

City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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Furman Discounts

Summer season pool passes for Furman Aquatic Center are now available. Purchase a new summer season pass by May 1 and receive a 10 percent discount. Renew your 2015 summer pass and receive a 15 percent discount. Purchase at the Community Center, 515 Clark Ave, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, or 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.



Ames Water Monitored Carefully To Ensure Quality and Safety

If you've followed the water quality crisis in Flint, Michigan, you may have wondered if the same situation could happen in Ames. The City of Ames takes a proactive approach to preventing lead from entering our drinking water. Corrosion of lead piping in the Flint, Mich., distribution system caused elevated lead levels for its water customers. The Ames Water Plant prevents this from happening by maintaining the appropriate chemistry of water leaving the plant. This is achieved by closely monitoring the process and adding treatment chemicals in very specific amounts.

In Ames, water originates from groundwater aquifers and flows through the remnants of ancient riverbeds of Squaw Creek and the South Skunk River. Pulled from 22 wells, water enters the Ames Water Treatment Facility through aerators. Dissolved gases are vented to eliminate undesirable taste and odor. The water then flows into mixing tanks where lime is added to raise the pH. The lime forms solid particles by combining with calcium and magnesium -- minerals that contribute to hardness. At this point, sodium hypochlorite is added to disinfect the water.

Water then travels to the clarifiers where the insoluble calcium and magnesium particles settle to the bottom. After clarification, polyphosphate is added to stabilize the water and reduce scale build-up on the filters. Next, the water enters the recarbonation tanks where carbon dioxide gas is diffused through the water to stop the softening reaction. From the recarbonation tanks, the water is filtered through beds of anthracite coal and sand. These filters remove fine suspended particles. For more information about Ames water, including an informative Q&A section, go to www.cityofames.org/water.



Open House Planned

The City of Ames Water and Pollution Control Department invites Ames residents to attend an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at the Ames Water Pollution Control Facility, located east of Interstate 35, at 56797 280th St.

The Ames Water Pollution Control Facility uses physical and biological treatment methods to reduce organic materials, oxygen demand, solids, and ammonia before discharging treated effluent to the Skunk River. The facility provides wastewater treatment to over 18,000 homes and businesses within Ames. In addition, service is provided to the National Centers for Animal Health and Iowa State University campus.

The open house will feature guided facility tours, environmental exhibits, equipment and process demonstrations, and refreshments.

Calendar

City Council Meetings

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

6 p.m. April 12

6 p.m. April 26

A Council workshop will be held at 6 p.m. April 19.

Stash the Trash Set for April 30

The Resource Recovery Plant is partnering again this year with the Volunteer Center of Story County for “Stash the Trash,” a volunteer effort to help clean up the Ames community. The event will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 30. Participants should sign up online and report to Reiman Gardens for check-in. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. For more information, go to <http://www.vcstory.org>, and look under “Volunteer Opportunities.” Volunteers can choose to work alone, with a group of people, or with an organization.



Animal Control Provides Assistance With Spring Wildlife

Wildlife is everywhere in Ames even if you don't notice it. It becomes more obvious when you discover an animal that appears injured, sick, or abandoned. During these times, remember that Ames Animal Control Officers are here to help. One of the most important decisions is knowing when to intervene.

The Animal Control Division receives many calls each year about injured and sick wildlife, but that number jumps in the spring with calls about baby animals. If you come across a baby animal that appears to have been abandoned - don't panic. In most cases, the mother is not far away. Mothers often leave their young to look for food. Animal Control's most common calls are about young rabbits, fawns, and birds.

Birds (nestling and fledgling). A nestling will be pink, featherless or fuzzy, and will likely not yet have opened its eyes. A fledgling will have adult feathers and may be attempting to fly. While learning to fly and becoming more independent, the fledgling will leave the nest and can be found on the ground. Don't worry. The mother is close by watching. If you stand back and watch, you may see her bring the fledgling some food. A nestling probably fell out of its nest. Try locating the nest and put the bird back. Otherwise, put the bird back in a tree as far as you can by making a nest. Mom will most likely find it and continue to care for it.



Rabbits. Mother rabbits visit the nest twice a day (dawn and dusk) to keep predators away and to forage for food. Cover the nest back up with grass and place a couple small branches in a grid pattern over the nest. If the branches are disturbed after the next dawn or dusk, then the babies are being cared for.

Fawn. A fawn by itself is learning some independence while the mother is most likely nearby foraging for food.

If you find a baby animal on its own, the best thing to do is to let it be. Keep children and pets away, and watch the area from a distance for the next 24 hours. If there is no sign of a mother after 24 hours, the baby may have been abandoned. This is the time to call Ames Animal Control at 515.239.5530. Animal Control works with licensed wildlife rehabbers who are knowledgeable about these situations and provide assistance to the animals. For other helpful sources of information regarding wildlife, contact the ISU Wildlife Care Clinic at 515.294.4009.

Open Streets Planned for April 24

Ames Parks and Recreation Department will participate in this spring's Open Streets event hosted by Healthiest Ames. The event will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 24, in Downtown Ames.

Previously called “Healthy Streets,” Open Streets encourages physical activity, while educating the community about Complete Streets policy and enhancing community connectedness. Ames Park and Recreation, along with other health-related organizations, will provide various activities such as basketball, big wheel races, Zumba, yoga, and Cardio Dance. A protected bike lane will be displayed for participants to experience, along with information about Complete Streets policy and multi-modal transportation in Ames.

Open Streets is free, fun, and educational for people of all ages. For more information, visit www.healthiestames.org and “Like” Healthiest Ames on Facebook.



Project Share Helps Those In Need

The Ames Electric Services Project Share program continues to be a success because of the compassion and generosity of our customers. This heating season through January 31, 2016, Project Share has provided \$11,400 in assistance to 92 households. 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.

The purpose of the Ames Electric Services Project Share program is to solicit and accept contributions used to assist our low-income customers. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines permissible uses of funds donated to the program. The committee has established new guidelines which guarantee every \$1 contributed is used to assist low-income customers. All expenses incurred administering the program are covered by Ames Electric Services as a donation in-kind. Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) assists in the administration of the program by determining the eligibility of applicants.

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

Tree-Planting Program Set for April 30

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, April 30. Participating garden centers include Earl May 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 Earl May Nursery & Garden Center, 1601 S. Kellogg Ave; and Lowe's, 120 Airport Road. Participants may pick up an informational brochure in advance at the Ames Public Library, City Hall, Earl May, or Lowe's. 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.

Eco Fair 2016 Set for April 2

Plan to attend the fifth annual City of Ames Eco Fair. This year's event will be held at the Community Center Gym, 515 Clark Ave., from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 2. Bring your kids and play games, see many interesting displays, register for door prizes, and join us for refreshments. There's family fun for everyone. Most importantly you'll get answers to your energy questions and find information on where to purchase the products and services that can give you, and Ames, a more sustainable future. Mark your calendar and join us for our annual Eco Fair. Hope to see you there!

Prime Time Power Reminder

Receive a \$5 credit during each of the four summer months for allowing Ames Electric Services to cycle off your air conditioner for brief periods during peak summer loads. The credit is automatically applied to your account. To sign up, call Steve Wilson, The Energy Guy, at 515.239.5177.



Ask the Energy Guy

Q: Is it safe to use dimmer switches with LED bulbs?

A: Good question. Many homes and businesses utilize dimmer switches to reduce the light level coming from their incandescent lights. Early dimmer switches had a pretty straightforward solution

to adjusting light levels by incorporating a resistive material. The light was dimmed by adjusting the distance that the electric charge traveled through the resistive material. More distance equals less light. However, as the electricity moves through the resistor, energy is lost in the form of heat. The problem with older dimmers is that while you reduce the amount of light, you still pay for all the electricity.

Modern resistors utilize solid state electronic circuitry to rapidly shut the light circuit off and on to alter the amount of energy flowing through the circuit. More energy through the circuit makes for a brighter light while letting less energy through dims the light. Light emitting diode (LED) bulbs can be manufactured to be dimmed, but only those marked “dimmable” on packaging are intended for this type of use. It is also important to use a dimmer switch made especially for LEDs. While standard dimmer switches will work with dimmable LEDs, using the wrong dimmer switch can reduce the dimming range and may result in flicker.

Properly matched dimmers and LEDs have the ability to dim down to 5 percent of measured light output. The actual dimming range is dictated by the bulb’s circuitry. Using an incorrect dimmer switch can cause “drop out.” As LED bulbs are dimmed, they will sometimes turn off before the slider reaches the bottom making it difficult to set the dimmer at the right level without bulbs turning off.

Making sure your dimmer switch and your LEDs are compatible is important for optimal bulb output and life. An LED driver responds to the changing needs of the LED by providing a constant quantity of power to the LED as its electrical properties change with temperature. Using the correct dimmer switch can ensure lights stay on as they are dimmed at all light levels. They can also reduce or eliminate flicker and help keep the lights on during times of line voltage fluctuations. To find out if your dimmer switch is compatible with your LED, check the package or call the switch manufacturer directly.

Rebates for LEDs are available through City of Ames Electric Services’ Smart Energy program. For more information visit www.cityofames.org/smartenergy, or call Steve Wilson, the Energy Guy, at 515.239.5177.

Steve Wilson

“The Energy Guy”

Energy Services Coordinator
515.239.5177

Smart Energy

Electric Services’ Smart Energy program provides energy audits and rebates on the purchase of energy efficient lighting, air conditioners, and appliances.

Visit our website for information on programs and incentives available to help you improve your efficiency, conserve energy, and reduce your bills at, www.cityofames.org/smartenergy.

Free Conservation Packet Provided

Need to improve your home’s efficiency? Call 515.239.5177 for a free energy conservation packet. In it you’ll find booklets about insulation and home tightening from the Iowa Energy Center, a home self audit, energy saving tips, and energy conservation information.

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 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 January 2016

Wind purchased: 7,899,607 kWh

Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Used: 27,824 tons

Heating Degree Days

| January | | | Season to date | | |
|---------|------|-----------------|----------------|-------|-----------------|
| 2016 | 2015 | 34-year Average | 15/16 | 14/15 | 34-year Average |
| 1367 | 1279 | 1359 | 3388 | 3936 | 3908 |

Cooling Degree Days

| January | | | Season to date | | |
|---------|------|-----------------|----------------|------|-----------------|
| 2016 | 2015 | 34-year Average | 2016 | 2015 | 34-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 website: www.cityofames.org

