Ames Public Works Recognized For Innovative Parking Lot Project

Ames City Hall’s new parking lot was awarded “Project of the Year - Environment” by the Iowa Chapter of the American Public Works Association recently at its annual fall conference. The west parking lot project was designed to set an example for implementing green stormwater infrastructure practices. The lot includes permeable pavers capable of managing water quality and flood control, bioretention cells, soil quality restoration, native landscaping, and conversion of turf areas to native turf.

In designing the parking lot, the project team focused on creating a demonstration site of practices to improve water quality, decrease the volume and rate of water run-off from downtown, and use green stormwater infrastructure practices. Through a partnership effort with the City, Ames High School students grew and planted many of the native plants in the gardens surrounding the City Hall Community Center.

Do You Park on a Snow Route?

Winter weather is just around the corner and that means snow is not far behind. If you park on a snow route, you’ll want to know when the snow ordinance is in effect. Snow plowing begins after two inches of snow accumulates on the city’s major streets. 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. Also, pay attention to local media, check the City’s website (www.CityOfAmes.org), watch City Channel 12, and join the City of Ames and Ames Police on Facebook and Twitter!

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.
Calendar

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

6 p.m. Dec. 11
6 p.m. Dec. 18

For the most current information, go to: www.cityofames.org.

Add Art to Your Neighborhood!
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. 14.

A New Home for the Holidays?
Are you a first-time home buyer in the market to purchase a house in Ames? As part of the City’s 2018-19 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs, the City’s Planning and Housing Department is accepting preliminary applications for its Home Buyer Assistance Program.

The program will provide down payment and closing cost assistance to eligible first-time home buyers. Preliminary applications will be used to generate a waiting list to determine the level of interest and the number of potential qualified applicants who could be assisted through the program.

The City of Ames is seeking to provide households with the opportunity to purchase newly constructed single-family and/or existing housing primarily at the 321 State Avenue development site, and also throughout the West Ames Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA). Preliminary applications are available on the City’s website at www.CityOfAmes.org/housing.

Sustainability Coordinator, Interns Present Conservation Program
Ames Sustainability Coordinator Merry Rankin and Ames Electric Services Smart Energy interns Scott Nemec and Taylor Silvestrini traveled to Pittsburgh, Penn., recently to present details of the Smart Business Challenge at the 2018 AASHE (Association for the Advancement for Sustainability in Higher Education) international sustainability conference.

As part of the Ames 150th anniversary celebration in 2014, Ames Electric Services launched the Smart Business Challenge to encourage 150 businesses to make the commitment to reduce energy consumption. While falling short of their ambitious recruitment goal, at the end of the year there was enough enthusiasm to continue the program, which has continued to add participants. Through the supervision of the Sustainability Coordinator, Ames Electric Services interns work directly with local businesses to encourage their participation in the program. Businesses that sign up first fill out an inventory of current practices, and areas of improvement are identified. Businesses receive recognition for achieving energy-efficient milestones toward the goal of becoming a “platinum” business. Resources are provided on energy and water conservation, transportation, waste reduction, indoor and outdoor environmental quality, carbon footprint, and community engagement. Businesses can participate in rebate programs and implement a business energy plan that saves money while helping the environment.

Any Ames business is eligible to participate. For more information, go to www.CityOfAmes.org/SmartBusinessChallenge.
In the Season of Giving, Consider Project Share

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. Project Share is a program developed by Ames Electric Services to assist low-income customers with the payment of their winter utility bills. The program’s success is the result of your generosity. Through your support, Ames Electric Services has been able to provide $423,181.88 in assistance to 3,535 households since the program’s inception in 1990. Last winter, Project Share provided $15,760 in assistance to 127 households.

Project Share asks for and accepts contributions to assist low-income utility customers. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines the permissible uses of the funds donated to Project Share. The Committee has established guidelines to ensure that every dollar contributed to the program is used to assist low-income customers. Ames Electric Services ensures contributions go to those in need by providing the staff and materials needed to administer the program. Last year, Ames Electric Services contributed $4,395 toward the cost of administering the program. Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) also assists in the administration of the program by determining the eligibility of households for Project Share funds.

With your continued generosity, we will be able to help more Ames households stay safe and warm this winter.

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.

Save the Date!

The second annual Smart Business Challenge Luncheon and award presentation is planned for Thursday, Jan. 24. Any business that is currently a participant or interested in joining is welcome to attend. The luncheon will begin with a sustainability open house, a complimentary lunch, and an awards ceremony. Is your business interested? Joining the Smart Business Challenge is free. It reduces energy use, and it saves money. Learn more at www.CityOfAmes.org/SmartBusinessChallenge.

Visit Our Smart Energy Web Site

Check out Ames Electric Services’ Smart Energy website for information on programs and incentives available to help you improve your efficiency, conserve energy, and reduce your bills. Go to www.CityOfAmes.org/SmartEnergy.
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 that 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.

Renewable Energy

For September 2018

13.2% of electricity used this month was generated from wind.
2.7% of electricity this month was generated by refuse derived fuel (RDF) from the Resource Recovery Plant.
75 LED street lights installed for a total of 2,869.
60% of Power Packs for the Ames Community Solar Farm have been reserved.

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