

OUR TOWNS

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Gayville Sinkhole Still Waiting For A Solution



This eight-foot deep hole remains on the 500 block of Merchant Street in Gayville. The hole was created three weeks ago when part of a 70-year vitrified clay pipe collapsed because of heavy rain. The town is hoping to have the hole fixed within the next week.

JUSTIN RUST/P&D

Hole Created By Collapsed Pipeline, Heavy Rains

BY JUSTIN RUST
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GAYVILLE — Three weeks later, the eight-foot deep hole in Gayville in the 500 block of Merchant Street still sits waiting for repairs.

The five-foot wide hole was caused after a portion of a 70-year old vitrified clay pipe collapsed a day after a four-inch rain.

But a solution, both short term and long term, may finally be in place.

Gayville is planning a temporary fix of the pipeline, which the ditch board committee is hoping that construction will start soon.

"I would say within the next week, it will get fixed," said Gary Freeburg, a member of the Gayville ditch board. "Hopefully we get the paperwork done and the culvert gets put in before someone gets hurt or if more of it caves in."

The hole hasn't gotten worse since it originally collapsed three weeks ago, but Freeburg said it still could be a disaster waiting to happen.

"It still presents a big danger," he said. "We better get moving, and the sooner we do it, the better. I'm not a

patient person, so when something needs to get done, we have to get off our rear and do it."

The major hold-up with getting a culvert put in and to fill the hole has been paperwork, which has been the same hold-up for getting a permanent fix for the pipeline.

"It just takes time. You have to get the legal things taken care of," Freeburg said. "You have to have the proper financing. That's all there is to it."

Another roadblock to repairing the hole has been the weather. Since the four-inch rainfall that caused the pipe to collapse, Gayville, along with the rest of the area, has had to deal with other major storms.

"Basically weather is a big thing," said Jay Jorgensen, the mayor of Gayville. "Hopefully the weather holds up and the water works its way down."

The hole sits across from a daycare, and is blocked off by a four-foot orange snowfence.

Part of the fence is showing some wear from people stepping over it, but Jorgensen said the fence is doing its job.

"Far as I know, it's holding up well

and I haven't heard any problems with it," he said.

Jorgensen said the temporary fix to the pipe and the hole will cost between \$500 and \$1,000, and the money to pay for it will come out of an assessment the town has built up for the past eight years.

The assessment was started because this isn't the first problem the town has had with the pipe. In 2000, Gayville had to fix the pipeline after it collapsed for the first time. Two years later, an assessment was placed on property owners who were adjacent to the drainage system in an attempt by the county to get grant money from the state to replace the pipe.

The assessment has generated approximately \$12,000 a year, and a total of \$112,000 has been accumulated. The estimated cost to replace the drainage system is \$250,000.

Jorgensen has been working to get a loan to cover the remaining cost to replace the pipe. Two weeks ago, he met with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in order to get a loan for it.

"The meeting went well and we are looking at the application process now," he said. "I am hopefully going to meet with (Yankton County Auditor) Paula Jones so we can get the application filled out this week."

Meningitis Vaccination Recommended For Pre-Teens, College Freshmen

PIERRE — Parents of high school and college freshmen should add meningitis immunization to their back-to-school lists, says a state health official.

"College freshmen living in dorms and unvaccinated kids entering high school are among the high-risk groups for meningococcal disease," said Dr. Lon Kightlinger, State Epidemiologist for the Department of Health. "This disease progresses very quickly and it can be fatal so it's important for parents to make sure their kids are appropriately immunized."

The vaccine is also routinely recommended for all children 11-12 years of age, those ages 2-10 years who travel to countries where the disease is epidemic, and those with immune deficiencies.

A bacterial infection, meningococcal disease is an inflammation of the tissues covering the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms can include fever, severe headache, stiff neck, vomiting and a rash. Prompt treatment is important to prevent disability and death. Ten to 14 percent of people with the disease die and up to 19 percent of those who do survive may suffer long-term permanent disabilities such as hear-

ing loss, limb amputation or brain disease.

The disease strikes up to 2,800 Americans each year, killing 300. In 2009, South Dakota reported five cases of invasive meningococcal disease, including one death. There have been no cases reported to date in 2010.

Meningococcal vaccine is available from family health care providers and campus student health centers. The department provides the vaccine for those 11-18 years of age who are eligible for the federal Vaccines for Children Program (Medicaid eligible, Native American or Alaskan Native, uninsured or underinsured). There is no cost for the vaccine for these children but providers may charge an administration fee. To find a provider, see <http://doh.sd.gov/LocalOffices/Vaccine.aspx>. Learn more about meningitis at <http://doh.sd.gov/DiseaseFacts/Meningitis.aspx>.

Improving the state's childhood immunization rate is one objective of the department's Health 2020 Initiative.

Use Caution With Transient Contractors

PIERRE — Attorney General Marty Jackley is warning South Dakota consumers and business owners about transient paving and roofing scams that are currently targeting South Dakota citizens.

The Consumer Protection Division has received numerous complaints about out-of-state transients going door-to-door promising low estimates because of left over materials from a completed project down the road or needing to keep crews busy between jobs. Consumers and business owners are reporting poor quality jobs at exaggerated prices, often double or triple what was originally quoted.

"Every single year our Consumer Protection Division receives numerous complaints against transient contractors," Jackley said. "Their main goal is to trick consumers into making hasty decisions in purchasing an inferior product, generally at an inflated price. Catching the consumer or business off guard is their most effective tactic."

Jackley states that it is important for individuals and businesses to be cautious when dealing with these transient pavers. Oftentimes they place flyers or brochures on your car window or at your door with a South Dakota phone number or address as a contact number. Even though they claim to have an address in South Dakota, oftentimes this is just a mail drop.

Here are a few precautions that may help prevent becoming a victim:

- Do not be pressured into a quick agreement.
- Request a written contact specifying in detail the work to be done and the agreed upon price.
- Be cautious if cash-only terms are required.
- Do not make full payment before the job is satisfactorily completed.
- Ask for local references and call these references to make sure they were satisfied.
- Get bids from local companies to compare prices.
- Consumers have a three

day right-to-cancel, which should be stated on the receipt of contract.

• Sellers must provide the consumer with a copy of the contract or receipt at the time of the sale. This receipt must show the date of the sale, the name and address of the merchant, and a statement to the buyer of his or her right to cancel the contact within three days. After proper cancellation, the seller has 10 days to refund your money.

• Remember that a legitimate offer does not require you to have the work done immediately. Do not get pressured into sale.

• Ask to see their current South Dakota tax license. State law requires all persons selling products or services to have a current South Dakota sales or contractors' excise tax license. But remember that even though they may have this license it does not mean that you will be able to locate them once the work is complete.

Contact the Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-300-1986 or consumerhelp@state.sd.us with questions or concerns regarding transient contractors.

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New System Helps Military And Overseas Voters Cast an Absentee Ballot

PIERRE — Military and overseas voters can take advantage of a new system developed by the office of the South Dakota Secretary of State to speed the delivery of their absentee ballots.

The system is fully functional for the 2010 general election.

New laws and technology allow a military or overseas voter to request electronic delivery of their absentee ballot.

"This system will cut the turn-around time for an absentee ballot in half thus making it easier for these voters to get their ballots returned by election day and have those ballots counted," explained Secretary of State Chris Nelson.

Military and overseas voters who wish to have their absentee ballot electronically delivered must

complete an absentee ballot application and designate an email address on the application. The application and instructions are found on the Secretary of State's web page at www.sdsos.gov.

"I would encourage family members of South Dakotans who are deployed or have family or friends overseas to make them aware of this new option for obtaining their absentee ballot. The ballot applications can be submitted to their county auditor now. When ballots are available in September, the person's absentee ballot will be provided to them electronically. The voter will vote the ballot and return it by regular mail to their county auditor. Military and overseas voters still have the option of receiving a regular paper absentee ballot if they choose," Nelson said.

Fall classes begin August 23rd. Get registered today!
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