

AMR Case Study: Town of Ipswich Utilities Department



The picturesque Town of Ipswich is a Dual Water and Electric Utility serving over 6,600 customers - total of 11,349 meters. The Town is located 31 miles North East of Boston, MA and has a population of approx 13,500.

Challenge:

For many years the Town of Ipswich had read their Water and Electric Meters manually. This manual process was extremely time-intensive and meant that the Town had to implement and run 5 different billing runs to ensure accurate bills were generated and sent out every month.

The Town was very aware of the rapidly improving 'Automatic Meter Reading Solutions' available to them and in 1998 a decision was made to explore and move towards automated data collection.

Requirements:

Being a dual utility, one of the most important things for the town was to find a solution that was capable of reading both water and electric meters at the same time, so as to avoid having to drive the route twice.

Below are some of the additional benefits that the town were looking forward to receiving once the step towards automation had been made:

- Reading all water and electric meters in two day instead of 4 weeks
- Improving Customer Service by having one bill which includes Water & Electric usage
- Being able to bill all of the towns customers with only one bill run
- Improving meter reader safety
- Reducing overall operating costs

Solution:

After a review of available technologies the Town decided to move forward with a RF based Solution and installed a 100 point trial of 900 Series Water Transponders at the Ipswich Country Club.

The trial used a Handheld Receiver and Radix Handheld Computer. David has subsequently upgraded to a full drive-by reading system - the BLU:TOWER FastTrackIT GPS System that shows both meter and vehicle positions on laptop screen

Outcome:

The Town has now installed Transponders on a large number of their Water, Centron and Electromechanical meters. They have successfully improved their Customer Service, Meter Reader Safety and reduced their Operating Costs. The Town's Meter Technician David Levesque is now able to read all of the Towns Water and Electric Meters Single Handedly in two days - this leaves him free to carry out maintenance of the system for the remainder of the month.

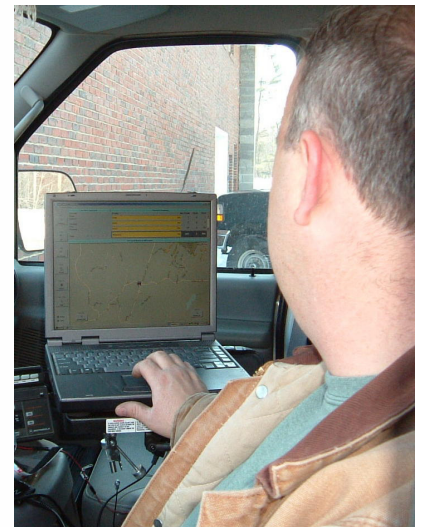
When asked to summarize the BLU:TOWER 900 Series Water and Electric AMR System David Levesque said:

"This system has definitely made my life easier. I do not think it could get any simpler".

"Programming the radios is very easy to do, everything is on one screen. I can program a Water Transponder in under 6 seconds and an Electric Transponder in under 30 seconds".

"Upgrading to the BLU:TOWER FastTrackIT GPS drive-by reading system was great. It is very easy to use and I find the moving map display very useful when driving the route. I can see which meters have been read so that I don't have to drive each street - this makes driving the route much quicker".

David and the Town of Ipswich are looking forward to the release of the BLU:TOWER Solution for 3-Phase Electric Meters.



Automatic Meter Reading Solutions made Easy