

IN THE LOOP

MAY/JUNE 2019

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gardonville
cooperative telephone association

HEY DAVE!

By Dave Wolf, CEO/General Manager

Hey Dave, do gophers chew through buried cables?

Gardonville, along with other telecommunications companies in west central Minnesota were inundated this winter by fiber-optic cable cuts caused by gophers.

Why do gophers chew on fiber-optic cables?

From what I have read, gophers and other burrowing rodents have teeth that continuously grow like our fingernails and they need to gnaw on things to keep their teeth in proper shape.

When do gophers do the most damage?

I do not know a lot about gophers, but I do know nearly all Gardonville's cable cuts caused by gophers happen between

Thanksgiving and April Fools day every year. My guess is they are stuck underground without a lot to chew on. When a cable is plowed into the ground, there is a rip, or cut in the earth that makes the disturbed ground easy to burrow through. So, rodents probably find their way to a cable because it's easy to reach, even if it's buried 42" underground.

How does Gardonville repair the damaged cable?

First off, Gardonville only installs rodent-resistant-direct-bury-cable and it takes many generations of gophers to chew through the outer jacket and armored sheath of one of these cables. After 12 years of chewing, eventually they will get their teeth inside the cable and quickly damage the fiber-optic glass strands. Unfortunately, this tends to happen when it's extremely cold out and the ground is frozen.

Continued...

Repairing a buried cable during a polar vortex like we had earlier this year is nearly impossible. First, we locate the broken location by bouncing laser light through the cable and measure the exact distance the light reflects back to our measuring point. We head to that location and we push snow back to expose the bare ground. A large backhoe equipped to dig into frozen ground is brought in to uncover the damaged cable. This trench is about 4 feet deep and up to 200 feet long, and it is not easy to do. After the cable is exposed, we cut out the damaged section and splice in a new cable. This process takes about 15-24 hours and costs about \$6,000 to \$32,000 per repair. No two cable cuts are the same.

How often does this happen?

Telecommunication companies are evaluating this winter's unusually high rodent activity. I do not have the final tally, but I'm aware of dozens of cable cuts that happened this winter. Gardonville had three large "chew cuts" this winter that will cost the co-op well over \$20,000 to repair. In

northeast South Dakota this winter, a telecommunication company was isolated from the world because of multiple, simultaneous gopher chews. Another company, to the west of Gardonville, experienced 34 gopher chew cable cuts this winter!

What services are affected by gopher chews?

Everything from your cell phone to a credit card transaction at a grocery store requires a connection to a fiber-optic cable. Internet traffic, cable television and 911 service can be impacted as well. Each of these disruptions add an additional cost to the repair.

What can people do to help?

Most of the townships in the area pay a bounty for gophers. Their goal in paying the bounty is to encourage controlling the gopher population. They typically pay more for pocket gophers than striped gophers and always require proof of the capture. Each township has their own procedure, and information about their program is readily available.

Gardonville wants to support this effort by establishing a total budget of \$2,500 to match amounts paid out by townships that are in the co-op service area. Applicants simply need to present a **township gopher bounty payment check** and fill out a simple form. The Gardonville board will approve the amounts during its monthly meeting and a check will be mailed out to applicants. Once the \$2,500 budget is exhausted, I'll ask the board to fund another round of bounties. Look on Gardonville's website for details about this experimental program. There will be a list of eligible townships and other items to keep in mind.

Thank you for sending me this question. I appreciate any feedback and we are grateful for your continued patronage.



Welcome to the Team

We'd like to welcome Isaac Trelstad, Levi Eastlund, Jim Dumitras and Christina Rokes to our crew. Isaac and Levi are on our help desk team, Jim joins our engineering team and Christina is the newest member of customer care. We're excited to have these new faces around the office!



Isaac Trelstad



Jim Dumitras



Levi Eastlund



Christina Rokes

BUSINESS PROFILE

New Hope Healing and Recourse Center

Twelve years ago, Aimee Goodwin was a healthy mom of four, happily married, had a career and exercised regularly. She vividly recalls a day at the gym when everything changed. While working out, she felt a tremor in her knee that led to an excruciating five years battling debilitating neurological pain and extreme fatigue. Noise hurt, light hurt, even cotton sheets hurt. She underwent countless tests and saw many doctors, but it was a mystery why Aimee was so sick. Never giving up hope, Aimee found a specialist in California who was finally able to diagnose her with Lyme Disease. Thankfully, after two years of treatment, she is now symptom free and victorious over the disease.

Understanding how isolating and hopeless Lyme Disease can be, she made it her mission to help others. "If I can make a difference, I can't not help them," she comments. She started a group called Central Minnesota Lyme Disease Support Group. "Imagine walking into a room and immediately feeling understood," Aimee says.

But, Aimee's fight didn't stop there. She knew she could do more for the ever growing number of people suffering from Lyme Disease. The CDC estimates there are over 300,000 new cases in the United States each year! More and more research is being done on Lyme Disease, but there is still much to learn

and resources are limited, especially in Minnesota... until now.

Aimee is the founder and director of New Hope Healing and Resource Center. Their mission is to treat the whole patient— body, mind and soul. Because Lyme Disease affects everyone differently, she has assembled a team with a wide variety of expertise including medical treatment, nutritional therapy, mental health counselors and support advisors and fitness experts including; yoga, meditation, physical therapy and massage.

"This place is out to give hope. It can turn the tide for people," Aimee says.

Their beautiful, new center is located in the Turning Leaf Business Center in Alexandria and will open its doors in May. They are open 9 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

Go to <https://lyme-hope.org> or check out their Facebook page for more info.



Aimee Goodwin
Founder of New Hope
Healing and Resource
Center

Outdoor Movie Night

Save the date, friends and family! We're hosting an Outdoor Movie Night on our office lawn in Brandon on Friday, May 31st, featuring Incredibles 2. This is a FREE event! Just bring your own chairs and blankets.

Popcorn, soda and candy will be available for purchase as a fundraiser for Little Peeps Gardonville Family Daycare.



New Channel on May 1st

BUZZR is a pop culture time capsule – an unending celebration where viewers can play along to more than 40,000 iconic game show episodes, which are shown around the clock. Featured titles include Family Feud, What's My Line, To Tell the Truth, Match Game, Password, Beat the Clock, Blockbusters and Card Sharks.

BUZZR is available to all TV customers on channel 441.



Office Closed

Our office will be closed on Monday, May 27th in recognition of Memorial Day.

Capital Credit Checks

In April, Gardonville mailed out capital credit checks to our cooperative members. This money was allocated to our members based on the number of services they had in 1999 and 2000.

Capital credits are just one of the benefits of choosing to purchase services from your local cooperative. Cooperatives, like Gardonville, benefit the economy of the communities they serve by

returning revenues generated by the cooperative back to their members, rather than shareholders.

If you live in the communities of Garfield, Brandon, Evansville or Millerville and subscribe to certain services, you automatically become a member of our cooperative!

Thank you for choosing Gardonville!

Call Before You Dig

Don't assume you know what's below when doing any digging. Whether you are a professional excavator or a homeowner using a shovel and rake, you must contact Gopher State One Call before starting any excavation project. It's simple to reach them. Call 811 or submit a ticket on their website, www.gopherstateonecall.org.

Welcome New Members!

BRANDON

Little, Jason 524-2126

EVANSVILLE

Jones, B 948-2370

GARFIELD

Koepn Rick & Kirsten 834-2826

Wagner, Clifford 834-8077

Gesell, Seth & Sarah 834-2844

Behlke, Tom & Judy 834-2689

Brain Buster

What is a person who builds and repairs stringed instruments called?

- a) Hostler b) Luthier c) Sommelier

Answer

Name - Please Print

Mar/April Brain Buster

What is the only letter in the alphabet that does not appear anywhere on the periodic table of elements?
Acceptable Answers: J or Q

Last month's winner is Joe & Lil Grunenwald. Stop in at either our Alexandria or Brandon office to get your goody bag!

FCC Battery Backup Disclosure

Gardonville Cooperative Telephone Association and Wisper Next Wireless Internet deliver telephone service via three different methods. These methods are copper, fiber and wireless modem/antenna.

Backup Power for Telephone Service during Power Outages: For many years, your telephone service would allow you to connect to 911 emergency services during a power outage. However, many of today's telephone services require backup battery power to function during an outage. If your service is delivered to your location via fiber or modem/antenna connection, a backup battery is required. If your telephone service is delivered via copper, and you use a corded phone during a power outage, you do not need a backup battery.

What a backup battery can and can't do for you: If you are on a fiber connection, you have an optical network terminal (ONT) at your location. If you have a Voice-over-IP connection, you have a wireless modem/antenna at your location. Both types of these connections require a battery backup to ensure telephone service continues to work during a power outage. Without a battery backup or alternate backup source such as a generator, you will not be able to make any calls, including 911 emergency calls. The only way to maintain the ability to use your telephone is by using some form of backup power.

The battery backup does not provide power to any services other than voice. Home security systems, medical monitoring devices and other equipment will not run on a telephone battery backup.

Purchase and Replacement Options: To ensure you can contact 911 emergency services during a power outage, you must have a backup battery. For fiber ONT's, a Cyber Power Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS), wall mount, 8-hour battery backup is provided and maintained by Gardonville. A 24-hour battery backup is available, upon request, for a one-time service fee of \$99.95.

For Voice-over-IP locations, customers can purchase an UPS APC 600va battery

backup from Gardonville. The APC 600va battery backup sells for \$79.95, plus tax, and comes with a one-year warranty. Customers also have the option to purchase a larger UPS, a 1500va battery backup from a retailer of their choice, in order to increase their battery backup time to 24 hours. If you do not feel comfortable installing your own UPS battery backup, please contact us to make an appointment. We would be more than happy to assist you; however, there may be a charge for this service.

Expected Backup Power Duration: The Cyber Power UPS (wall mount) battery backup is expected to last at least 8 hours on standby power. This backup battery should give you 6 hours of talk time. The 24-hour Cyber Power USP (wall mount) battery backup is expected to last at least 24 hours on standby power. This backup battery should give you 16 hours of talk time. The APC 600va battery backup is expected to last at least 6 hours on standby power. This backup battery should give you 4 hours of talk time. A 1500va battery backup is expected to last at least 24 hours on standby power. This backup battery should give you 12 hours of talk time.

Instructions for Proper Care and Use of Your Battery: Please follow the more detailed instructions included with your battery for proper use, storage and care of your battery to ensure it will function as needed during a power outage. If you do not store your battery correctly, it may shorten its useful life.

Environmental factors such as temperature can shorten your battery's useful life. We recommend that you store your battery above 41°F and below 104°F. These batteries are rechargeable but will not last forever and should be replaced when your device starts to make a loud beeping sound. See the instructions above for purchase and replacement options. You should also periodically, as described in the instructions included with the APC 600va and 1500va battery backup, remove and test your battery to verify both the operation of the battery backup and its condition.

Please contact Gardonville for any questions you may have regarding the Backup Power Disclosure Rules.