



CITYSIDE

MARCH 2021

NORTH RIVER VALLEY LOW HEAD DAM PROJECT NEARLY COMPLETE

Plans are underway for a spring recognition event to celebrate the completion of improvements to the North River Valley Low Head Dam along the South Skunk River. A sequence of boulder weirs placed in the water creates a small section of river rapids for kayakers, tubers, and canoers. The feature provides a challenging water obstacle while eliminating the dangerous recirculation hydraulics caused by the dam. A fish passage allows for the migration of aquatic species upstream.

The project features improved river bank access, allowing anglers, water

trail users, and visitors to get closer to the water. Nearly 2,000 cubic yards of material from the riverbank was excavated to open the area to the public and to provide protection against flooding. A shared use path along with the upstream and downstream portage was added. The low head dam was constructed in 1984 to pool water in the South Skunk River to recharge the aquifer that supplies Ames with drinking water.

A portion of funding for the project was provided by Iowa Department of Natural Resources Low Head Dam Mitigation



Grant Program and the Water Trails Grant Program, along with pledges from the Outdoor Alliance of Story County, Iowa Whitewater Coalition, and the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association.

SPRING HYDRANT FLUSHING BEGINS IN MARCH

The Ames Public Works Department plans to begin flushing rust from water mains beginning Wednesday, March 24, weather permitting, and continuing for approximately two weeks. Each year, this program provides Ames residents with the safest and highest quality water possible.



Flushing serves the following purposes:

- Dislodges and removes mineral deposits and sediments from the water mains
- Verifies the proper operation of fire hydrants and valves
- Helps identify weaknesses in the water system
- Checks for closed valves and weak flows in the water system

During the flushing process, Ames residents may experience rust

in the water, even when crews are not working in the immediate area.

To avoid rust, follow these tips:

- Turn on cold water first to check for rust. This avoids drawing it into your hot water heater.
- If the water looks rusty, run the tap for one to two minutes until it clears.
- If rust discolors clothing in a washing machine, rust remover is available at the City Hall information desk, 515 Clark Ave.;

Ames fire stations; the Water Treatment Plant, 1800 E. 13th St.; or by calling 515.239.5550.

Specific information about the times, dates, and locations of the crews will be posted at www.CityOfAmes.org.

CITY NEWS TO USE

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Ames Parks and Recreation Update
- Project Share Helps Those in Need
- Energy Q&A

BLOCK PARTY TRAILER:

Reservations for the Street 'N' Greet Block Party Trailer, typically available in March, will now open on May 17. The first weekend the trailer would be available is May 28. Look for more details in future CitySide editions.



PARKS AND RECREATION CHANGES DURING COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way Ames Parks and Recreation is conducting business currently and for the near future. Recreation programs, facilities, and services have all been affected. Staff learned to Zoom, social distance, and adapt to ever-changing circumstances. However, two priorities have remained constant: (1) connecting with customers, and (2) safety of users and staff.



Since the pandemic began in March, Parks and Recreation has continued to evaluate how to safely offer programs and gauge the interest of participants to enroll in programs. Outdoor activities have been more popular than indoor, so staff continues to explore outdoor programming and virtual classes.

As we continue to navigate our way through the uncertainty with programs and use of non-City facilities, the Department did not produce a Fall/Winter Program and Facilities Guide. A decision hasn't been made yet regarding a Spring/Summer Guide.

To keep our users up to date on options, information regarding programs and classes is posted online at www.amesparkrec.org. Starting with this issue of CitySide and continuing with future editions, Parks and Recreation will have a page dedicated to program offerings, facility updates, and park news.

REGISTER FOR CLASSES

With spring right around the corner, registration for the following programs are currently being accepted:

- Youth Soccer for children through 6th grade
- Swimming Lessons (adult required to be in water with participant for Preschool and Levels 1, 2, 3A, and 3B)
- Adult Slow Pitch Softball Leagues (Men's & Coed)
- Fitness Classes (in-person, virtual, and recorded)

For more information and to register for these programs, please visit www.amesparkrec.org.

FACILITY CALENDARS

Facility calendars for the Ames/ISU Ice Arena, Community Center, and Municipal Pool can also be accessed at www.CityOfAmes.org/prcalendars. This is where you register for an ice skating session at the Ames/ISU Ice Arena, reserve a basketball hoop or weight/cardio room time at the Community Center, and reserve a lap lane at Municipal Pool.



LOOKING FOR A SUMMER JOB?

Looking for a summer job that's engaging, rewarding, and active? Ames Parks and Recreation has opportunities for motivated candidates who are looking for work that's fulfilling and fun. In anticipation of opening this summer, we're hiring lifeguards, cashiers, and slide attendants at Furman Aquatic Center; cashiers at Homewood Golf Course; camp counselors at summer camps; coaches for youth sports, and more!

Working at Parks and Recreation is flexible. It's a great opportunity for high school and college students, and also retirees, stay-at-home parents returning to the workforce, teachers, educational associates, school nurses, and professors on summer break. Come join our team!

Apply online at www.CityOfAmes.org/Jobs.



CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

City Council meetings are held virtually on Zoom teleconference.

Meetings:

6 p.m. March 9 (Final budget hearing)

6 p.m. March 23

MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT WWW.CITYOFAMES.ORG



ELECTRIC

PROJECT SHARE USES DONATIONS TO HELP 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 winter season, through January 15, 2021, we have been able to provide \$8,080 in assistance to 60 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.

solicit and accept contributions which are used to assist our low-income customers. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines the permissible uses of the funds donated to the Project Share

program. The committee has adopted guidelines to ensure that every dollar 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 the City of Ames in the administration of the program by determining eligibility of applicants for Project Share funds.

The purpose of the Ames Electric Services Project Share program is to



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

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- Power Out 515.239.5240
- Street Light Out..... 515.239.5500
- Utility Bills..... 515.239.5120
- Energy Questions 515.239.5177
- Tree Too Close to Electric Line? 515.239.5500
- Digging? Contact Iowa One Call..... 811
- Storm Water Concern..... 515.239.5160
- Rusty Water..... 515.239.5551

CitySide is a publication of the City of Ames, Iowa
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 Questions?
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ENERGY Q&A

Q: I'm considering some remodeling to my older home. Heating costs are a big part of my utility expenses. What are some tips or ideas to reduce my heating bills?

Heating is the single largest consumption of energy for most homes in our climate. That's why we talk a lot in the winter about things like:

- sealing and insulating your home
- investing in energy efficient windows
- installing a smart thermostat
- programming thermostat setbacks

If you've already tackled those improvements and want to lower your heating bills further, you may be able to do so by paying attention to your home's exposure to the sun. Passive solar building design is planning a home so that, "windows, walls, and floors are made to collect, store, reflect, and distribute solar energy in the form of heat in the winter and reject solar heat in the summer." Since the sun is lower on the horizon in the winter, the right overhang will shade windows in the summer, reducing heat gain, and allow full sun exposure in the winter.

Passive solar design relies on large south-facing windows or solar collection surfaces, a heat-absorbing surface within the home where sunshine enters, a thermal mass to store the heat and redistribute it during the night, and a method of distributing the heat throughout the living space.

While it's best for these elements to be considered in the construction of a new home, if your home has a south-facing wall that is not shaded for more than 10 percent of the day, there are some ways to implement passive solar design in retrofits. If it fits in your budget and works with your home's layout, simply adding more energy-efficient windows to an existing unshaded south-facing wall can brighten up your space, increase the value of your home, and increase solar gain in the winter.



If adding a window is not a possibility because of structural or visual reasons, a Thermosyphoning Air Panel (TAP) is another alternative. It is installed on the outside of an existing wall, with vents on the bottom that allow colder air from the house to enter the panel, where the sun will warm the air, and vents at the top that send warmer air back into the house. Depending on the size and specifications of the panel, the air coming out of the panel can be up to 80 degrees F warmer. This is also an effective option for garages or sheds.

Check out our website: www.CityOfAmes.org/SmartEnergy for more information about Passive Solar Design!

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AT-A-GLANCE ENERGY NUMBERS FOR DECEMBER 2020

2.1% ELECTRICITY THIS MONTH WAS GENERATED BY REFUSE DERIVED FUEL (RDF) FROM THE RESOURCE RECOVERY PLANT

0.2% ELECTRICITY THIS MONTH WAS GENERATED BY SUNSMART AMES OR OTHER SOLAR ENERGY

65 LED STREETLIGHTS INSTALLED FOR A TOTAL OF 5,449

288 KILOWATT HOURS OF VEHICLE CHARGING AT PUBLIC ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS

DEGREE DAY INFORMATION AVAILABLE
AT WWW.CITYOFAMES.ORG/ELECTRIC

INFORMATION

POWER OFF? START HERE!

Check if the power is off in the whole house or just part of it. Also, 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 if your neighbors have been affected. Report your outage by calling the outage reporting system at 515.239.5240.

You will be asked to provide your name, address of the outage, and phone number at the outage address. Check for other outages in Ames at www.CityOfAmes.org/ElectricOutage.