



# Neighborhood News

Quarterly Neighborhood Update - Spring 2015

## Spring Storm Readiness

Spring weather in Iowa can change rapidly. Thunderstorms, wind, hail, tornadoes, and flooding are always a risk, but the spring months typically experience the most active weather patterns. Being prepared for a variety of emergency situations can help you “weather the storm” in the best possible way.

### Pay Attention to Outdoor Warning Sirens

All cities in Story County have adopted the same policy for the activation of outdoor weather sirens. In addition to tornadoes, the outdoor warning system sirens may be sounded for severe thunderstorms if:



- Winds are occurring/forecast to be 70 miles per hour or greater
- Hail 1.75 inches (golf ball) or greater is occurring/forecast

The outdoor siren warning system includes 15 sirens located around Ames, and five sirens on Iowa State University campus. The outdoor

warning system was designed to warn people outside of approaching tornadoes or storm systems. To stay safe indoors, every home or business should have a weather radio.

When the sirens are activated, they will sound for five minutes. If necessary, they will be reactivated after five minutes. There is no “all clear” signal from the sirens. Residents are encouraged to listen to their radios or televisions for all clear information.

### Register for Story County Iowa Alert

Story County Iowa Alerts is the new mass notification system for

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### IMPORTANT DATES:

**Saturday, April 18**  
Stash the Trash

**Tuesday, April 28**  
City Hall 25th Anniversary Celebration

**Saturday, May 23**  
Furman Aquatic Center opens for season

**Monday, May 25**  
Memorial Day:  
City Hall **Closed**

**Thursday, June 4**  
Ames Municipal Band Concert season opener

**Thursday, June 18**  
City Council Night at the Bandshell with Simon Estes

## New Look for Newsletter Coming this Summer

The format of the quarterly Neighborhood News is changing! Beginning with the summer 2015 issue, Neighborhood News will change from a four-page “traditional style” newsletter to a 5.5 x 8.5-inch two-sided color postcard.

The new format will still have all the information about what’s going on in Ames and its neighborhoods, but the new size will make it easy to put on your refrigerator for quick reference of upcoming events.

*Storms, continued on page 2*

# Neighborhood Communications: There's an App for That

Good communication has always been one of the keys to strong neighborhoods. The way that communication takes place, however, is changing.

Word-of-mouth as the only option for communication amongst neighbors has evolved to include telephones, newsletters, email, and social media. Some neighborhoods have created their own Facebook page, and private social network sites devoted specifically to neighborhoods have been popping up recently.

A quick Google search yields neighborhood community apps like Nextdoor, SeeClickFix, EveryBlock, NabeWise, ReBuildYourCommunity, Neighborland, and Neighbortree. Most of these apps can be downloaded for free to a web browser or smart phone, and offer platforms for a variety of neigh-

borhood information from pothole locations to crime, announcements to discussion forums, and more.

Regardless of which method neighbors use to connect with each other, the key is to communicate.

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If you'd still like to maintain that neighborhood connection through a traditional paper newsletter, the City offers neighborhood newsletter grants. All Neighborhood Associations that are currently registered with the City Clerk are eligible to apply for a Neighborhood Association Newsletter Grant of up to \$1,000.

For additional information and a grant application form, go to <http://www.cityofames.org/newslettergrant>.

# Reserve the Block Party Trailer Online

Ames residents can now begin reserving the Street 'N' Greet Block Party Trailer for the 2015 season with the new online application process. In order to reserve the trailer, residents can visit [www.cityofames.org/trailer](http://www.cityofames.org/trailer) to submit a request for the block party trailer.

Since the application period opened on March 16, ten reservations have been requested and more are coming in.

To reserve the block party trailer for your neighborhood event, fill out the online application form, or call 515.239.5400.



# Storms, continued from page 1

Ames that is capable of alerting all Story County citizens and emergency personnel of emergency situations. Story County Iowa Alerts is being implemented across Iowa and replaces the former emergency notification system called CodeRED.

Story County Iowa Alerts notification system for mass public safety alerts is a free opt-in service for Ames residents. During an emergency, the system delivers mass voice, text, and email messages to registered phones and email addresses. The system allows dispatchers and emergency managers to notify the entire county or specific geographic areas of an evacuation, flood, lost or missing person, or other type of public safety threat.

Only landline phone numbers published in the current white pages are automatically included in the new notification system. Residents who have changed landline numbers recently, have unlisted phone numbers, want to include a cell phone number, or want to use an email address must register with Story County Iowa Alerts. Those who provided information other than a public landline number to CodeRED must re-register with Story County Iowa Alerts at [www.cityofames.org/alerts](http://www.cityofames.org/alerts).



# 'Tis the Season ... ... For Spring Cleaning

Spring has sprung! Read on for more information about an upcoming event and a volunteer program that can help you with your spring cleaning.

## Stash the Trash is April 18

"Stash the Trash," a volunteer effort to help clean up Ames, will be from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 18. Participants should sign up online at [www.vcstory.org](http://www.vcstory.org), under Volunteer Opportunities.

Volunteers will report to Reiman Gardens for check-in on April 18, where they will be given gloves and trash bags.



## Ames Repair and Care Volunteer Program

Do you or someone in your neighborhood need help with maintaining your property? Ames Repair and Care Volunteer Program might be able to help.

The program, a partnership between the City of Ames and the Volunteer Center of Story County, provides assistance to homeowners who are unable to maintain their property due to age, disability, or lack of financial resources.

This volunteer assistance can help avoid the risk of citations for nuisance or maintenance violations and their cost. It 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.

Typical activities a volunteer may help with include:

- removal of yard debris and outdoor storage
- trimming trees and shrubs
- mowing tall grass and controlling weeds
- minor painting
- repairing or installing exterior handrails and guardrails.

Community members can volunteer as individuals, in groups with clubs or organizations, or an entire neighborhood can organize a work day. To get involved, contact the Volunteer Center of Story County at 515.268.5323.

To apply for assistance, contact Jeff Benson, City of Ames Neighborhood Liaison, at [jbenson@city.ames.ia.us](mailto:jbenson@city.ames.ia.us) or 515.239.5400.

## City Hall Marks 25 Years at 515 Clark Ave.

Ames City Hall is observing its 25th anniversary at 515 Clark Ave., and all Ames residents are welcome to attend the celebration. Cake will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, in the front lobby of Ames City Hall. A brief program will be held at 11:30 a.m., and participants are welcome to take self-guided tours of the building throughout the afternoon.

As part of the anniversary celebration program, the Ames Historical Society, Ames Historic Preservation Commission, and Main Street Cultural District will unveil a brass plaque that explains the history of City Hall and will be displayed outside the front doors. The plaque will be formally presented to the Mayor and City Council at the Council meeting that evening. Also at the program will be representatives from the original "Celebrate Ames Committee," which planned the dedication and open house in 1990.

In 1988, Ames residents approved a \$6.85-million bond referendum to fund the purchase and rehabilitation of the former Ames High School and Central Junior High School building into a new city hall. By utilizing the vacated building, the City of Ames was able to consolidate departments from four downtown buildings into one location.

The new facility opened with a two-day celebration on April 28-29, 1990.



CITY OF  
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## Spring is the Season for Road Construction

Spring marks the return of green grass, flowers, and warmer weather. It also designates the start of the construction season. The City of Ames Public Works Department is busy on many street projects, and has more planned in the coming months. For some of these projects, the street must be closed for repairs to take place.

Stay up-to-date on all the latest construction projects by going to [www.cityofames.org/publicworks](http://www.cityofames.org/publicworks). Look to the blue column on the left and click on "Construction Project Updates." You also can get updates on City news by following the City of Ames on Facebook and Twitter.

### Have an idea? We want to hear!

Submit your own story ideas for Neighborhood News. Neighborhood News articles or ideas should showcase our local neighborhoods or neighbors.

To submit information for Neighborhood News via email: [printern@city.ames.ia.us](mailto:printern@city.ames.ia.us).

## Neighborhood News

Neighborhood News is a quarterly publication of the City of Ames, Iowa, mailed directly to Ames residents who are members of established Neighborhood Associations or who ask to be placed on the mailing list. You can receive the newsletter via U.S. Mail or request to be put on the e-mail list.

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