets. If you haven't looked at the City's website recently, you may not realize what you can accomplish from the comfort of home. Users can pay parking tickets and utility bills, sign up for utility service, register for Parks and Recreation classes, download Smart Energy rebate forms, watch Channel 12 through video-streaming, check City Council meetings, and much more. To continue to stay up-to-date on all City of Ames news, users can use the e-notification button to sign up for notices about specific topics including city news and events.



Ames Involved in Sustainability

As world leaders including President Obama gathered in Paris to discuss climate change recently, Mayor Ann Campbell joined a conference call of U.S. mayors with Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz as part of the 21st United Nations climate conference, COP21. The City of Ames continues to explore ways to remain committed to sustainability.

Converting the Ames Power Plant from coal to natural gas will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent. At the same time, the Power Plant will continue to use refuse-derived fuel from the Resource Recovery Plant as an alternate fuel source. To encourage the reduction of electric use by residential and commercial users, Ames Electric Services offers Smart Energy, a suite of energy-saving programs and rebates. Smart Water programs encourage water conservation, and Smart Watersheds reminds residents about keeping our waterways free from pollution. The City of Ames continuously explores and encourages reducing energy use through education, incentives, and technology improvements. (Learn more about the City's new fuel efficient equipment on Page 2!)



Calendar

City Council Meetings

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

5:15 p.m. Feb. 9

6 p.m. Feb. 23

A Council workshop will be held at 6 p.m. on Feb. 16. (Budget hearings listed at right.) For the most current information, go to: www.cityofames.org.

Keep Hydrants Clear from Snow

As snow piles up along the curb, it does more than hamper visibility for drivers. Mounds of snow can obscure locations of fire hydrants. Ames firefighters are requesting residents check fire hydrants located near



their homes or businesses to ensure they are visible.

If the fire hydrant is covered, we need your

help! Please clear a three-foot wide area around the hydrant to ensure firefighters can locate it. During a fire emergency, every second counts. If you need assistance clearing the hydrant, call Fire Station No. 1 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at 515.239.5109.

Resource Recovery Invests In Fuel Efficient Equipment

At the Resource Recovery Plant, a wheeled loader pushes, sorts, and stacks garbage from the tipping floor into our waste-to-energy system to create refuse derived fuel (RDF) for the Ames Power Plant. Garbage is used to produce 10 percent of our electricity.

Due to the increased size of the trucks hauling trash into the facility, RRP needs larger, more powerful equipment. In most cases, increasing to a larger, more productive loader means an increase in the amount of fuel used. But not this time! The City of Ames added a diesel electric hybrid to the RRP fleet. The new John Deere 644K Hybrid wheeled loader is step up in size and power, but uses the same amount of fuel as the loader it replaced.



With the new equipment, operators are able to push oversized loads in fewer passes, which reduces wear to the tipping floor surface, the solid rubber tires, and the rubber scraper bits. All of these are very expensive to replace. Also with the increased productivity and efficiency, there is reduced operator fatigue. In addition to the larger loader, a back up camera with object detection has been added. This improves safety for staff, commercial haulers, and our citizens. Finally, the diesel electric hybrid is considerably quieter than its conventional counterpart, which improves safety and communication.

Public Meetings Scheduled For Next Fiscal Year's Budget

The City of Ames began preparing for the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget last fall with a series of internal staff meetings. Work continues throughout the winter months as each department's budget is reviewed internally prior to presentation to the Ames City Council. There are still plenty of opportunities to get involved in the budget process. A budget overview will be presented to the City Council at 2 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 29.

Three additional meetings will follow in which representatives of each of the City's departments present an in-depth review of their proposed budgets. All budget meetings will be held in the City Council Chambers, Ames City Hall, 515 Clark Ave. The schedule includes:

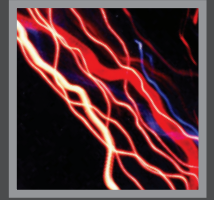
5:15 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 2

5:15 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3

5:15 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4

A wrap-up of the budget will be held at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 9. The final budget hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, and will include an opportunity for public comments. This is also a regularly scheduled City Council meeting. Like all Iowa communities, the City of Ames must submit its budget to the State of Iowa for certification by March 15. Budget documents for the current fiscal year are posted on the City's website, and draft documents for 2016-17 will be posted by early February. For more information, go to www.cityofames.org.





Mark Your Calendars: Eco Fair 2016 Set for April 2

The 16th annual City of Ames Eco Fair will be held at the Community Center Gym, 515 Clark Ave., on Saturday, April 2, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring your kids and play games, see interesting displays, register for door prizes, and enjoy refreshments. The Eco Fair features City department booths, as well as community organizations and vendors who offer energy-efficient products, programs, or services.



“This is an exciting opportunity for our City of Ames departments to join together and share all the great conservation programs we offer. Additionally, we have many outside vendors attending the event to offer information about becoming a more environmentally friendly community,” said Steve Wilson, “The Energy Guy” with Ames Electric Services.



In addition to showcasing electric conservation, the Eco Fair includes water conservation and watershed protection, landscaping, and transportation efficiency. Get useful information on products and services from area vendors, see interesting displays, register for door prizes, play games, and join us for free food. You won’t want to miss this free, fun, and educational event!

Space Heater Safety Tips

Electric space heaters are not intended for the whole house or for continuous operation, but they are a great way to take the chill off. Most heaters use around 1,500 watts of electricity, which costs approximately 15 cents an hour. When operating a space heater, users must be careful. Here are some safety tips:

- Operate the heater in a stable, upright position with 3 feet of clear space around the unit.
- Never operate the heater in a closed area, such as beneath furniture, or behind curtains or drapes. It should not be hung from a wall or ceiling.
- Do not use a heater with a damaged cord or plug.
- Do not run the cord under rugs or carpeting.
- Never locate a heater in a wet area like the bathroom, kitchen, or laundry room.
- Always unplug a heater when not in use or when cleaning it.
- Make sure the heater has been tested by a lab such as Underwriters Laboratories.
- If an extension cord is needed, use one that is rated to handle the wattage of the heater.

Carbon Monoxide Dangers

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas produced when fuel burns. If a fuel-burning device such as a furnace or kerosene heater is installed, operated, or vented incorrectly, the carbon monoxide it gives off can build up in the air. Should the concentration of carbon monoxide get high enough, you will develop the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Symptoms may be hard to recognize because at first they are much like symptoms of the flu: headache, weakness, dizziness, and nausea. Other symptoms can include shortness of breath, chest pain, confusion, loss of consciousness, and heart arrhythmias. If you suspect carbon monoxide may be a problem in your home or experience symptoms, call the Ames Fire Department at 515.239.5109.



Ask the Energy Guy

Q: How do I know if I'm buying an efficient appliance?

Appliances can be expensive. That's why it's important to do a little research before you buy. We want to be smart with our money and any appliance will bring with it an ongoing monthly cost of operation.

According to the National Association of Home Builders and Bank of America Home Equity, a new refrigerator will last you about 13 years, a washing machine 10 years, and a dishwasher nine years. The ongoing cost can be significant.

So, how do you know you're making a smart purchase? First, look for the Energy Star label. Energy Star has done all the testing necessary to determine which appliances exceed federal standards for efficiency, so Energy Star certified appliances are 30 to 50 percent more efficient than standard appliances. You also need to look for the bright yellow and black Energy Guide label. This will show you the estimated annual energy consumption and operating cost for each appliance so you can compare them yourself. The Energy Guide label is required to be placed on all appliances by the manufacturers. The label provides information about energy consumption, and shows you how much energy an appliance uses compared with similar models. Remember that these are average and actual costs will differ somewhat depending on how you use them. The label shows the following:

1. Maker, model number, and size of the appliance.
2. Estimated yearly operating cost (based on the national average cost of electricity), and the range of operating costs for similar models.
3. The Energy Star logo indicates that this model meets strict criteria for energy efficiency.
4. Estimated yearly electricity consumption.
5. Key features of the appliance and the similar models that make up the cost comparison range.

It is important to note that the yellow Energy Guide doesn't mean the appliance is efficient. Only those with the Energy Star label in the lower right-hand corner are identified as exceeding federal standards for efficiency. The Energy Star certification is also necessary to qualify for a rebate from City of Ames Electric Services' Smart Energy program. For more information visit www.cityofames.org or call the Energy Guy at 515.239.5177.

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, 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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www.cityofames.org

Numbers to Know

Power out515.239.5240
Street light out515.239.5500
Utility bill515.239.5120
Energy questions..515.239.5177
Tree growing too close to an electric line515.239.5500
Going to be digging?
Iowa One Call: 811
Stormwater Concern:.....515.239.5160

Power Plant Renewable Energy Use
For November 2015
Wind purchased: 5,624,845 kWh
Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Used: 27,797 tons

Heating Degree Days

November			Season to date		
2015	2014	33-year Average	14/15	13/14	33-year Average
640	1040	808	1052	1539	1311

Cooling Degree Days

November			Season to date		
2015	2014	33-year Average	2015	2014	33-year Average
1	0	0	992	890	1043

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 website: www.cityofames.org

