

STORM

Continued from Page 1

power lines and broken poles due to powerful wind gusts and broken trees falling onto power lines are what caused the power outages. City crews worked all night long to restore power to the city residents after power lines were taken down by strong winds. As of Tuesday, the city crews were still repairing poles that were broken out in the country.

The city could not use the power plant generator because it was not safe to put power out on power lines when they were broken and down on the ground.

Backup generators did keep power on at the Cheyenne County Hospital, the emergency building and the Good Samaritan Village.

Bird City residents went without power for a far longer period of time. The power went out Saturday evening around 7 p.m., however it was not restored until late Sunday evening between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Some went 24-26 hours without power.

The transmission lines that feed into PrairieLand and Midwest lines also sustained damage, causing a large scale problem. Crews were brought in to assist in restoring power to the county.

A PrairieLand spokesperson said approximately 100 power poles were broken in the Cheyenne and Rawlins county area. Although the damage was widespread, he said that the heaviest damage sustained was in the McDonald and Atwood area. The lines that were damaged ran north-south; in winter and blizzard damage the damage usually occurs to east-west lines. It appeared to all be straight line winds, with no indication of tornado damage.

Ryan Murray, Cheyenne County Emergency Management Director, said that the Bird City Fire Department and the Cheyenne County Sheriff's Department went around town in Bird City checking on people. That was the part of the county that sustained the most damage, he said.

Saturday and Sunday the emergency operations were



LYNN GLASCO'S sprinkler well was twisted and on the ground from the high winds that ripped through the area on Saturday evening. Reports of several center pivot systems being overturned have come in.

Herald staff photo by Norma Martinez.

handled through the Bird City emergency building. Mr. Murray said their automatic start generator was already up and running, which made it quick and easy for them to gather and get to work. St. Francis' emergency building does have a backup generator, it is just not an automatic start. He also said that the upgrades to the communication system that were recently made worked really well.

Mr. Murray verbally filed an emergency proclamation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) following the large storm that downed power lines and did extensive damage on Saturday evening, June 14. He brought the emergency proclamation to the Cheyenne County Commissioners for them to sign at the Tuesday morning meeting.

The emergency proclamation filed with FEMA allows the

county to enact some emergency plans, and Mr. Murray said the county may be able to go under an emergency declaration. At this point, he said they are still assessing damage. The amount done to the power lines is significant. The amount of damage to electric poles, the extra crews that were called in and the equipment that was called in to expedite the restoration of service to residents was very costly. The emergency proclamation may help alleviate some of those costs.

Many have asked why the backup generator in Bird City was not activated. Mr. Murray said that he did not know why at this time, but he was looking into that as well.

Severe weather is always a threat this time of year, so be prepared and have an emergency plan in place at your home. Always have emergency back-up items in



GRAIN BIN ended up in the middle of a wheat field during the storm on Saturday.

Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

case of an electricity outage such as flashlights, candles, and plenty of drinking water.

Program helps county gardeners

Amanda Miller
amiller@nwkans.com

The Cheyenne County Conservation District is sponsoring the Cheyenne County Home Garden Program to assist county residents in establishing their own small, home gardens. Applicants will be provided with plans to build a 4- by 8-foot raised bed and 10 complimentary packets of seeds to grow in their garden.

The objective of the program is to encourage people to grow some of their own fresh produce. Participants will also be asked to share some of their harvest by bringing it into the conservation office where it will be weighed and donated to the local food pantry. There will be a prize awarded to the participant that donates the most produce at the end of the season.

Last year, Brian Holzwarth won the Cheyenne County Conservation District Home

Garden Award. With the packets provided, he and Dani grew an impressive 1,525 pounds of produce. Brian grew tomatoes, cucumbers, cantaloupe, watermelon, carrots, corn, squash and zucchini.

This is the third year for the Home Garden Program to take place. Last year, donations from all participants in the county totaled to 1,987 pounds. Donations were given to the Senior Center, Good Samaritan Village in St. Francis and in Goodland, the schools, and to some individuals.

There were eight participants last year, but the Conservation District hopes for even more this year!

For an application, please stop into the conservation office; call Dani at 332-2341, extension 101 or go to the website at www.cheyennecountycd.com. Seeds will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Theater board needs two new members

Amanda Miller
amiller@nwkans.com

The Cheyenne Theater board met on Monday, June 2. Board members Fred Mahlberg and Heidi Plumb have resigned from the board, and the board commented that they were grateful for their efforts as members.

The board discussed finding replacements for them, and will report any volunteers at the next meeting.

July 4 falls on a Friday, and after some discussion the board decided that they will show the movie at the regular time.

Glori Milne, city clerk, gave the board a treasurer's report and noted that the theater's income is exceeding budget numbers, but that expenses are on track with the annual budget expectations. The board asked

Mrs. Milne about accepting credit cards, and said that they thought not accepting credit cards is reducing the number of customers. Mrs. Milne told the board that the city office is not ready for the change.

Brent Rueb, board member, reported that he contacted JR Landenberger, city superintendent, about installing the upgraded lobby lighting fixture. It has not been installed yet. Robert Grace, board member, said that he would remind Mr. Landenberger about the job. He will also ask him about turning the direction of the auditorium ceiling fans for the summer season.

The next Cheyenne Theater board will meet the first Monday of July, July 7, at 6 p.m.

Editor's note: This article was taken from the Cheyenne Theater meeting minutes.

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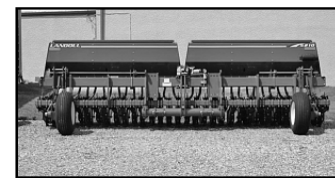
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