Resident Satisfaction Survey Provides Citizen Input on Services

The 37th annual Resident Satisfaction Survey provided some positive feedback from residents. The majority of Ames respondents rated overall City of Ames services favorably. In the 2019 report, 98 percent of those surveyed ranked service quality as “good” or “very good.”

Surveys were mailed to 1,350 randomly selected City of Ames utility users and emailed to randomly selected Iowa State University students. There were 606 returned surveys for a response rate of 25.8 percent. The Resident Satisfaction Survey gathers feedback on priorities for ongoing services and capital improvements, as well as satisfaction with law enforcement, safety, city utilities, and transportation. The survey also provides an opportunity for comments. This year’s survey featured questions that allowed respondents to provide an assessment of their physical health, general well-being, and how connected they felt to their neighbors and the community.

The survey included several comment sections including what issues the City of Ames should focus on and the best thing about living in Ames. The entire Resident Satisfaction Survey is available on the City’s website at www.CityOfAmes.org/RSS2019 or at www.CityOfAmes.org under Government followed by City Manager’s Office.

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, Instagram, 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@cityofames.org. For concerns about sidewalks that aren’t cleared, call the Snow Walks hotline at 515.239.5468 or email snowwalks@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. 13.

Tis the Season for Fire Safety!

As we approach the holiday season, many people will celebrate with a good home-cooked meal. It’s also one of the busiest times for fire departments across the country. Thanksgiving and Christmas are the busiest times of year for cooking fires, followed closely by Super Bowl Sunday.

Cooking fires are the leading cause of home fires in the United States, accounting for 48 percent of reported fires and 45 percent of fire injuries. Around the country, fire departments respond to an average of 471 cooking fires daily. Most cooking fires are preventable. The leading cause of fires while cooking is leaving the cooking unattended.

Follow these tips to help prevent cooking fires:

- Never leave cooking unattended
- Keep the cooking area and stove clear of combustibles like food containers, oven mitts, and towels
- Keep an extinguisher close by; know how to use it
- Don’t cook when tired or impaired
- Use a timer
- Keep a close-fitting lid nearby

If there is a fire:

- Call 911!
- If you are unable to immediately extinguish the fire, evacuate everyone to a designated meeting place
- NEVER put water on a grease fire
- Smother grease fires with a tight fitting lid and allowing it to cool completely before removing the lid
- Never use flour or sugar on a fire; baking soda can be used if quickly available.

Cooking is one of the most common causes of fire; it’s also one of the most preventable. Use these tips to have a safe holiday season.

Census 2020: It’s Coming!

Once a decade, America comes together to count every resident in the United States. The decennial census was first taken in 1790, as mandated by the Constitution. The census population count provides the basis for reapportioning congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing more than $675 billion in federal funds. This money supports state, county and city programs including housing, education, transportation, and healthcare.

The next census is coming in 2020, and Census Day is April 1, 2020. There will be three ways to complete your census form: online, telephone, or hard copy. Making the census simple and easy to complete will help increase participation. As always, individual census data is protected and kept confidential. Learn more about the 2020 Census at www.Census.gov.
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 winter utility bills. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines the permissible uses of the 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 contributed $6,086 in staff time and materials toward the cost of administering this program. Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) shares in the administration of the 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 $440,052 in assistance to 3,668 households since the program’s inception in 1990. Last winter alone, Project Share provided $16,870 in assistance to 133 households. With your continued generosity, we will be able to help more Ames households stay safe and warm this winter.

Save the Date!

The Smart Business Challenge is a program offered by the City of Ames designed to promote and connect sustainability throughout the business community.

Ames Electric Services will host the third annual Smart Business Challenge Luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on January 23, 2020 in the Garden Room at Reiman Gardens.

Save the date! The luncheon is open to any business interested in the challenge. There is no cost to attend, but an RSVP is requested. Learn more about the Challenge, the luncheon event, and RSVP on the Smart Business Challenge website at www.CityOfAmes.org/SmartBusinessChallenge.
Q. I purchased a couple of Power Packs earlier this year as part of the SunSmart Ames community solar farm. What do I need to do now?

A. Thanks for your commitment to renewable energy. Ames Electric Services has good news to share. The final cost of purchasing a “Power Pack” with the SunSmart Ames community solar project has dropped from $333 to $300. Power Packs are a portion of energy that will be produced by the 2-megawatt community solar farm planned along Airport Road. Technological improvements in the solar industry since the introduction of the program allowed the City to negotiate a more competitive contract and drop the subscription price. The community solar farm is expected to break ground in the spring and begin producing electricity by summer of 2020.

Those who’ve committed to purchasing Power Packs, should have received additional details and payment information via email. It’s not too late to get involved or increase your commitment. Power Packs will continue to be available until all the solar energy produced is purchased. But don’t wait too long - nearly three-quarters of the available Power Packs are committed.

In July, the Ames City Council approved an Energy Services Agreement with ForeFront Power of San Francisco, Calif., to construct the solar farm. Ames Electric Services will purchase all electricity produced by the solar panels, and customers who purchase Power Packs will receive a small, monthly credit on their utility bill for 20 years based on the amount of solar energy generated. Customers who move outside of Ames Electric Services territory before the end of the 20-year contract can sell the Power Packs back to Ames Electric Services at a pro-rated price.

For more information, email Kayley Barrios Lain at klain@cityofames.org or call at 515.239.5177. Ames Electric Services customers can purchase Power Packs or get additional information by going to www.CityOfAmes.org/Solar.

Renewable Energy
For September 2019
11.1% of electricity used this month was generated from wind.
1.7% of electricity this month was generated by refuse derived fuel (RDF) from the Resource Recovery Plant.
XX LED street lights installed for a total of X,XXX.
74% of Power Packs for the Ames Community Solar Farm have been reserved.

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