



# THE WIRE

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## AMU Upgrades Internet & Email

Algona Municipal Utilities has recently upgraded equipment to improve Internet and Email services to our customers. In November 2010 AMU installed a new main Internet router that allows for more capacity throughout the AMU system and increased bandwidth to cable modem customers. In addition, AMU has upgraded other equipment to make the user experience even better as customers demand more bandwidth. In the near future, AMU will continue to upgrade Internet equipment to provide for more bandwidth. AMU has recently invested over \$150,000 in the Internet

and email system that serves Algona customers.



In addition, effective **February 24, 2011**, Algona Municipal Utilities will contract with Iowa Network Services (INS) to provide bandwidth, Internet and email technical support. Technical support for Internet and email customers of AMU will now be available 24 hours per day/365 days per year, including holidays. AMU Communica-

tion Technicians will provide the local Internet and Email support at your home and business. AMU will now be purchasing bandwidth from INS and the North Iowa Communication Partners. The new bandwidth path provides greater reliability by creating redundancy in the transport of bandwidth to Algona.

INS is an Iowa based company created by Independent Telephone Cooperatives to better serve rural Iowa providing a host of communications services. INS has provided Internet connectivity to rural Iowa since 1993. North Iowa Communications Partners is a **Continued Page 2: ISEP Cost-Effective**

## AMU/City of Algona Set for 2011 Downtown Alley Project

The City of Algona and AMU are set to start a 2011 project to improve utility infrastructure in Algona's downtown alleys. The project includes sanitary sewer replacement or lining and storm sewer removal and replacement, installation of primary and secondary electrical and communications lines underground, and the abandonment of overhead lines and removal of most poles in the alley. The project also includes reconstruction of



about eight blocks of alley affected by excavation. "This is the next step in a plan to help improve the infrastructure in downtown

Algona," said John Bilsten, AMU General Manager. According to Bilsten, the electric, sanitary and storm sewer infrastructure is in need of upgrading, and inspections indicate that a majority of poles and electric infrastructure are in moderate or extensive decay.

He said placing utilities underground increases reliability and reduces expenses to AMU and our customers over time. Other reasons for the upgrade include the National Electric Safety Code requires meters to be accessible, the National and State Electric Codes require proper protection for electric circuits, City Ordinance requires sump pumps to be connected to the storm sewer, and alley safety will be increased by eliminating surface drainage from roof drains. The Downtown Alley Project is expected to start in May 2011 with completion set for July 2012.

# Add Energy Efficiency When You Spring Clean

Spring cleaning will start soon. Motivate yourself by thinking positively about the energy and



money you can save when you spring clean.

Here are some chores to add when cleaning this spring. Dust the lamps and light bulbs. Dust and grime on bulbs reduces the amount of light they give off.

Clean the air filter to your furnace/air conditioner to make sure the system runs efficiently.

Clean air return vents. Make sure drapes and

furniture aren't blocking the vents.



Vacuum the refrigerator coils. The dust builds up, causing the fridge to run less efficiently.

Thoroughly dust electronics and then unplug them when not in use.

Scrub the tub and install low flow shower heads.

# Spring Ahead — Daylight Savings Time

Daylight Savings Time begins in March. It officially begins March 13 at 2 a.m.



The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that consumers replace batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.

Most residential smoke detectors run on 9-volt alkaline or carbon-zinc batteries. When these batteries run down, the smoke detector becomes inactive. Most smoke detectors will signal a low-battery condition. The alarm may chirp at intervals if the battery is low, though if there is more than one unit within earshot, it can be hard to locate. It is common, however, for houses to have smoke detectors with dead batteries.

# AMU UPGRADES INTERNET

## Continued from Page One: AMU Upgrades Internet & Email

partnership of Independent Telephone Cooperatives around northwest Iowa that provide fiber connectivity between INS and Algona. Algona Municipal Utilities has worked with INS and NICP since launching the communications utility in 2002. AMU has contracted with AmberWave Communications of Algona for bandwidth, email and technical support since AMU began offering Internet and Email services in 2002.

AMU Internet customers will still call 295-6901 for Internet technical support and now the same number will be used to provide Cable TV and Telephone support. "AMU Internet customers should not experience any changes as service migrates from AmberWave Communications to AMU and INS," said John Bilsten, AMU General Man-

ager. "Customer email addresses and static IP addresses will remain the same," said Bilsten. Customers can expect the same friendly and reliable Internet and email support from AMU that they have been accustomed to with cable TV and telephone technical support. "There will be a few simple adjustments required to customer email accounts and AMU will provide more information to customers regarding those as the transition date nears," stated Bilsten.

"AmberWave Communications has been a skilled and reliable vendor for AMU, helping to provide Internet and email service to our communications customers," said Bilsten. "Now that AMU has built a stable, successful full-service communications utility, it is time for us to move ahead with our original plan to provide more of the Internet and email

business in-house at AMU. This further fulfills the commitment our Board of Trustees made to the community to cultivate and command the digital destiny of our community. Through provision of state of the art broadband services via our local community owned communications utility, AMU customers receive more service at lower costs than others in towns where companies in faraway places make important decisions affecting the welfare of residents and merchants that have come to rely upon these critical services in their everyday lives. Already, our community has saved millions of dollars and re-circulated revenues that otherwise would have left our community, and the economic return to the community will continue to accumulate for years to come."



*Community Owned For  
Community Benefit!  
That's Our  
Commitment to You,  
Our Customer and  
Owner!*