



Upcoming Events

July 30

Gas Steel Pipe Distribution
Maintenance Workshop
Register/more info:

<http://www.iamu.org/calendar/>
(go to "July")

August 27

Water Distribution Workshop
Register/more info:

<http://www.iamu.org/calendar/>
(go to "August")

Sept. 16 — 19

Underground Elec. Workshop

Sept. 30 — Oct. 2

IAMU Fall Conference
Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny and
IAMU Training & Office Complex



**Complete agenda and registration
coming soon!**



Welcome to the **i**nformer

The IAMU *Informer* is a new and improved source for timely news and information affecting IAMU and its members, distributed electronically each week. Questions? Comments? Contact John Burnett, *Informer* editor: jburnett@iamu.org

Smokefree Air Act now in effect; are you compliant?



◆ The Iowa Smokefree Air Act went into effect July 1. It is important for city and municipal utility employees to understand the provisions of the new law and how it impacts their workplaces and facilities.

It is also important for municipal employees to understand that as representatives of municipal government, they should help set the example for their community and to be of assistance if residents approach them with questions about the new laws.

IAMU members are strongly urged to go to the Iowa Smokefree Air Act website, www.iowasmokefreeair.gov, to access detailed information. A document specifically outlining the law as it applies to city government facilities can be found by clicking "Resources" on the front page, and then looking for "Fact Sheets" and "Local Government Requirements."

Downloadable official Iowa Smokefree Air Act "No Smoking" signs (required by law) are also available on the website.

Des Moines may nix bottled water for city facilities



◆ Des Moines Mayor Frank Cownie has announced he will be presenting a proposal to his city's council that would eliminate bottled water being distributed at city buildings and events – and instead urge the use of municipal tap water.

Cownie is not alone in this desire – and in fact, his decision for Des Moines is part of a much larger effort that centers on a resolution passed at the recent U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in Miami. There, Cownie and many other mayors signed on to the resolution, which supports promoting water from municipal water systems over bottled water. IAMU has tentatively scheduled a presentation on the topic of municipal vs. bottled water at the upcoming Fall Conference (see notice to left).

Currently, the city of Des Moines purchases bottled water for some special meetings and events. In addition, bottled water is found in concession stands at city parks and in certain vending machines, but the city does not buy this water. Cownie said he feels that promoting municipal water is something the city should be more aware of in light of the recent Forbes.com study that proclaimed Des Moines water as the best in nation (see *IAMU Newsletter*, April 2008 issue).

Cownie has said that after bottled water has gone by the wayside at city facilities and events, he will approach corporations in Des Moines about adopting a similar policy.

Cities nationwide already have implemented, or are considering implementing, similar policies for municipal government. Some of the largest cities to do so are Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle.

In addition to a considerable cost for bottled water in some cities, another major factor prompting the movement is growing concern over the environmental impact of discarded plastic water bottles accumulating in landfills and recycling facilities across the country. Another major motivation is that the new policy could have a great public relations impact on residents, and could be a great help in rebuilding public confidence in municipal water systems and water quality.

State Energy Office now under Office of Energy Independence

◆ Governor Chet Culver has requested and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has approved the transfer of the DOE-designated Iowa State Energy Office from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to the Iowa Office of Energy Independence (OEI). As of July 1, 2008, the OEI will serve as the official home of the Iowa State Energy Office, and all future competitive grants that originate from the DOE will now be submitted through the OEI.

A 42-inch plasma television can consume more electricity than a full-size refrigerator, even when the TV is used only a few hours each day. This is about double the amount of energy consumed by a conventional cathode-ray picture tube TV.

The American Public Power Association (APPA) and the National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency will co-host a free webinar, "Quick Start Energy Efficiency Programs," Tuesday, July 8 from 1— 2:30 p.m. Central time. Register by following this link: <http://www.appanet.org>. (click on "Utility Operations" and "Energy Efficiency")

Current Transformers Wanted!



Does your electric utility have used CTs no longer in service?

Replacing substation equipment?

Please consider donating to IAMU for training purposes. All ratios and rating factors will be considered.

Contact Eric Stoll at IAMU: 800-810-4268 or estoll@iamu.org.

IRS increases mileage rates for second half of 2008

◆ The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has announced an increase in the optional standard mileage rates for the final six months of 2008.



Taxpayers may use the optional standard rates to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

The rate will increase to 58.5 cents per mile for all business miles driven from July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008. This is an increase of eight (8) cents from the 50.5 cent rate in effect for the first six months of the year.

The IRS reports this adjustment was made in recognition of recent gasoline price increases, in addition to other items taken into account.

To access a detailed summary from the IRS, follow this link: <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=184163,00.html>

Big-screen TV = big energy costs; tell your customers

◆ Municipal utilities and their customers should be aware that many of the popular big-screen televisions can be big users of electricity – a fact that is not known or understood by many consumers. In addition to being an unwise energy conservation practice, this can lead to a jump in a customer’s electric bills.

A 42-inch plasma television can consume more electricity than a full-size refrigerator, even when the TV is used only a few hours each day. This is about double the amount of energy consumed by a conventional cathode-ray picture tube TV, which typically uses about 100 watts of electricity. A 42-inch plasma set can use as much as 200 – 500 watts; and a 60-inch plasma set can use 500 – 600 watts, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). When add-ons like set-top boxes, game consoles, speakers, DVD players and digital video recorders are included in the mix, it can result in an increase of nearly \$200 to a family’s annual electricity billing.



Among the big-screen TVs, the projection types are considered to be more energy efficient than plasma or LCD-screen units.

The EPA’s Energy Star program, which identifies the most energy efficient appliances in various categories, was not set to begin identifying the best TVs until this year. The program has been rating TVs only when in standby mode, which greatly limits usefulness. The Federal Trade Commission’s (FTC) Energy Guide system for labeling consumer appliances is not currently used with TVs. The agency has reportedly been waiting for the EPA to complete test methods for comparing TVs when turned on before it will make a determination on whether it will apply Energy Guide labeling to TVs.

For now, it is up to entities such as municipal utilities to inform their customers about the increased energy usage and subsequent increase in energy bills that can come along with the purchase of a big-screen TV.

— *Thanks to Jerry McKenzie of MAXIMUS Financial Services, Wichita, KS, for the above information.*

The IAMU *Informer* is an electronic publication of the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities.

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