



SUCCESS STORY

GROWTH MEANS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT: ST. JOHN, INDIANA

COMPANY PROFILE

Six years ago St. John, Indiana was a small town poised for rapid growth. Located in Indiana very close to the border of Illinois, St. John is part of the urban expansion of the Chicago area and is now the second highest percent growth community in the state.

Bob Parazym, the newly hired Director of Public Works for the Town of St. John Municipal Water and Sewer Utility, had inherited an aging water meter system of mostly thirty-year old positive displacement meters, with only very few meters five-years old or newer. Moreover, the water supply's high mineral content caused contaminant buildup which reduced accuracy and shortened the useful life of the city's meters.

BUSINESS SITUATION

Confronted with rapid growth and high unaccounted-for-water loss, Bob realized that something had to be done. Financial justification for a meter system replacement program was likely, so Bob went to work. He thoroughly reviewed the system's working condition and sought after an advanced AMR technology so the City could make a major move for its future.

TECHNICAL SITUATION

Financial analysis performed by Master Meter showed an optimal payback by replacing meters six years or older with new units featuring and integral AMR solution, and then simply retrofitting the utility's newer meters with good usable life with AMR technology. Installation was outsourced to expedite the process. The community's response was overwhelming with seventy percent of the calls to the utility unexpectedly requesting immediate installations.

SOLUTION

After a successful presentation to the St. John Utility Board to pursue and implement a "full blown new AMR water metering system", Bob began working with his local meter system distributor, Underground Pipe and Valve, to help find a system that fit the utility's needs. They made a trip to AWWA's annual conference to see the newest technologies, all of which used external transmitters with wired connections.

Bob ultimately decided on Master Meter's BLMJ water meters with integral 3G AMR.

Master Meter broke away from other AMR products and introduced its own ConnectionFree™ 3G® technology that eliminated the problems commonly associated with traditional wired designs. Master Meter's solution completely integrates all of the AMR technology inside the register. Immediately, the Town of St. John Municipal Water & Sewer District adopted 3G technology for all new installations and replacements of any failed wired units.

Installation is as simple as 'plug-n-play.'

BENEFITS

- This project nets an operational cost savings in addition to generating greater revenues from the replacement of inaccurate 30 year old meters.
- What had been four meter readers working full time to get the reads was reduced to just one reader in a single day.
- Master Meter's self-activating 3G technology greatly reduced installation time and cost.
- Standard leak detection, backflow and tamper detection



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alarms within 3G have helped identify and improve water conservation efforts by reducing system water loss.

- Installation was fast and accurate with greatly reduced opportunity for human error.
- As the community grew so did the use of 3G® technology, and the reduction of meter reading time. What was once a small town, the community has nearly doubled with now over 4,000 meter connections.

PRODUCTS USED

1. DIALOG 3G® Integral AMR Register System
2. Master Meter BMLJ - Bottom Load Multi-jet Residential Water Meters
3. MasterLinx Mobile and MasterLinx Enterprise Management Software

PROJECT DURATION

16 weeks

COMMENTS

Bob concludes, "Our future plans include the migration with Master Meter to fixed networking when it financially and operationally makes sense for St. John."

Two of St. John's major accomplishments are their water distribution system and the 3G Mobile™ AMR Drive-by program.