

City Side

Caring People Quality Programs Exceptional Service

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Holiday Closings

Most City of Ames offices will be closed Monday, Dec. 25 and Tuesday, Dec. 26. Additionally, most City offices will be closed on Monday, Jan. 1, 2018 for New Year's Day.



Don't Miss a City Meeting: Catch Us on Facebook Live!

Does it ever feel like there are so many City meetings you'd like to attend, but so little time to get to City Hall? You're not alone. One way the City of Ames is making it easier to stay up-to-date on City Council, and Board and Commission action is by streaming meetings on the internet through Facebook Live.



Using emerging technologies to keep residents informed continues to be a focus of City of Ames communications. The popularity of social media has encouraged more experiments like streaming City meetings on Facebook Live. Since beginning the service in late summer, the feedback has been tremendously positive. "We weren't sure what to expect when we started or if people would even notice, but we can monitor - in real time - how many people are watching. The meetings are definitely creating a draw. Also, we can see how many people tune in later," said Cable Television Coordinator Derek Crisler.

Many City meetings are cablecast live on City Channel 12 (for those who have Mediacom cable television) and videostreamed on the City's website (www.CityOfAmes.org). Also, meetings are available for on-demand viewing from the City's website video archive. Facebook Live offers one more tool to access City of Ames information. Remember, stay current with all sorts of City updates, events, and breaking news by following the City of Ames on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Also, subscribe to Ames Channel 12 on YouTube.

Fire Safety Tips for Happy Holidays

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together, but that also means a greater risk for fire. The Ames Fire Department reminds residents that following a few simple tips can help ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.



- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stove top.

Calendar

City Council Meetings

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

6 p.m. Dec. 12

6 p.m. Dec. 19

There will be no City Council workshop in December. For the most current information, go to: www.cityofames.org.

Share the Art!

If your neighborhood is interested in acquiring one of the sculptures currently on display along Main Street as part of the Ames Annual Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition, all you need to do is fill out an application!

Neighborhoods can apply for a sculpture to be placed in their neighborhood at no cost. The artwork must be displayed in a "public" area that is open and can be accessed by the citizens of Ames, such as a neighborhood park or cul-de-sac.

For more information, go to the City's website at www.CityOfAmes.org/PAC. Click on the "Neighborhood Sculpture" link. The deadline for applications is Friday, Dec. 15.

Do You Park on a Snow Route? Stay Informed this Winter!

Winter weather is just around the corner, and that means snow, snow plowing, and moving your vehicle if you live on a snow route and park in the street. How do you know when the snow ordinance is in effect? The easiest way is to play it safe. If snow is in the forecast, move your vehicle to off-street parking or to a street that is not a designated snow route. Also, pay attention to local media, check the City's website (www.cityofames.org), watch City Channel 12, and join the City of Ames on Facebook and Twitter! All of these sources will help you get updates and notifications.

The Ames snow removal policy was established by the City Council and states that plowing will begin after two inches of snow accumulates on the city's major streets (Grand Avenue, Lincoln Way, Duff Avenue, etc.). Reaching two inches on these streets also activates the snow ordinance. When the snow ordinance is in effect, drivers parked along snow routes – marked with red and white signs – need to move their vehicles to avoid ticketing and/or towing. Vehicles may return to the street when it has stopped snowing, no additional snow is forecast, and the street has been plowed from curb to curb. Since this happens at different times throughout the city, there is no official notice when the parking ban is lifted.

For questions or concerns about snow removal on city streets, call the Snow Desk at 515.239.5543 or email the Public Works Department at snowstreets@city.ames.ia.us. For concerns about sidewalks that aren't cleared, call the Snow Walks hotline at 515.239.5468 or email snowwalks@city.ames.ia.us.

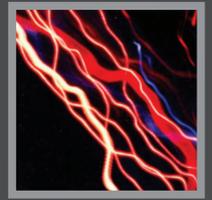


Leaving for the Holidays?

While holidays can be a season of cheer, the Ames Police Department sees an increase in home and vehicle burglaries during holiday breaks. Residents, particularly Iowa State University students, should take precautionary measures when leaving town for breaks. Police officers patrol building complexes, student housing areas, and other areas of the community during the holidays, but there are steps you can take to reduce your chance of being victimized.

- Make sure locks are in good working order and lock all doors and windows.
- Consider installing timers on interior lights and install exterior motion lights.
- Write down serial numbers of valuables (televisions, laptops, gaming consoles) and take photographs in case items are stolen.
- Don't leave backpacks, purses or bags in plain view in your apartment or vehicle. Lock vehicles at all times.
- Stop mail and newspaper deliveries so these items don't accumulate.
- Ask a trusted friend or neighbor to check on the residence while you are away.
- Don't tip off criminals on the web; refrain from posting your holiday plans on social media.

You are an important partner in the fight against crime, and you decrease your chances of becoming a victim by following these simple tips. The Ames Police Department also encourages residents to report anything that appears suspicious to the non-emergency phone number: 515.239.5133.



Give the Gift of Project Share!

A simple way to share warmth with those in need is to make a monthly pledge or one-time contribution to Project Share.

Project Share is a program developed by Ames Electric Services to assist low-income customers with winter utility bills. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines the permissible uses of funds donated to Project Share. The guidelines established by this committee ensure that 100% of every contribution is used to assist low-income customers.

Last year, Ames Electric Services donated \$4,315 in staff time and materials toward the cost of administering this program. Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) shares in the administration of this program by determining the eligibility of households for Project Share funds.

Project Share's success is the result of our customers' compassion and generosity. Through your support, Project Share has provided \$407,422 in assistance to 3,408 households since its start in 1990. Last winter alone, Project Share provided \$16,440 in assistance to 137 households. With your continued generosity, we will be able to help more Ames households stay safe and warm this winter.

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.

Holiday Lighting Safety Tips

It's the time of year when many residents enjoy decorating homes and businesses with festive light displays. Ames Electric Services encourages taking steps to ensure a safe and happy holiday season!

- Check all light strands and cords for worn insulation, bare wires, lights with broken or cracked sockets, or loose connections. Don't try to fix old or deteriorated decorations. Throw them away.
- If you must use an extension cord, make sure it's of adequate size and power capacity. Use a grounded cord that is rated #16 or greater.
- For outside lighting, only use lights and extension cords that are specifically listed for outdoor use by Underwriters Laboratories.
- If you are using a ladder to hang decorations or work on your roof, avoid contact with overhead lines.



Ask the Energy Guy

Q: Does cooking and baking over the holidays cost a lot?

A: This time of year is tough when it comes to saving energy. It seems we just do more over the holidays, and a big energy user has to do with something that is near and dear to my heart ... food!

The energy used in cooking up a big feast for the family can cost \$5. Doesn't sound like much? For the same energy used in that one big meal, you could watch TV four hours a day for two months. While you may not cook up a huge culinary extravaganza often, normal everyday cooking can account for 10% to 15% of your total energy bill. There are ways to have a great holiday with plenty of yummy stuff and still save some energy:

- Some foods like a holiday turkey take a long time to cook, and you may not have to preheat your oven.
- Opening the oven door while cooking lowers the temperature inside by as much as 25 degrees which wastes energy.
- If your oven is on, cook several items at the same time.
- If you use glass or ceramic pans, you can turn your oven temperature down 25 degrees, and foods will cook just as quickly.
- When cooking on top of your range, match the size of the pan to the heating element. A 6-inch pan on an 8-inch burner will waste more than 40% of the energy!
- Put lids on your pots and pans while cooking.
- Remember a microwave oven uses half the energy of a conventional oven. Additionally, it won't heat up your kitchen, and it's fast.
- Slow cookers (crock-pots) are perfect for busy families. On average, it will cook a whole meal for about 15 cents.
- If you're baking or broiling small food items, a toaster oven is ideal because it uses one-third the energy of a bigger oven.

Numbers to Know

- Power out515.239.5240
- Street light out515.239.5500
- Utility bills515.239.5120
- Energy questions..515.239.5177
- Tree growing too close to an electric line515.239.5500
- Going to be digging?
- Iowa One Call:811
- Storm Water Concern.....515.239.5160

Renewable Energy For September 2017

13.3% of electricity used this month was generated from wind.

2.3% of electricity this month was generated by refuse derived fuel (RDF) from the Resource Recovery Plant.

132 Ames customers have invested in solar voltaic systems.

118 LED street lights installed for a total of **1,609**.

Degree Day information available at www.CityOfAmes.org/Electric



Steve Wilson

"The Energy Guy"

Energy Services Coordinator
515.239.5177

Energy Tips

- Don't forget to insulate and weather-strip your attic access door.
- Save 1 to 2 percent on your energy bill by using foam gaskets under all exterior wall switch and outlet covers.
- Use bathroom and range hood fans sparingly. They exhaust conditioned air and create a suction that pulls in outdoor air.
- Insulate pipes and ducts in unheated areas to reduce heat loss.
- Tape all the joints in your furnace ductwork to reduce air leakage.

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

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Questions?

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