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Getting closer to start-up time is the new 7.8 million dollar state of the art water treatment plant south of Clark. Duane Stokes, general manager of Clark Rural Water says the fine tuning of the plant on its test runs will begin as early as next week. Ninety nine percent of the water conditioning will happen in the clarifying system at the plant. Behind the building, hidden in this photo, are two large blue tanks to the east that will hold one million gallons of treated water in storage. To the west of the building are, from left to right, the aerator, a chlorine tank and a pebble lime tank.

## It's getting time to be excited about soft water!

"There's a lot more to it than meets the eye," said Duane Stokes, general manager of the new Clark Rural Water Treatment plant south of Clark.

The new CRW treatment plant has been in the works for three years and is getting very close to being completed. That will happen some time this fall.

The \$7,852,000 facility will be testing out and tweaking the system as soon as next week. "Then after everything is fine tuned and in good working order, we could be up and running with the new plant within a month," said Stokes.

"Our water is 30 grains hard at the treatment site," says Stokes. "We hope to get it down to 15 with this new system of water treatment, creating nice, soft water." Manganese, iron and calcium carbonate are the hard chemicals that need to be taken out of the water at the new plant. This water is all taken from six wells within three miles of

the plant that are from 24 to 58 feet deep and out of the Vermillion aquifer.

Previously the water was filtered and oxidized and the hard minerals taken out with chemicals and then filtered. In the new plant, 99% of this process will happen in the new clarifier system at the plant.

"It's an exact science" explains Stokes, and even water coming from different wells yet from the same aquifer can be different and need more or less adjusting to the systems.

A lot of modern technology is used at the plant, but Stokes has also implemented manual backup switches should the computer systems have a glitch.

The plant also has a huge CAT caterpillar diesel generator indoors that can be switched over in a matter of seven seconds should the power go out.

Raw water coming up from the wells must first go through an aera-

tion system to remove the carbon dioxide gases. From there it goes into the clarifier tank.

Pebble lime is involved mixed with liquid and heated to make a slurry in the lime slaking room. The terminology here would be "when lime is slaked it turns into a slurry," stated Terry Kaufman, operations manager at the plant. In other words slaking is technically turning dry lime into a solution.

The lime does the softening when put into the clarifying tank as it raises the pH balance of the water to 11 or 12 which is on the alkaline side. When that happens, the calcium carbonate, manganese and iron precipitates out. A sludge blanket is then formed about four feet off the bottom of the clarifying tank. As water is circulated through, the sludge particles get bigger and eventually drop to the floor of the tank.

"You could compare it to hail-

stones forming in the sky," said Stokes. "How they form and eventually get heavy and fall is how these water particles get heavy as they collide together and fall down, making the sludge at the bottom of the clarifying tank."

Large, 50 feet across, arms slowly scrape the sludge into a system that carries it out to three football field sized ponds to the southwest of the building. As the water drains out of these ponds and the sludge builds up, it will be removed and taken to farmers for their feedlots for an example.

Back at the plant, the cleaned water on the top in the clarifier room is then moved through a recarbonization basin where CO<sup>2</sup> lowers the pH to seven or eight. Then it will go into the sand filter, going through two feet of sand to filter out anything that doesn't get caught in the sludge tank. This sand is back-washed every 10 days to clean it

Clark Rural Water  
(continued on page 3)

## Clark Hometown Variety Store is closing its doors

It's official. The Clark Hometown Variety Store that so many were excited about when it opened four years ago, has been forced to close its doors due to a lack of sales.

"It's really unfortunate that it's come down to this," said Clark Chamber of Commerce Board president Greg Furness. "I wish we could have had the support before the closing that we have had since Tuesday when we announced our liquidation."

"This closing will be real hard on the Chamber of Commerce in Clark as well as all of the businesses downtown in a trickle down effect. When one has to go to another town for certain supplies, they'll shop other places too while they are there and will tend not to shop locally when they return. None of that money comes back to us in sales tax revenue either for our city, county and school district, like it does when one shops locally. We really need to support businesses locally," said Furness.

It is a fact that the Clark Cham-

ber will have to continue making payments on the mortgage until the building is sold or rented out. The Clark Chamber purchased the building and had been leasing it to the variety store. Now the Chamber will be forced to pay the \$558 a month until it is sold. The Clark Chamber's income as a non-profit organization is only about \$7,000 a year from membership dues. Business promotions and sponsorship for events like Potato Day and Spook-tacular come out of the Chamber of Commerce fund.

Melanie Smith, co-chair of the Clark Chamber said the store's closing will put the Chamber in a difficult situation. "It's going to impact the rest of us on Main Street as well. The fewer businesses, the tougher it is to bring people in from around the area. Trying to keep the community viable is why we started it in the first place."

Both Smith and Furness said the store's closing will affect the shop-

Variety Store  
(continued on page 3)

## Clark County has two cases of West Nile virus

According to the latest Department of Health West Nile update, Clark County now has two cases of human detection.

The number of South Dakotans who have been diagnosed with West Nile virus has risen to 158, up 60 cases from two weeks ago. So far in 2012, two persons have died in the state from this disease.

In this part of South Dakota, only Deuel County remains detection-free.

In eastern South Dakota, Brown County is one of the hardest-hit counties in the state, with 35 reported human cases, five donor cases and 32 confirmed mosquito

pools. Beadle County has reported 11 West Nile human cases.

Roberts County has one human and one bird case. Marshall County has six human and three donor cases. Grant has two human cases, while Codington County reports six human cases, two donor cases, one bird case and three mosquito pools.

The average age of those infected is 48 years old and a gender breakdown shows 51 percent are male and 49 percent are female. The status of those patients has indicated 33 percent have contracted meningitis/encephalitis, 67 percent had fevers and 41 percent were hospitalized.



Tony and Angie Werdel are the new owners of Tony's Collision Center, formerly Ritter's Repair on US Highway 212 in Clark. The business transaction took place earlier this month and the plan was to have Merlyn Ritter handing over the keys to the new owners, but health issues brought about a change in plans.

## Tony's Collision Center is now open in Clark

The signs will be up soon, they're not up yet, but Ritter's Repair is now Tony's Collision Center.

Tony and Angie Werdel have purchased the Auto Body repair business from Merlyn and Marie Ritter. Werdel officially became owner September 17.

When asked if he will be making any changes to the business, Werdel commented, "We will be able to do semi's and heavier equipment, so we can accommodate big rigs."

He also was excited that a new booth with new and improved water based (not solvents) paint will be used. "With this new booth, we will get just a wonderful paint match, which will be two times the true finish," he said.

The auto body repair business will feature a full-line mechanic shop, a new, digital tire alignment machine, a transmission flush ma-

chine and a radiator flush machine. They also will sell tires and personal car washes for individuals.

The staff at Tony's Collision Center will be Tony and Angie, Scott Wirkus and body man Jason Brinkman, who will begin employment on October 8.

Werdel has been doing auto body repair since 2000 and he was employed at Ritter's Repair for five years prior to managing Hillcrest Auto, six miles east of Clark.

"I'm very excited about owning my own business in Clark. We have been making some changes at the shop so it will look the way we want it to. My long-term goal is to have an auto body/mechanic shop in Clark, so someday my boys can take over."

Tony and Angie are the parents of three boys: Jackson, eight; Zane, five and Gavin, one.

## Finishing a harvest in September?

### ▲ Crazy as the respectable yields

It's just amazing that some producers will be done with harvest by the end of September. That will be a rare case, but it is safe to say that farmers are harvesting crops earlier this year because hot weather caused plants to mature faster than normal. Beautiful, dry weather is not impeding harvest this week whatsoever, allowing soybeans and corn to be harvested at a fast pace. Plus, a freeze occurred over the weekend to help speed up the process.

"Many of the fields are ready and on some we will have to wait," is the consensus of South Dakota Extension agronomists. "Overall, we are seeing a very early harvest this fall. Farmers got in early to fields last spring to plant early and the heat took over, early and often this summer."

With all of the summer heat and moisture less than normal, results and yields are all across the board this harvest season with both corn and beans.

As dry as it was, producers are somewhat pleased with crop results, as especially the soybeans are producing a nice crop.

## Burn ban in effect in Clark County

The Clark County Board of Commissioners at their Tuesday, September 25 meeting adopted a county-wide burn ban, effective immediately.

The resolution was adopted due to lack of adequate moisture causing extremely dry conditions. Open burning is not allowed at this time, as a "fire danger emergency" exists.

To repeat, effective immediately, no open burning is allowed in Clark County.

"I'd say we're probably close to a month ahead of schedule with both the corn and the beans. Usually we use the beginning of the pheasant season as a barometer of where we are at concerning the start of corn harvest, but not this year. We could very easily be done with harvest by Oct. 20, the pheasant season opening date," noted a spokesman from the extension agronomy department.

More corn than usual was chopped for silage this year, but as corn crops were burning up in the fields, that was a viable option.

Soybeans have been surprising, but vary from field to field, ranging from 18 bushels to the acre to over 60 in some fields, depending on if any rains came.

Moisture levels have been eight to 16 percent, with 13 being ideal. Quality also has shown some variation, with some small beans and some green ones.

With beans at \$16 a bushel, many producers are pleased with the results. "Overall, I'm finding that yields are about 10 bushels an acre higher than expectations," said Jeff Olson, manager of Clark County

Harvest  
(continued on page 3)

WEATHER			
Ryan Eggleston - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
Sept. 18	65	34	0
Sept. 19	66	40	0
Sept. 20	62	40	0
Sept. 21	66	30	0
Sept. 22	53	26	0
Sept. 23	59	31	0
Sept. 24	74	40	.12
2012 precipitation to date 14.44"			
2011 precipitation to date 20.77"			



## Hovde, Tonak selected as 2012 Willow Lake Homecoming Royalty

The 2012 Willow Lake High School Royalty were chosen on Monday night at the WLHS auditorium. Queen Savannah Hovde and King Logan Tonak will reign over this week's Homecoming festivities.

Hovde is the daughter of Mike and Cheryl Hovde and Michelle and Les Peters. Tonak is the son of Dan and Nicole Tonak.