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## Think Safety During the Holidays

Autumn has quickly moved to winter, and many are planning their holiday celebrations. Some will string up Christmas lights while others will add, repair, or replace existing fixtures. Before grabbing the ladder, take some precautions to ensure a safe holiday season.

Check lights for frayed cords, broken wires, bulbs and loose connections which may cause a serious electrical shock or fire. Unplug lights before replacing broken bulbs or fuses.

Use only UL approved lights. UL approved products are tested for resis-



**Check holiday lights for frayed cords, broken wires and bulbs and loose connections before putting them to use.**

tance to water, sunlight and heat, and require certain standards or wiring.

To avoid piercing wires, use plastic hangers to hang lights instead of staples, tacks or nails.

Limit the use of extension cords and avoid overloading outlets by plugging in too many strings of lights or other electrical items. Do not connect more than three light strings together. Light strings with screw-in bulbs should have no more than 50 bulbs connected together.

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Holiday Lights**

## AMU Participates in Energy Star® CFL Program

Saving money and energy this year can be as simple as installing an Energy Star® qualified compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). From October 1 through December 15, 2008, Algonia Municipal Utilities encourages residents to "Change the World" one light at a time by replacing their standard light bulbs with Energy Star qualified CFL's. By changing to energy efficient CFLs, a household can save more than \$60 a year in energy costs, reducing utility bills as well as saving energy

and preserving the environment.



**"Change A Light,  
And Change The World"**

AMU is helping residential electric customers make the simple switch to energy-efficient lighting by

offering a \$2 instant rebate on Energy Star qualified light bulbs. Eligible CFLs are available at Bomgaars, HyVee, Fareway, and North Iowa Lumber/Hardware Hank in Algonia. The program is held in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy's national "Energy Star Change a Light, Change the World" campaign.

## PREPARE FOR THE WINTER HEATING SEASON



If you haven't prepared for the winter heating season, now is the time to get started.

Have your furnace inspected annually. While it may cost for the inspection, it can reduce your fuel use and your heating bills.

Seal drafts around

windows and doors. Up to 30% of heating and cooling is lost if windows and doors don't seal properly.

Install a programmable thermostat. Lowering the temperature just 3° Fahrenheit can reduce heating costs by 10 to 15 percent.

Change the furnace filter to prevent dust and debris from seeping into the furnace.

Move any furniture or

beds that block heating vents.

You can also save money in the winter by watching your appliances energy expenditures. Turn off the computer when you are not at home. Change the lights in your home over to compact florescent light bulbs (CFL). Energy efficient CFLs reduces utility bills as well as saves energy and preserves the environment.

## KEEP AMU METERS ACCESSIBLE

Once a month, an Algona Municipal Utilities meter reader comes to your home or business to record the reading on the AMU electric and water meters. Sometimes the meter reader encounters difficult situations due to winter weather.

During the winter season, AMU asks customers to clear the snow and ice from around the meters for quick and safe access. If the meter is located inside a fenced area, please leave the gate unlocked and opened.

Providing access to your electric and water meters allows Algona Municipal Utilities to ensure reliable service and a safe operation.

## AMU CABLE ADDS FOX COLLEGE SPORTS

Algona Municipal Utilities has added three new networks to its Digital Basic tier: FOX College Sports Atlantic, FOX College Sports Central, and FOX College Sports Pacific. The networks were added Tuesday to channels 209, 210, and 211 in the Digital Basic tier. In order to add the new FOX channels, AMU has realigned channels in the Digital Basic tier. Customers may also find a printable program guide at [www.netamu.com](http://www.netamu.com) use the interactive TV Guide on their cable box, or stop by AMU for a new cable TV line-up card.

FOX College Sports (FCS) is programmed from 20 FSN and FSN affiliated regional sports networks across the country and delivers over 800 NCAA events per year. Each fall FCS delivers nearly 150 NCAA football games, including rivalries from the Big 12,



PAC 10, and other power house conferences. FOX College Sports will air close to 500 NCAA basketball games.

Plus, FCS has a full line-up of collegiate events including, baseball, softball, wrestling, hockey, soccer, and volleyball. In addition, FOX College Sports has an extensive line-up of collegiate coaches' shows, collegiate magazine shows, and daily in-depth regional sports reports from across the country.

AMU had featured FOX College Sports Central on channel 24 while it worked through the process of adding the FCS Networks to the Digital Basic tier. AMU will place the local radar on channel 24 as it has in the past.

### From Page 1: Holiday Lights

Make sure outdoor lights are rated for outside use, and follow the manufacturers' recommendations for the number of strings of lights that can be safely connected.

Keep tree and greenery away from all heat sources. Never use candles on trees or decorations as they are a fire haz



ard. Check to make sure all ornaments, trimmings, and artificial trees are made of fire retardant or non-combustible materials.

Light outdoor decorations during the evening hours—from dusk until bedtime or until the close of business. Timers can make this job easier.

Unplug tree lights and all lighted decorations when you are away from home or are asleep.

Information provided by the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI)



*Community Owned  
For  
Community Benefit*

*That's Our  
Commitment to You,  
Our Customer  
and Owner*