



Submitted photo

An oil spill alongside N.D. Highway 23 Feb. 8 was cleaned up following a fatal collision. The highway was shut down for seven hours while first responders dealt with the wreckage and the spill.

of February meeting with oil and gas executives, CEOs and presidents to see how North Dakota and the Bakken fit in their future plans.

“There were no signs of slowing down production in North Dakota,” Ness said. “What I saw and heard was at least 14-17 years of drilling activity and an immediate focus on solving the issue of affordable housing.”

With that said, Ness acknowledged the cold weather and how that plays into reaching the million barrel milestone.

“In simple North Dakota terms, it’s been a brutal winter,” Ness said. “High winds, sub zero temperatures just slow everything down from

drilling to electrical.”

Ness continued saying when the ground freezes pipes aren’t laid, reclamation is more difficult and fluids become difficult and expensive to manage. In the frozen abyss of wind, ice and oil Ness sees a shining ray of light: the light of human lives.

“Yes, it is a fact that we didn’t reach the million barrel milestone yet – but we will,” Ness said. “The one piece of good news that came out of this cold miserable winter was it was one of the safest winters on record. Not too many accidents in the Bakken this year and that’s worth more than a million.” ■



Associated Press

Winter was just as hard for those in the agriculture industry as those in the oil and gas industry. Steven Zenker breaks up ice in a water tank used for cows on his ranch near Carson, N.D., Dec. 4, 2013, as an arctic blast swept across the Northern Plains.