

Tech leaps out of 'Stone Age'

By John Miller

Staff writer

The Goshen County Sheriff's Office continued an overhaul of its communication system this week by installing new facilities at the county's four emergency communication towers, replacing the archaic structures built 30 to 40 years ago.

The newly configured towers will eventually be used jointly to activate the emergency sirens located

throughout Goshen County.

Sheriff's Captain Bryan Morehouse oversaw the placement of all four buildings and has been the driving force behind the upgrade and personally applied for the state grant to fund the project and serving as the project's manager.

"I've never done anything like this before," Morehouse said. "It's great to see everything go so smoothly."

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testing tak-
ing place.
"Why doesn't that con-
sent dictate the outcome?"
she said.

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Morehouse prepared the county's grant request for the project in April, securing \$256,000 from the State Loan and Investment Board (SLIB) and \$20,000 from the Goshen County commissioners. He was named project manager after completing the grant application. In addition to the new tower facilities, he also attained new communication pag-

ers for every province in the county while staying within \$117 of his \$276,000 budget.

"This is going without a glitch," Moorehouse said. "You couldn't ask for a better day to do this."

Weather could have been a huge factor as the tower locations are very remote, placed on hills whose only access are via dirt roads recently carved into the hillsides with a bulldozer. A crane and a

50-foot flatbed carrying the pre-built buildings were required to traverse the narrow paths to the top of the hills and set the new structures in place. Three were completed in one day, while the west location between Lingle and Fort Laramie was finished the next day.

The new buildings, which are roughly 10 times the size of the tiny tin shacks they are replacing, feature state-of-the-

art equipment and facilities that immediately raise the system to present-day standards. All of the towers have ample maintenance storage space and are climate-controlled to protect the sensitive computer hardware inside.

The upgrade will improve both the clarity and overall coverage of the county's communications.

"We went from the Stone Age to the 21st cen-

tury in one day," Morehouse said of the project.

The towers can activate the emergency sirens either individually or as a group. Preliminary plans have the sirens emitting different sounds to signify different emergencies, such as tornadoes, hazardous materials and flash flooding. Specifics will be released when the system is ready to be implemented.