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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION

MAY 2020

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MAY 2020

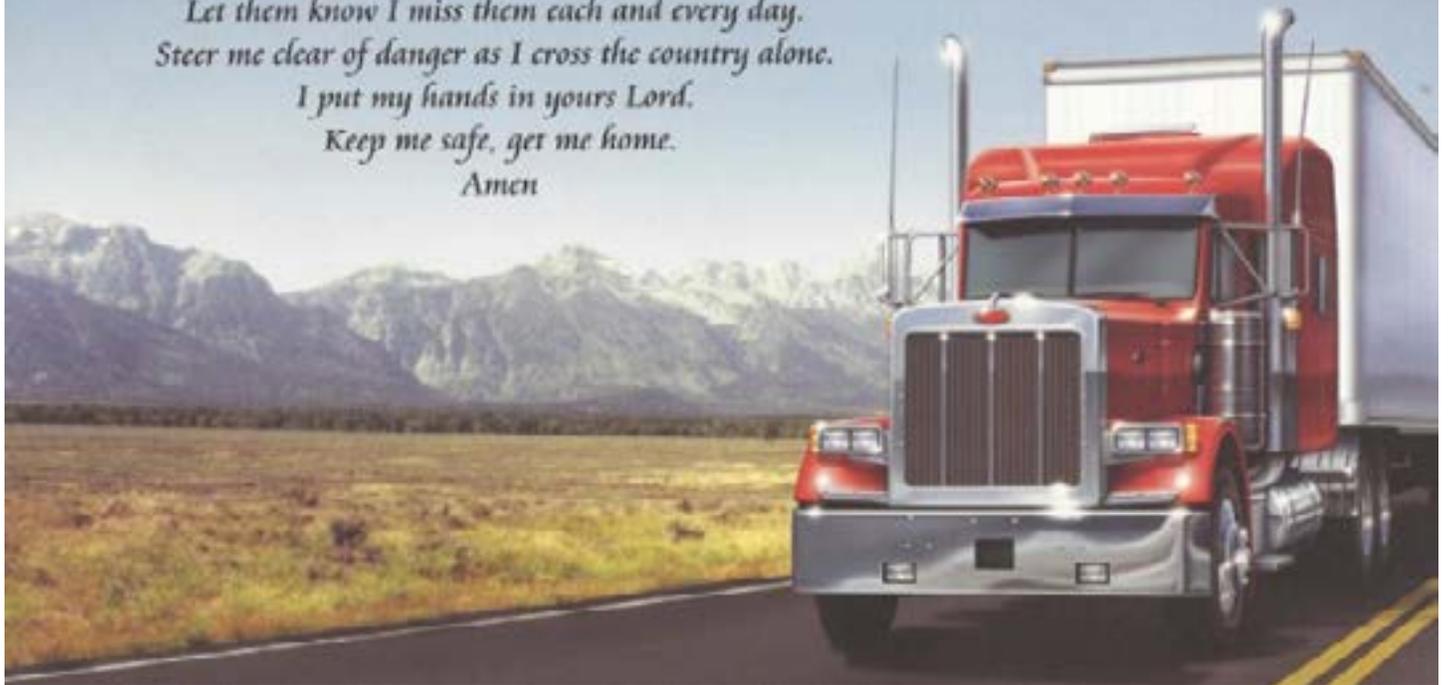
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A Trucker's Prayer

*Lord please help me to be safe as I travel each mile.
Let your presence guide me and bring me a smile.
Take care of my family while I am away.
Let them know I miss them each and every day.
Steer me clear of danger as I cross the country alone.
I put my hands in yours Lord.
Keep me safe, get me home.
Amen*



STAY HOME. STAY

Safe

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Chairman's Message

As I am sitting down to write this month's article, many states are officially beginning to start to try and phase back into some form of normalcy of what our lives once were. I don't know that it will ever or can ever be the same, certainly not until the Coronavirus has been eradicated or a vaccine has been developed. We talk about the new normal.

I can't stop thinking about watching news reporters over the years broadcasting news from heavy populated areas across the world and seeing masks as being something normal in their every day lives. I would not have believed it six months ago, but I believe now! This will continue to become something that you will see more of in our every-day lives as we leave our current sheltered lives and expose ourselves more and more publicly.

The uncertainty of the Coronavirus brings enough questions itself and time will dictate the measures needed to resolve it. Now we begin to start shifting our focus from the Coronavirus to economic recovery.

When I think of economic recovery, I can't help but think of infrastructure. What else does our nation need worse and has the ability to create the number of jobs directly and indirectly as an aggressive infrastructure program. History has a way of repeating itself and we have the ability to learn from it. We can look at the recovery from the great depression and much needed dams were built not only to control flooding but produced hydro plants. We live in a country where our infrastructure should be the envy of the rest of the world. When we think of infrastructure, we have the tendency to only think of highways and bridges. Infrastructure also includes things like transit and passenger rail, modernized waste, drinking water systems, ports, harbors and broadband internet. Stop and not only think of the jobs it would produce to directly achieve the results needed, but the indirect jobs it would produce to support it.

This has been a horrible and tragic experience, but out of this I hope we see positive changes.

Please stay healthy and safe. We just can't let our guard down or be over protective.

Let's keep all our drivers out there in all that uncertainty in our prayers and thoughts. Even all of us who have always had an appreciation for them have found a whole new appreciation and gratitude for them. Let's do our part to keep them safe to return home to their loved ones healthy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Christian". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Robert Christian, Black Hills Log Haulers President & SDTA Chairman

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President's Message



We are learning a great deal as we progress through these current difficult times. One particular thing of note is how proud we should all be to be part of the trucking industry. Throughout these challenging times, trucks have continued to deliver medical supplies, food, cleaning products, fuel, clothing, toys and etc. Together, we have continued to meet the needs of the country while a driver's work ethic creates an unselfish desire to go into harms way to make a difference to peoples lives every day.

It is great to be part of an industry that is keeping this country moving forward. Our drivers currently face many challenges; truck stop restaurants are closed, rest areas have limited access to no access. Like you and I, the drivers also have questions without answers about what is happening and what might happen. Now is a time for everyone in this country to take note as to what the trucking industry does while also realizing what it would be like if trucking would not be stepping up. Hopefully people will not forget!

With the cancellation of many association events, as of this writing, we have not discussed cancellation of the west river poker run nor the west river or east river annual SDTA Golf Fundraisers. Hopefully by that time, some of the crowd size limitations will be eliminated and life will start to get back to what some are calling "the new normal", whatever that is.

In Sioux Falls, we are still under crowd size restrictions, shelter in place and social distancing restrictions. COVID-19 seems to have picked Sioux Falls to be a hotbed. Although your SDTA office is not on the essential business list, I chose to split the staff in order to avoid some of our interactions and make some appropriate in office work hour adjustments and have kept the office open. All of us are working from home when we are not actually in the office. We are all available by telephone both while in the office and while working from home.

Service to the members is what we do. Your SDTA Staff has managed to continue its service to the membership throughout this event. As we continue to progress through these difficult times, please do not hesitate to give us a call with any questions you have. Although we may not have all of the answers, we certainly can and will do the research and get the answer to any question that is posed.

We will get through this together! Be proud to be part of the trucking industry; I know that I am.

Stay safe and stay healthy! Until next month . . .

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Myron L. Rau". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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MAY 2020 DRIVER OF THE MONTH



Kimberly Bone, Habeck Trucking, Inc., Belle Fourche, SD, has been selected as the May 2020 Driver of the Month by the South Dakota Safety Management Council.

Kimberly has been a professional truck driver for 32 years. She has driven for Habeck Trucking, Inc., for the past 6 years. She has logged 725,000 accident-free miles for Habecks and over two million in her career.

Her dispatcher says, “Kim is an excellent driver. She has a very clean driving record and is extremely personable. She is a joy to have in our trucking family.”

She and her husband Owen are the parents of two adult children; Derek (30) and Christopher (29). They reside in Sturgis, SD.

The South Dakota Trucking Association joins the Safety Management Council in congratulating Kimberly Bone for being selected as the May 2020 Driver of the Month.

.....
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ATTENTION

SDTA's Safety Management Council is looking for Driver of the Month nomination forms.

Nomination forms & rules can be found on pages 22 & 23 of this publication.



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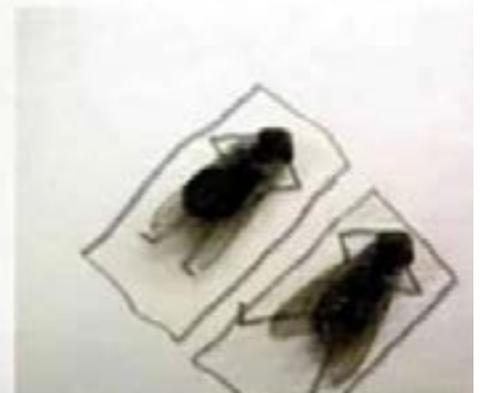
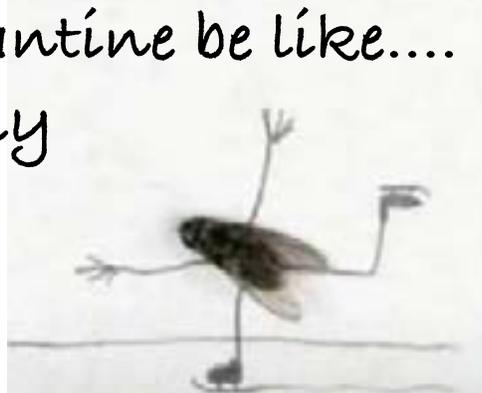
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America's*

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DRIVERS!**

Stay **SAFE**

Day 45 of quarantine be like....
I found a dead fly



**STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-21**

Whereas, An outbreak of the severe respiratory disease, COVID-19, which is caused by the person-to-person spread of the novel coronavirus, started in late 2019 and has currently been detected across the world, including the United States; and,

Whereas, The World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") have declared the COVID-19 outbreak a public health emergency and pandemic; and,

Whereas, The CDC has issued guidance to all state and local governments and all citizens recommending preparedness, nonessential travel, social distancing, and other mitigation strategies impacting many sectors of daily life to prevent the spread and guard against the COVID-19 outbreak; and,

Whereas, South Dakota has confirmed cases of COVID-19, making this a public health emergency posing a danger to public health and safety in all of South Dakota; and,

Whereas, A state of emergency has been declared by Executive Order 2020-04 on March 13, 2020, which has been extended by Executive Order 2020-15, and continues to currently exist within the State of South Dakota until its expiration on May 31, 2020, unless sooner terminated or extended; and,

Whereas, Many county courthouses have reduced operations or closed county offices impeding citizens' ability to comply with certain motor vehicle requirements requiring flexibility, relief from penalties, and causing a backlog when those offices do open; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the statutory requirement for all mobile and manufactured homes to be initially titled within forty-five days of transfer and the penalties and fees for failure to comply with the requirement will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the statutory requirement for an application for certificate of title for a motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, or certain large boats within forty-five days of transfer and the penalties and fees for failure to comply with the requirement will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the statutory requirement for owners of vehicles and boats to renew their registrations during the month assigned to the first initial of their last name and the penalties and fees for failure to comply with the requirement will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the statutory requirement for any person acquiring a motor vehicle to apply for registration within forty-five days of purchase and the penalties and fees for failure to comply with the requirement will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the statutory requirement that a seller's permit provided to a purchaser of a vehicle that allows operation of the vehicle until registered expires forty-five days from the date of purchase and the penalties and fees for failure to comply with the requirement will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state; and,

(Continued on page 10)

Whereas, There are other options available for people to conduct their motor vehicle business, other than in person at a county office, by using a DMV Now Kiosk, going online at mysdcars.sd.gov, or mailing paper forms and fees to their county treasurer's office; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the statutory requirement governing the limit of temporary or probationary status for law enforcement officers will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state; and,

Whereas, Strict compliance with the requirements governing the limit of temporary or probationary status for 911 telecommunicators will prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action to cope with this emergency in all counties of our state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, KRISTI NOEM, Governor of the State of South Dakota, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of this State, including but not limited to SDCL 34-48A-5(4), do hereby order and direct the following:

Section 1 Titling of Mobile and Manufactured Homes. I temporarily suspend the statutory provision of SDCL 32-3-3.1 governing the forty-five-day requirement for initially titling a mobile or manufactured home. Initial titling required pursuant to this statute must be completed within 60 days after the termination of the emergency.

Section 2 Application for Certificate of Title for a Motor Vehicle, Trailer, or Semitrailer. I temporarily suspend the statutory provision of SDCL 32-3-26 governing the forty-five-day requirement for applying for a certificate of title for a motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer. The application required pursuant to this statute must be completed within 60 days after the termination of the emergency.

Section 3 Penalty for Failure to Comply with SDCL 32-3-26. I temporarily suspend the statutory provisions of SDCL 32-3-27 governing the penalty for failure to comply with the provisions of SDCL 32-3-26. The penalty may be imposed for noncompliance after 60 days from the termination of the emergency.

Section 4 Application for Certificate of Title for Large Boats. I temporarily suspend the statutory provisions of SDCL 32-3A-21, 32-3A-23, 32-3A-29, and 32-3A-40 governing the forty-five-day requirement for applying for a certificate of title for a large boat. The application required pursuant to this statute must be completed within 60 days after the termination of the emergency.

Section 5 Penalty for Failure to Comply with SDCL 32-3A-40. I temporarily suspend the statutory provisions of SDCL 32-3A-41 governing the penalty for failure to comply with the provisions of SDCL 32-3A-40. The penalty may be imposed for noncompliance after 60 days from the termination of the emergency.

Section 6 Renewal of Vehicle Registrations During Month Assigned. I temporarily suspend the statutory provisions of SDCL 32-5-2.4 governing the renewal of vehicle registrations during the month assigned to the first initial of the owner's last name for the renewal months of March and May 2020. Renewal required pursuant to this statute must be completed within 60 days after the termination of the emergency.

Section 7 Renewal of Registrations and Validation Decals for Boats. I temporarily suspend the statutory provisions of SDCL 32-3A-13 governing the renewal of registrations and validation decals for boats during the month assigned to the first initial of the owner's last name for the renewal months of March and May 2020. These requirements must be completed within 60 days after the termination of the emergency.

(Continued on page 11)

Section 8 Registration of a Motor Vehicle upon Transfer. I temporarily suspend the statutory provision of SDCL 32-5-2.5 governing the forty-five-day requirement for registering a motor vehicle. Registration required pursuant to this statute must be completed within 60 days after the termination of the emergency.

Section 9 Seller's Permit Provided to a Purchaser of a Vehicle. I temporarily suspend the statutory provision of SDCL 32-5-2.9 governing the forty-five-day period that a seller's permit provided to a purchaser of a vehicle is valid to operate the vehicle prior to registration. The seller's permit shall only be valid within 60 days following the termination of the emergency.

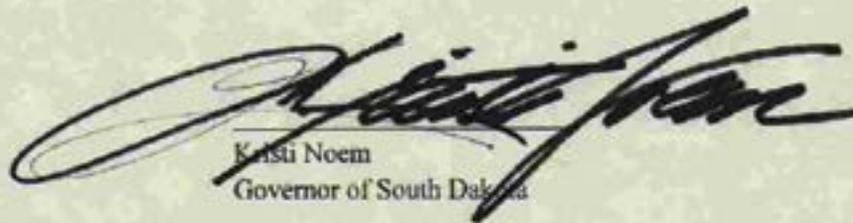
Section 10 Alternative Operation. I encourage South Dakotans to use alternative methods for conducting their motor vehicle business other than in-person at a county office, by using a DMV Now Kiosk, going online at mysdcars.sd.gov, or mailing paper forms and fees to their county treasurer's office.

Section 11 Probationary Period for Officers. I temporarily suspend the statutory requirement of SDCL 23-3-41 requiring temporary or probationary law enforcement officers to complete the Law Enforcement Academy course within one year of appointment for 180 days following termination of the COVID-19 State of Emergency. The department employing any such law enforcement officer must submit a request to extend the probationary time period to the training administrator.

Section 12 Probationary Period for Telecommunicators. I temporarily suspend the statutory requirement of SDCL 34-45-24 and the regulatory requirement of ARSD 02:05:02:02 requiring temporary or probationary 911 telecommunicators to complete the 911 Academy course within one year of appointment for 180 days following termination of the COVID-19 State of Emergency. The department employing any such telecommunicator must submit a request to extend the probationary time period to the training administrator.

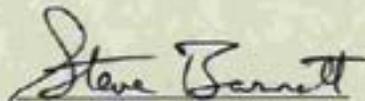
BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, This Executive Order shall be in effect immediately and shall continue for the duration of the state of emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-04 and extended by subsequent Executive Order 2020-15, unless sooner terminated or extended.

Dated in Pierre, South Dakota this 30th day of April, 2020.



Kristi Noem
Governor of South Dakota

ATTEST:



Steve Barnett
Secretary of State





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Crash Preventability Demonstration Program

SUMMARY: On July 27, 2017, FMCSA announced a demonstration program to evaluate the preventability of eight categories of crashes through submissions of Requests for Data Review to its national data correction system known as DataQs. On August 5, 2019, based on experiences with the demonstration program, FMCSA proposed a Crash Preventability Determination Program with a streamlined process. FMCSA proposed to modify the Safety Measurement System to exclude crashes with not preventable determinations from the prioritization algorithm and proposed noting the not preventable determinations in the Pre-Employment Screening Program. This notice responds to comments received on the proposal and announces the start of the Agency's new Crash Preventability Determination Program.

IMPLEMENTATION

Preventability Standard

The standard for making a preventability determination is provided in 49 CFR part 385, Appendix B, section II.B(e): "If a driver, who exercises normal judgment and foresight could have foreseen the possibility of the accident that in fact occurred, and avoided it by taking steps within his/her control which would not have risked causing another kind of mishap, the accident was preventable." This continues to be the standard used by the Agency for all preventability reviews. The burden continues to be on the submitter to show by compelling evidence that the crash was not preventable.

Crash Types

FMCSA is implementing all crash types proposed in the August 2019 notice and adding a "Rare or unusual crash" type. However, to help submitters find the correct eligible crash type, FMCSA rearranged the order of crashes to group like crash events together. As a result, the final list of eligible crash types is:

Struck in the Rear type of crash when the CMV was struck:

- In the rear; or
- on the side at the rear.

Wrong Direction or Illegal Turns type of crash when the CMV was struck:

- By a motorist driving in the wrong direction; or
- by another motorist in a crash when a driver was operating in the wrong direction; or
- by a vehicle that was making a U-turn or illegal turn.

Parked or Legally Stopped type of crash when the CMV was struck:

- While legally stopped at a traffic control device (e.g., stop sign, red light or yield); or while parked, including while the vehicle was unattended.

Failure of the other vehicle to Stop type of crash when the CMV was struck:

- By a vehicle that did not stop or slow in traffic; or
- by a vehicle that failed to stop at a traffic control device.

Under the Influence type of crash when the CMV was struck:

- By an individual under the influence (or related violation, such as operating while intoxicated), according to the legal standard of the jurisdiction where the crash occurred; where the individual was charged or arrested, failed a field sobriety or other test, or refused to test; or
- by another motorist in a crash where an individual was under the influence (or related violation such as operating while intoxicated), according to the legal standard of the jurisdiction where the crash occurred where the individual was charged or arrested, failed a field sobriety test or other tests, or refused to test.

Medical Issues, Falling Asleep or Distracted Driving type of crash when the CMV was struck:

- By a driver who experienced a medical issue which contributed to the crash; or
- by a driver who admitted falling asleep or admitted distracted driving (e.g., cellphone, GPS, passengers, other).

(Continued on page 17)

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Region's Truck Drivers Steer Through Coronavirus Challenges

But as the severity of the virus outbreak intensified in early March, truckers were faced with growing challenges in their search for food, and even just a little human contact, while out on the road.

Written By: Sam Fosness | May 9th 2020 - 10 am.



Ernie Holmes, a Canadian truck driver, continues persevering through the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 virus. (Matt Gade / Republic)

MITCHELL, S.D. -- After trucking across 700 miles of desolate interstates, Ernie Holmes had never been so thrilled at the sight of an open restaurant when he pulled into Mitchell on Wednesday.

While satisfying his hunger made up a small fraction of the Canadian truck driver's excitement to see a traditional restaurant open amid the COVID-19 pandemic, it was the thought of a server greeting him, taking his order and engaging in small talk that filled him with the most joy. Having gone the past two months without being able to enter a traditional restaurant filled with friendly faces awaiting to serve him a hot and fresh meal, walking through the doors of Marlin's Family Restaurant was Holmes' first taste of normalcy since the novel coronavirus virus prompted restaurants across the nation to shut-

down.

"This is the first restaurant that I've been able to get a table inside and eat at since everything began closing down," Holmes said from the driver seat of his semitrailer. "Being able to go in and sit down and relax with people around you is really one of the biggest things I miss. It's always fun meeting new people on the road."

Trucking across regions of the country for up to 10 hours at a time without making a stop, while maintaining focus on the road ahead, the experience of dining inside a traditional restaurant provides more than just a meal for many truckers. For Holmes, enjoying a meal in a restaurant fills the void of interacting with others after being alone in the driver's seat for hours on end.

But as the severity of the virus outbreak intensified in early March, prompting many states to close diners, restaurants and fast-food chains, truckers were faced with growing challenges in their search for food options while on the road. Deemed an "essential worker," per the federal government's classification, Holmes is one of many truck drivers who has been tasked with continuing his vital job role amid the statewide shutdowns and lockdowns, regardless of whether he has a place to eat, rest or shower.

"This isn't an easy job, and I see it as a lifestyle more than it is a job," Holmes said. "You have to roll with the punches."

As he crosses upward of 10 states during a given trek, each state has its own set of restrictions for COVID-19, ranging from strict lockdowns to widespread business closures, making Holmes' and many fellow truckers' jobs more difficult. South Dakota was one of the eight states in the country that steered clear from enforcing a lockdown that typically entails residents being told to "stay-in-place," which ultimately leads to more business closures and red tape.

For Montana-based truck driver Myron Aeschbacher, pulling into the I-90 Truck Stop on Wednesday afternoon provided a breath of fresh air and much needed hygiene, as it housed one of the first full-service restaurants with no restrictions, along with a shower room awaiting him, something Aeschbacher had to go without nearly the past two months when he's on the road.

"Some of the states I travel through in the South are starting to slowly open things back up, but there are so many restrictions for eating in a restaurant that it makes it hard to get a table," Aeschbacher said. "I've seen some places allow only 25 to 30 people in the same restaurant at once with a waiting line."

Considering some states have gone as far as closing truck stops that house the only shower rooms many truck drivers rely on for hygiene while they are completing a near 1,000 mile route, the challenges keep piling up for transportation workers "Sometimes, you have to rough it for as long as you can until you can make it back home," Aeschbacher said, noting some hotels are also closed in some states. "I hope things start to turn the corner sooner than later. I haven't seen anything like this in my lifetime."

(Continued on page 25)



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SDTA DRIVER OF THE MONTH RULES

Each month the SDTA Safety Management Council reviews the nominations and votes to select the next months winner. At the Annual Convention the past 12 monthly winners interview to be named the S.D. Driver of the Year.



Driver may be nominated for Driver of the Month for any outstanding act of heroism, a contribution to highway safety, an extraordinary act of courtesy, an exceptional deed or act of service to mankind within the community reflecting positively on the motor carrier industry, or for a long period of safe and courteous driving. An outstanding act shall be deemed to mean unusual or other than the normal every day courtesies afforded by truck drivers.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. The nominated driver must be an employee of a member in good standing of the South Dakota Trucking Association.
2. The nominated driver must have been employed by the present employer for at least two years and have a minimum of five years overall experience.
3. South Dakota domiciled* drivers are eligible for nomination for an outstanding act performed in any state.
* The intent of the word "domiciled" shall be interpreted to mean: Any driver reporting to or regularly dispatched from a terminal within the State of South Dakota (in keeping with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations definition of his home terminal) regardless of where the driver may dwell.
4. A driver may receive the Driver of the Month award only one time in any contest year. He/she may be renominated in any subsequent year.
5. Nominations for outstanding acts on the highway shall be accompanied by supporting evidence (letters, statements, news clipping, etc.). A clear, factual account is absolutely necessary. Vague generalizations will not be accepted.
6. A copy of recent driver motor vehicle record check must accompany the nomination.
7. Drivers nominated and not selected as Driver of the Month will be held over and used in the following month's selection. Nominees not selected in either of these two months may be re-nominated for any future month's selection.
8. Entries must be in the office of the South Dakota Trucking Association no later than the 10th of each month for that current month's contest.
9. Nominations may be made by any party, but must be approved by the employer or a representative of the employer.
10. The annual contest will run from September of the previous year through August of the current year.
11. Company agrees to submit a professional, head and shoulders, black and white photo of entry upon notification of winning. (3" X 5" preferred)

**Take The Time
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DRIVER OF THE MONTH NOMINATION FORM



PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

Date _____ Jacket Size _____

Name of Driver _____ Age _____

Marital Status _____ Spouse Name _____

Residence Address (in full) _____

Children & Ages _____

Name of Carrier _____

Home Terminal Address (in full) _____

Phone Number _____

Years Employed by Present Employer _____ Total Years Experience _____

Type of Equipment Operated Truck Tractor-Semitrailer Doubles Other _____

Type of Driving Over the Road City Other _____

Total Mileage _____ Mileage with Present Employer _____

Total Number of Accidents: Chargeable: _____ Dates _____

Non-Chargeable: _____ Dates _____

Has your driver ever been selected as a driver of the month or year in South Dakota or any other state? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, explain when and where _____

Participation in truck driving championships or other transportation related activities:

Basis of Nomination: _____

★ With this entry, company agrees to send their driver, if selected as Driver of the Month, to the South Dakota Trucking Association Annual Convention where driver will participate in a PERSONAL INTERVIEW. Selection of Driver of the Year will be made following ALL personal interviews. Drivers not being interviewed will not be eligible for Driver of the Year honors. Interview times will be scheduled Friday afternoon during the convention.

★ With this entry, company agrees to submit Driver of the Year Entry Form for National Competition if your driver is selected as South Dakota's Driver of the Year.

Nominated by _____ **Title** _____

Please attach supporting information and send to the South Dakota Trucking Association. Attach extra sheet if more space is needed.

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Region's Truck Drivers Steer Through Coronavirus Challenges Continued...

Breakdowns?

What happens when a semi breaks down in a state under extreme restrictions and lockdowns measures? That's a question Aeschbacher hopes to never find the answer to, as he's witnessed some semi-repair shops have been closed due to the virus.

However, South Dakota is one state truck drivers won't have to worry about there being a lack of semi mechanics available, as a local diesel mechanic shop, A&G, has been open throughout the virus outbreak. Just 15 miles south of Mitchell sits Wolf Auto and Truck Repair in Parkston, a shop equipped with semi mechanics.

Comparatively, Aeschbacher said he's put on a little extra miles over the past two months than what he usually does in previous years, putting more strain on his truck. With the volatility of the livestock industry that's intensified amid the pandemic, Aeschbacher's commodity feed he transports primarily to dairy and cattle farmers is a vital product for the U.S. food supply chain.

Tony Wolf, owner of Wolf's Auto and Truck Repair, has experienced an uptick in semi repair work over the past several months. As truckers continue transporting vital products, goods and materials around the area, Wolf's repair shop continues to have plenty of work on its hands.

"Our truck business has been doing really good lately, because the freights always have to be hauled," Wolf said. "Whether it's hauling pigs or cows, people have to eat. A lot of miles are put on trucks, and that hasn't changed with all this going on."

Changes eliminate interaction

What were once bustling interstates and highways, packed with cars and motorcycles, are now bare stretches of roads. Holmes can recall the busy traffic flow on American and Canadian interstates before the pandemic. But all that changed, seemingly overnight, when the virus swept across North America in early March. While the reduction in traffic makes for quicker trips for truckers, Holmes said it's an eerie sight.

"The little traffic is technically good for us in terms of the less time our travels take, but you feel like you're in a Stephen King movie after a while," Holmes said of the bare roads. "Everything just suddenly changed at the flip of a switch. I never thought I'd say I miss some of the traffic."

The final step in the long transportation process also has looked a lot different of late. The delivery exchange of products and goods Holmes transports to American and Canadian businesses used to entail greeting one another, followed by a substantial amount of paperwork for both parties.

The amount of paperwork that typically comes with a delivery is at times daunting. As a result of the virus, however, many companies receiving their goods have been easing the paperwork in an effort to reduce hand-to-hand contact as much as possible. It's one change the novel coronavirus has caused that has provided some benefits for Holmes.

"I haven't even been inside a location that I deliver to for two months. A lot of the paperwork is done digitally now, so that shaves quite a bit of time off," Holmes said. "It all works out, but it is just more tedious than the traditional paperwork style of forms and orders that we exchange."

But on the other hand, the elimination of paperwork and hand-to-hand contact is another loss of interaction with people along the journey on the roads.

To suffice for the dwindling interactions he and many fellow truckers now face, Holmes has turned to satellite radio, listening to world news outlets like BBC. But with the novel coronavirus dominating news cycles across the globe, Holmes said he's had to limit his listening time as it stokes unwanted fear.

"We are already spending many hours of the day trucking by ourselves, so talk about social isolation,

(Continued on page 27)



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Region's Truck Drivers Steer Through Coronavirus Challenges Continued...

huh?" a joking Holmes said from the front seat of his truck. "A lot of times we will get out and talk to share some stories, but that isn't happening now either."

Drive-thru struggles

When the city of Mitchell's shutdown ordinance went into effect April 3, specific types of businesses such as restaurants and bars were forced to either close or implement alternative operations like take-out and delivery service. Although the Mitchell City Council approved the shutdown ordinance in an effort to reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus, it made life much more difficult for truckers looking to eat a hot meal in a short period of time.

Throughout the 25-day shutdown, the 1521 S. Burr St. McDonald's was one fast food restaurant that recognized the unique circumstance facing truckers amid the closure.

According to Jeff Prickett, manager of McDonald's in southeast Mitchell, the lobby area where customers place their orders before finding a seat in the dining area was open to truckers and transportation workers, allowing them to enjoy a meal before they hit the road again.

"We had it arranged inside so they could come in and get their food, while keeping enough distance," Prickett said.

Between the struggles of maneuvering an 8-by-13 foot semi truck in a tightly spaced drive-thru and restaurant chains having to follow safety protocols, drive-thru service isn't an option for truckers.

That's why McDonald's decision to offer the carryout option has been so vital for truckers, but it took some disgruntled transportation workers sharing their stories of being denied food in the drive-thru for McDonald's to implement the new service. After reports and videos that showed truckers parking their semis to walk up to the drive-thru and place their orders on foot only to be denied, McDonald's responded by offering a takeout option and curbside pickup service known as McDelivery in late March.

"We can't allow people to walk and order through the drive-thru because of the safety issues it would cause, so it's nice to be able to open part of the lobby up for the truckers to get carry out," Prickett said, noting the local McDonald's location he oversees also opened up its restrooms for truckers.

As more light was being shed on the unique challenges that truckers were coming up against in the midst of the virus, acts of kindness were being offered in many parts of the country. For example, people in vehicles that were able to utilize the drive-through.

"Those stories of people doing those nice things are great, but I've only run into one person in Kansas who helped me get something to eat when I didn't have any options," Aeschbacher said.

Fuel prices drop

While the virus outbreak has caused some unusual affairs for truckers the past two months, the cost of diesel fuel drastically dropping to around \$2.17 is a first for Aeschbacher. In his 30 years of trucking, Aeschbacher has never witnessed diesel fuel dip that low.

Although lower fuel costs are typically celebrated as a gift for drivers filling up at the pumps, Aeschbacher said it's led some companies receiving the goods that he delivers to negotiate reducing transportation costs.

"We've had some places try to drop the rates on us," Aeschbacher said. "Just because fuel is going down so much, they think we can start hauling things for less. But that's not how this works."

Reprinted from the Grand Forks Herald



Myron Aeschbacher, a Montana-based truck driver, stands outside of his semi truck Wednesday afternoon at the I-90 Truck Stop in Mitchell. Aeschbacher has been overcoming the challenges he's come up against amid the COVID-19 virus. (Matt Gade / Republic)

What's Happening

- ~~Spring/Summer Board of Directors Meeting and the Cliff Tjaden Fishing Event at the AmericInn, Chamberlain. The Executive Committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. on May 7, 2020 followed by a full board meeting starting at 1:00 p.m. on the same day. The fishing Calcutta will be held after a social and hosted dinner. The Cliff Tjaden Fishing Event is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on May 8, 2020. **CANCELLED**~~
- ~~South Dakota Truck Driving Championships, Southeast Technical Institute, Sioux Falls, SD starting at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 16, 2020. **CANCELLED**~~
- ~~Wheel Jam, State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD - June 4 through June 7, 2020. **CANCELLED**~~
- 14th Annual West River Poker Run - 10:00 a.m. Saturday, June 27, 2020 starting in Rapid City.
- West River SDTA and Logging Industry Golf Event - 9:00 a.m. shotgun start on Sunday, June 28, 2020 at Tomahawk Golf Course south of Deadwood.
- East River Golf Event - 9:00 a.m. shotgun start on Thursday, July 23, 2020 at the Brandon Golf Course.
- ~~National Truck Driving Championships - Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, IN on August 19 through 23, 2020. **CANCELLED**~~
- Annual Convention - Deadwood Mountain Grand, Deadwood on September 9 - 11, 2020.
- West River Legislative Reception - Minerva's in Rapid City - Monday, November 9, 2020, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. (west river time).
- Annual guided pheasant hunt is on Thursday, November 12, 2020 - leave the hotel in Pierre at 9:00 a.m.
- SDTA Fall Board of Directors Meeting - Executive Committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. with the full board to convene at 10:00 a.m. all at RedRossa, Pierre, SD on Friday, November 13, 2020.
- East River Legislative Reception (NextGen Group meeting at 4:30) - Minerva's in Sioux Falls - Thursday, December 10, 2020, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. (east river time).
- Winter Executive Committee Meeting - 10:00 a.m. on Monday, February 8, 2021 at the Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, Pierre. Followed by the Winter Board of Directors Meeting at 12:30 p.m. The Winter Reception with Legislators will follow at 6:00 p.m. All events of the day are scheduled at the Ramkota River Centre in Pierre.



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1990
1988

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