

Jason Blanchard  
Black Hills Information Security  
115 W E Hudson St  
Spearfish, SD 57783  
407-310-1409

**Penetration Testers Host a One-Day Awareness Event in Adel, Iowa**  
*Ethical Hackers Bring People Together to Discuss the Profession of Security Testing*

Black Hills Information Security (BHIS), is hosting a one-day information security conference, called **Awareness Con** ([www.awarenesscon.com](http://www.awarenesscon.com)). The event will take place in Adel, Iowa on November 20th, in the Adel Public Library. The purpose of this event is to bring awareness to the profession of penetration testing (ethical hacking) and the benefits it provides to physical and computer security programs. Penetration Testers are hired by companies that want to test their security postures to ensure that safeguards put in place are actually effective against criminal attack.

Recently, two penetration testers from a security company (Coalfire) hired by the State to test the security of the Dallas County Courthouse, in Adel, were arrested and had originally been charged with third-degree burglary and possession of burglars' tools. But, the burglary charge was later downgraded to trespassing and they are pending a trial in April 2020.

<https://whotv.com/2019/11/06/2020-trial-set-for-security-contractors-charged-in-dallas-county-courthouse-break-in/>

"We are hosting this one-day conference because penetration testers provide a vital and integral part of security programs. Essentially, how do you know something is secure unless you test it." said, John Strand, owner of Black Hills Information Security. "We're hoping to help explain what penetration testing is, how rules of engagement are discussed ahead of time and adhered to, and find a way to make sure something like the arrest of people doing what they were hired to do, doesn't happen again."

"Organizations such as Coalfire are doing good work, in an ethical manner, and are crucial for finding holes in otherwise assumed secure physical security. By criminally charging the employees in the Dallas County incident, it has the potential for a chilling effect of dissuading security researchers from doing business in/with the State of Iowa," said Tom Pohl, Head of Software Architecture for Businessolver. "I'm glad this event is happening in Adel and hope it helps increase awareness of the importance of penetration testing and can clear up possible misconceptions." Numerous members of the information security industry in Iowa are planning to be in attendance.

The one-day conference at the Adel Public Library, 9am - 4pm, will consist of speakers from penetration testing companies, information security professionals from Iowa, and a time for questions and answers with audience members. This event will stream live online for people unable to attend in person, to watch through GoToWebinar, <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2471735527340369677>.

**About Awareness Con:** Awareness Con is a one-day information security conference taking place at the Adel Public Library on November 20th, 2019. The purpose of this inaugural conference is to raise awareness about the benefits of penetration testing for physical and computer security programs. The event is hosted by John Strand, owner of Black Hills Information Security, a company that specializes in penetration testing and ethical hacking. Awareness Con will have prominent speakers from the information security industry speak in-person and remotely.

**About Black Hills Information Security (BHIS):** Founded in 2008 by John Strand, BHIS specializes in penetration testing, red teaming, threat hunting, and incident response. The penetration testers at BHIS regularly share their knowledge to the information security industry through presentations, webcasts, open-source tools, training, and free resources like a card game that teaches incident response, called Backdoors & Breaches. BHIS employs 25 full-time penetration testers and performs tests on Fortune 500, credit unions, insurance companies, and numerous health care and software companies.