

OUR TOWNS

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NATHAN JOHNSON/P&D

Picking Up The Pieces

Farmers Elevator Co. In Mission Hill Bouncing Back From June 11 Storm

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MISSION HILL — The severe thunderstorm that swept through the Yankton area the morning of June 11 left a lot of damage in its wake — damage with which some area residents and businesses are still grappling.

One of those businesses is the Farmers Elevator Company of Mission Hill.

"We lost approximately one-third of our main grain storage," said elevator manager Jay Cutts. "We'll have to replace all our support equipment and replace at least three bins if we want to be back up to the same storage capacity that we were before."

The elevator consists of five 50,000-bushel bins and several smaller bins. During the storm, two of the large bins were ripped off their foundations, leaving them completely destroyed.

Another bin was dented when one of the other bins crashed into it, and two smaller bulk bins that had yet to be installed were blown into the city park, which is next to the elevator.

Cutts said the estimated cost of replacing the three large bins is \$250,000.

"Hopefully we can get them ordered and get them here in time for the fall harvest," he said.

Cutts was alerted to the damage at "about 2:30 a.m." that day, he said.

"One of my neighbors was out looking around after the wind came through, and he called me and said there was a sheriff down here on the highway with his lights flashing," Cutts said.

The sheriff was on the scene because fallen branches and portions of the grain bins had blocked the road leading into town.

At the time of the storm, Yankton County Emergency Management Director Jeremy Dangel had said the heaviest damage was sustained in a line that began just north of Yankton and made its way east into the Mission Hill and Volin area before moving on to Wakonda.

Despite the heavy damages sustained in the storm, officials say there were no tornadoes, Dangel had said.

The recorded rain total at Yankton Middle School was 1.83 inches.

For his part, Cutts was unaware of just how severe the storm was until he arrived at the elevator that morning.

"At 2:30 in the morning you can't see a whole lot," he said, laughing. "But where I live — about a mile south of town — it was just a storm with a little bit of wind. We didn't lose any branches or anything down at our house. So I didn't really anticipate anything of that magnitude when I drove up there. But when I got there, I said, 'Oh, well, that was a little windier than I thought.'"

Cutts and a local contractor cleaned up most of the damage that Friday.

Although the outcome of the storm wasn't good, it could have been much worse depending on what time of year the storm struck.

"It won't affect us at all during the summer," Cutts said. "We're basically just delivering grain during the summertime. It'll affect us more this fall when we go to harvest time and (need) enough storage for our local customers. ..."

"It's a lot better that it hit now than in the fall, because if it hit in the fall, we would have no chance to rebuild at all. But now we do have some time to make a few plans," he said.

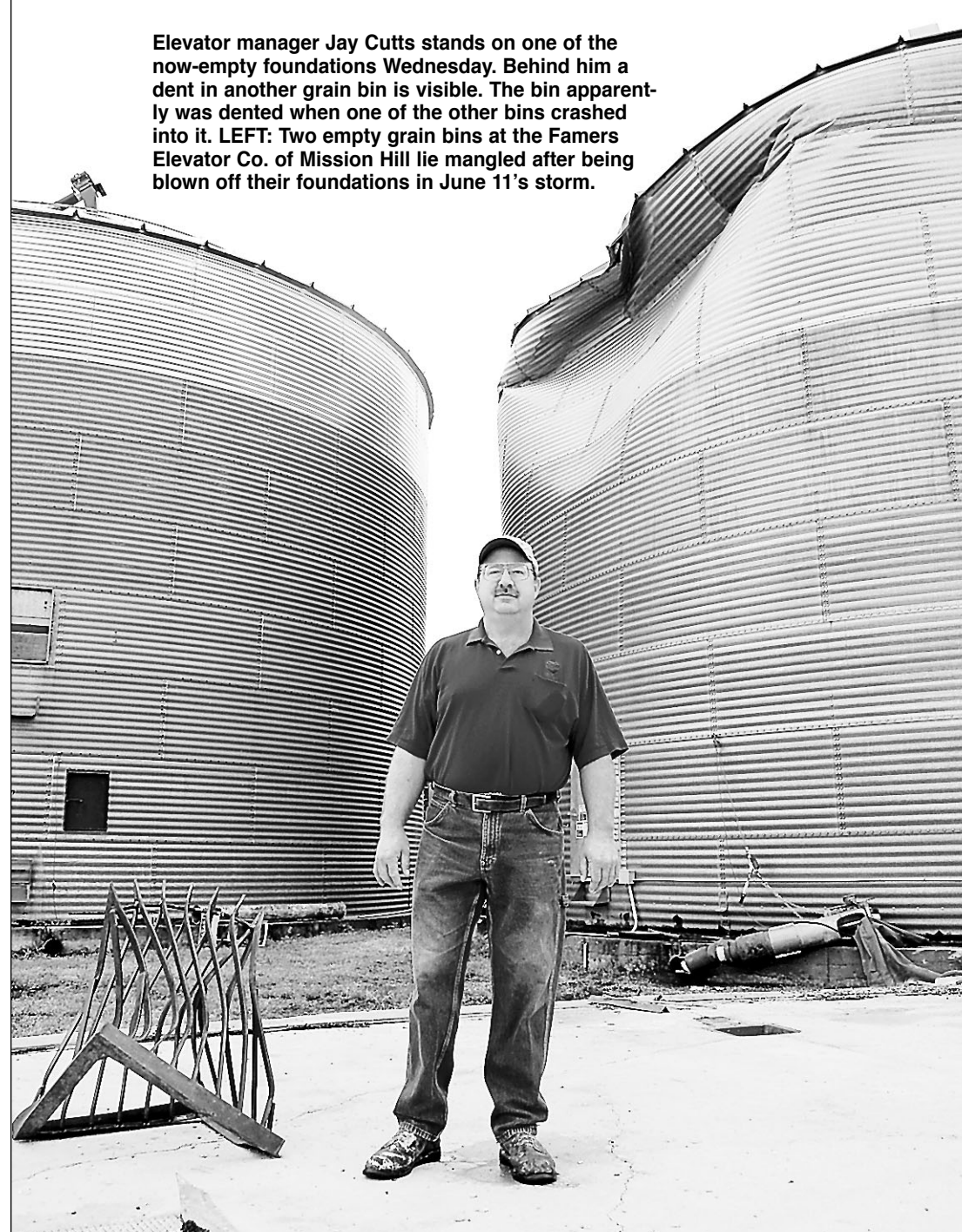
This was not the first time the elevator sustained severe damage in a summer storm.

"It was pretty close to 20 years ago from the date of the storm that they lost three bins in the same area," Cutts said. "They blew to the north rather than to the east last time. You could basically say they lost all four bins last time because the other one was damaged, and the roof was torn off of it."

Cutts said that his current focus is on getting the elevator back to its original capacity in time for the fall harvest.

"Putting the equipment up won't take that long — probably about a week per bin," he said. "So that's not a real long process. It's the estimates and planning and getting it here that takes a long time."

Nathan Johnson contributed to this report.



Elevator manager Jay Cutts stands on one of the now-empty foundations Wednesday. Behind him a dent in another grain bin is visible. The bin apparently was dented when one of the other bins crashed into it. LEFT: Two empty grain bins at the Farmers Elevator Co. of Mission Hill lie mangled after being blown off their foundations in June 11's storm.

TRAVIS GULBRANDSON/P&D

Veterans Summit Slated For Pierre July 13

PIERRE — The South Dakota Department of Military and Veterans Affairs will hold a summit on Tuesday, July 13, in Amphitheater II at the Ramkota Hotel, Pierre. The summit runs from 1-5 p.m. CDT.

The summit, "Meeting the Needs of South Dakota's Veterans," is an opportunity to bring together Department staff and partners within the veterans' network to review services, goals and visions, as well as develop dialogue and identify needs to

ensure that, collectively, the best possible service is provided veterans.

"This summit provides a wonderful opportunity for veterans' advocates to build a strong foundation to assist in meeting the responsibilities and challenges of providing veterans the best care and service possible," said Steve Harding, deputy secretary for the South Dakota Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "It is our hope that the information obtained during this summit will

guide the Department in building better lives for veterans, spouses, and their families living in South Dakota."

The South Dakota Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, as it has done for the past 66 years, will assist veterans of South Dakota and their dependents in obtaining all benefits to which they are entitled, both federal and state, either by direct contact or through the assistance of the County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers.

S.D. Education Services Get High Marks

PIERRE — South Dakota is one of only 16 states to earn the highest ratings possible under both Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, according to information recently released by the U.S. Department of Education.

IDEA Part B monitors the effectiveness of special education services at the preschool and K-12 levels, while Part C refers to the state's Birth to Three program, which serves younger children and their families.

South Dakota's special education programs met the established targets on 16 of 18 public reporting areas required under Part B. The state demonstrated that it provides valid and reliable data and has high levels of compliance in the eight areas of the State Performance Plan.

The state must also keep track of determinations for each of the public school districts it serves. In South Dakota, all the public school districts met requirements as well. Nearly 18,000 children, between the ages of three and 21, received special education services from more than 150 school districts statewide.

"Our districts are a huge reason why the state met requirements. If it was not for their hard work and dedication, we would

not have such high and accurate standards," said Ann Larsen, director of the South Dakota Department of Education's Special Education Programs.

The South Dakota Birth to 3 program is evaluated on 14 indicators under Part C of IDEA and had 100 percent compliance on federally mandated requirements. State Birth to 3 Director Susan Sheppick also said credit was due at the local level.

"The Birth to 3 program has 27

service coordinators statewide, and it is because of their hard work that we were able to hit these benchmarks," Sheppick said.

During the reporting year, the South Dakota Birth to 3 program served approximately 2,000 children ages birth to three, who have developmental delays or disabilities. If further services are needed, the child will transition into Part B special education services at age 3.

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