

City Side

Inside

- 2 City Budget Schedule for February
- 2 Neighborhood Law School
- 2 RRP Gets Metal Upgrade
- 3 Transmission Line Project
- 3 Energy Fair on March 28
- 4 The Energy Guy

City Offices Closed

City Hall and most City of Ames departments will be closed on Monday, Feb. 16, in recognition of Presidents' Day. For more information about the City of Ames, go to www.cityofames.org.



City Exploring Property Standards for Residences

Over the years, concerned citizens have asked the City of Ames Inspections staff to consider enacting policies to address problem properties in the community. Common issues such as overgrown yards, debris stored on properties, and deteriorating exteriors often are not covered by existing City of Ames ordinances. One way cities across Iowa have dealt with property complaints is by developing property maintenance codes. These laws establish a community standard for residential property and could apply to both rental and owner-occupied homes.

Establishing minimum standards for how owners maintain their property means walking a fine line between safety considerations, aesthetics, and property rights. What specific items would be considered? That is yet to be determined, but items typically addressed include height of grass, garbage and waste collecting in yards, excessive amounts of peeling paint or broken siding, safety issues with exterior stairways and decks, and garage or shed maintenance. As you consider these photographs of Ames properties on the right, it is important to think about how you would feel if you lived next door.

Before making a decision on whether or not to move forward with a property maintenance code, the Mayor and City Council are seeking public input. There will be several opportunities to share your comments about this issue. Using your utility account code, fill out a survey on the City's Web site at www.cityofames.org, attend an open house, participate in a focus group, or request a speaker for your neighborhood association or service group. Check the City's Web site, Channel 12, or local media for updates on how you can get involved, or contact the Inspections Division at 239-5153 for more information.

