

### Bill Would Help Support the State's Only Food Bank



North Dakota's only food bank has been serving the state for over 40 years. However, the current distribution center is facing structural and capacity issues. House Bill 1143 would give \$10 million to the organization to build a new distribution center in Fargo. Photo provided by Great Plains Food Bank

Ann Estvold, NDNA Legislative Intern

Great Plains Food Bank, which is the only food bank in the state, is looking to build a new distribution facility in Fargo to better serve the needs of North Dakotans who are experiencing food insecurity. HB 1143 would grant \$10 million to the organization to be used to help build their new warehouse.

Great Plains Food Bank has distribution centers in Bismarck and Fargo, and has partnerships with 196 food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters throughout North

Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota. The Fargo distribution center is the main hub for the organization. It serves about 100 communities whose residents lack access to a sufficient food supply.

"This includes rural towns, tribal nations and urban centers, ensuring everyone has access to nutritious food," said Darby Njos, a spokeswoman for Great Plains Food Bank.

The Great Plains Food Bank receives food from farmers, growers and other donors, and is supplied food from industry sources that otherwise would go to waste.

### Cramer, Scott Introduce Bill to Expand Access to Credit

BISMARCK, N.D. — Credit scores compiled from loan and payment data are a common indicator of overall consumer financial health. Credit data is typically sourced from car, home, and student loans as well as credit cards and other lines of credit. While most Americans have a variety of data streams, about 26 million Americans are "credit invisible" and lack credit records or repayment history. These scores are essential to securing further lines of credit and impact a consumer's ability to access financial products like car loans or mortgages.

U.S. Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND), a member of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs (Banking) Committee, joined Chairman Tim Scott (R-SC) in introducing the Credit Access and Inclusion Act to include additional payments to be factored into credit history. This bill allows credit bureaus to collect payments data for services not traditionally factored into credit reporting, such

as rent, internet, phone, electricity, and utility payments. Factoring these payments into credit reporting would expand credit histories and generate credit scores for consumers who were previously "unscorable." If enacted, people who pay their bills on time in cash will generate a credit score reflective of their fiscal responsibility.

"Millions of Americans pay their utilities, their rent, and their phone bill and other things on time every month, but the narrow scope of credit reporting today doesn't include these payments, so it doesn't get calculated into their credit score," said Cramer. "Our bill is really a simple fix to expand the credit reporting that will then allow these responsible Americans to build credit."

"It's simple, if you pay your bills on time, your credit score should reflect that. This commonsense bill will reward hardworking Americans who manage their finances responsibly, expanding access to credit to help them purchase a home, finance their education, or pursue their dreams," said Chairman Scott.

Senate Banking Committee cosponsors include U.S. Senators Mike Rounds (R-SD), Katie Britt (R-AL), and Bernie Moreno (R-OH)

The organization then distributes the food to pantries and soup kitchens.

"Currently our biggest hurdle is inadequate infrastructure to recover and distribute the volume of food necessary to meet the needs of our neighbors," said Njos.

The current Fargo facility needs maintenance and is expected to outgrow its current location within eight years in any case, said Melissa Sobolik, the chief executive officer of Great Plains Food Bank.

In October, Great Plains Food Bank purchased nine acres of land in Fargo to build their new facility, which is planned for about 70,500 square feet. It would have an allergen-free repacking room and volunteer and community space. It would also increase space for storage, including room for refrigerated and frozen goods. It should be sufficient to support the organization for another 40 to 50 years, said Sobolik.

The organization has about one-third of the money it needs for the new facility, said Sobolik. So far, its state funding has been limited to \$1 million in 2024 to buy local foods. Most of Great Plains' financial support comes from government grants and local donations.

The Great Plains Food Bank was opened as the Greater Fargo-Moorhead Area Food Bank in 1983 and has expanded to serve 196 food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters throughout North Dakota. The organization has warehouses in Fargo and Bismarck.

The food bank also provides programs to support school-age children, summer meals, "senior food boxes" for older customers, and mobile food pantries.

### NORTH Dakota Be Legendary. North Dakotans Reminded to Call Before You Dig



### Governor Armstrong Proclaims Safe Digging Month in North Dakota

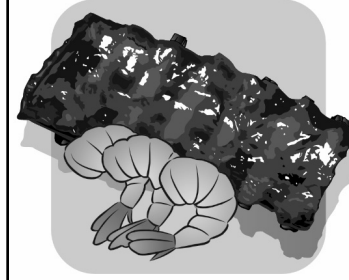
BISMARCK, ND — Governor Kelly Armstrong has proclaimed April as Safe Digging Month in North Dakota. In recognition, the North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) is reminding everyone of the potential dangers and consequences of digging without first clicking or calling 8-1-1, North Dakota's Call-Before-You-Dig number.

"Spring is here, and that means outdoor projects are on the rise! Before you pick up that shovel or start digging, the North Dakota Public Service Commission has a crucial reminder: call 811 first," said Commissioner Sheri Haugen-Hoffart, who holds the damage prevention portfolio. "It's not just a good idea — it's a safeguard

### SENIOR CITIZEN'S OVER 80 BANQUET

Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup> • 5:00 pm

@Shawna's Place



\*Choice of prime rib or shrimp\*

Sign up at the Senior Center or call Sylvia at 245-6656 by April 18th

### WESTHOPE SENIOR CITIZENS

Are giving away 40 hams for Easter!



Sign up at Cenex, Baker's Market or The Locker



Drawing takes place April 16<sup>th</sup>

against striking underground utility lines like gas, power, communications, water and sewer systems. Hitting one of these can lead to serious hazards and racks up billions in damages every year. With one quick call to 811, you can ensure a safe, hassle-free project and protect your community from avoidable risks. Don't dig into danger — make the call!"

North Dakota law requires anyone conducting an excavation to notify 8-1-1 at least two business days in advance of digging. This is a free service to homeowners and farmers working on their own property/land. Personnel will be sent to mark the locations of the underground facilities, typically within a couple of days. The markings are valid for 21 days after they are placed as identified on your excavation notice ticket. This process is coordinated through North Dakota One Call. The Public Service Commission's role is to enforce the requirements of the state's damage prevention laws and take action when violations are reported to the Commission. The PSC can levy a fine up to \$25,000 per violation depending on severity.

Each year North Dakota's underground utility infrastructure is jeopardized by unintentional damage from those who fail to call 8-1-1 to have underground facilities located prior to digging. Since 2009, the PSC has received and processed 364 complaints related to violations of the Call-Before-You-Dig law. In total, approximately \$466,150 in fines have been assessed against companies or individuals who have violated the law. The consequences of striking an underground utility can be severe including explosions resulting in injury or death, service interruptions or damage to the environment.

The significant residential and business growth occurring throughout North Dakota and the increased demand for pipeline infrastructure to support the energy industry have dramatically increased demand for the One-Call Program.

Safe Digging Month is endorsed each April by the North Dakota Public Service Commission, the Common Ground Alliance and the North Dakota One-Call Board. For more information about 8-1-1 and begin your excavation notice, visit the North Dakota One-Call Board's website at [www.ndonecall.com](http://www.ndonecall.com). For safety tips, best practices and other information, visit the Common Ground Alliance website at [www.commongroundalliance.com](http://www.commongroundalliance.com). (A copy of the Governor's Proclamation is included on the next page.)

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or [www.psc.nd.gov](http://www.psc.nd.gov).

### Antler Fire Department Annual Breakfast

Sunday, April 27th  
9:30am-1:30pm

Antler Community Center

Pancakes, French Toast  
Eggs, Sausage  
Coffee & Juice

Free Will Offering  
For Gear & Equipment

Kids, register to win a ride to Westhope or Mohall school on a Fire Truck!

Take out available!

### Spring 2025 Seed Available

Ask about other varieties

Cash Discounts Available!

- HRSW**
- Certified AP Elevate
- Certified AP Murdock
- Certified AP Smith
- AP HY141 Hybrid
- AP HY162 Hybrid
- Certified SY Valda
- Certified LCS Boom
- Certified LCS Buster
- Certified ND-Frohberg
- Registered ND-Thresher
- Certified ND-Heron
- PFS Rolls
- PFS Buns
- Certified WB9590
- Certified WB9606
- Certified WB9719
- Certified TCG-Zelda
- Certified TCG-Badlands

- Barley**
- Certified AAC Synergy
- Certified ABI Cardinal
- Certified Haymaker Forage
- Durum**
- Certified ND-Riveland
- Registered ND-Stanley
- Certified CDC Defy
- Certified TCG Ranger
- Certified AAC Stronghold

- Oats**
- Certified CS Camden
- Certified AAC Douglas
- Common Jerry

- Peas**
- Certified Orchestra - Yellow
- Flax**
- Common CDC Glas
- Faba Bean**
- Certified Fabelle

Corn, Sunflowers, Canola, Cover Crops, and Forage Seed Available

**Birdsall Grain & Seed LLC.**  
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Office: 701.453.3300  
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### Notice of Annual Meeting

**CENEX Farmers Union Oil Co. of Westhope/Souris/Bottineau ND**

Thursday  
**April 24, 2025**

**Gateway Motel Westhope, ND**

**5:00 p.m. Call to Order of Annual Meeting**

By Order of the Board of Directors  
Devin Tolstad, Secretary

**AGENDA:**

- Annual audit report - will be presented by John Martin Hennen & Associates
- Election of directors
- Any other business
- Door prizes
- Dinner will be served

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Public Notice

This notice is hereby given that township and city equalization meetings in Bottineau County will be held at the following locations and times:

2025 Equalization Schedule			
April 16, 2025	Hastings Township	Farden Bank Building	11:00 a.m.
	Lewis Township	Farden Bank Building	11:30 a.m.
April 22, 2025	Brander Township	Farden Bank Building	12:00 p.m.
	City of Maxbass	Farden Bank Building	12:30 p.m.
June 3, 2025	City of Overly	Willow City Community Hall	5:00 p.m.
	Wellington Township	Willow City Community Hall	5:30 p.m.
	Ostby Township	Willow City Community Hall	6:00 p.m.
	Willow Vale Township	Willow City Community Hall	6:30 p.m.
	City of Willow City	Willow City Community Hall	7:00 p.m.
	Unorganized Townships (Cecil, Whitby)	Court House Commissioner's Room	10:00 a.m.

Ashley Pedie, Director of Tax Equalization

For cancellations or rescheduling due to inclement weather, please check Bottineau County's Facebook page. Jurisdictions will be notified by the Tax Director via phone.