



USG WATER
SOLUTIONS



Bringing Greensboro, MD into the future with our Smart metering system



Project Summary

Customer:

Town of Greensboro, MD

Type of Project:

Metering Asset Management Program including installation of a new Aclara® AMI System with Neptune E-Coder® water meters

Results:

- Increased meter reading efficiency (100% reading)
- Increased revenue generated by more accurate readings and more efficient process
- Improved cash flow
- Improved customer service
- Increased availability of Utility staff resources for other activities

The Town of Greensboro is located on the northern banks of the Choptank River in Caroline County, Maryland. With its quaint downtown retail area and broad spectrum of recreational activities, this small community of 1,900 people is the perfect place to spend a relaxing weekend or a lifetime. Greensboro's potable water is provided by three wells that pump water from the Pine Point underground aquifer. Water is then treated and sent to the distribution system.

Like other small communities, Greensboro was facing a challenge to financially support maintenance projects and invest in new ones. One of the major projects being considered was the replacement of an aging 15-year-old touch-read metering system. On average, it took four days to manually read and collect the information in the town. However, due to the heavy workload on the town resources, meter reading could only be done on a quarterly basis. In addition to the time it took to read the meters, the city also knew it was collecting readings from old meters with decreasing accuracy.

Realizing that it needed to increase the efficiency of its metering infrastructure, Greensboro's water system contacted its long-time service partner, USG Water Solutions (USG). For more than a decade, USG has successfully maintained the town's tank assets under an asset management program, providing excellent customer service and building a high level of trust. After carefully reviewing the town's requirements, USG recommended the installation of a new Advanced Metering System (AMI) and new water meters. USG installed the new metering infrastructure without putting any burden on the Utility staff and handles all maintenance so the Utility can focus on its core competency.

Solution. USG installed a new Aclara AMI network with over 800 Neptune e-coder® smart meters and now provides on-going maintenance over the life of the system as part of its Metering Asset Management Program (AMP™).

“The new AMI system and new meters and the fact that USG is in charge of all future maintenance has freed up my team to perform other critical tasks. The labor efficiencies and added revenue generated by more accurate meter readings will provide a quick payback on our investment.”

— David Kibler, Utility Director, Town of Greensboro



Capturing more revenue

Instead of replacing a few meters every year, the USG metering maintenance program enabled the Utility to replace all the meters at once by spreading the cost over several years.

Since their installation, the new and more accurate meters have allowed the Utility to capture more revenue. In addition, the new automated system has reduced significantly the time dedicated to reading, processing and billing, which allows Utility staff to perform other important tasks. Moving from a quarterly billing to a monthly billing has also greatly improved the Utility cash flow.

With this innovative metering program - which spreads the initial AMI infrastructure costs over time and guarantees timely, preventative maintenance of all equipment for the duration of the contract, USG is bringing AMI networks to small utilities that couldn't afford them until now.

Improved customer service

The new AMI system collects hourly data on any customer's usage, which helps the Utility be more proactive. In the case of an abnormal reading signaling a potential leak, the Utility operators are alerted immediately so they can take appropriate action. Thanks to the accurate data collected continuously and available online, the Utility can also respond more diligently and efficiently to any customer inquiry or complaint. For example, the analysis of a customer utility bill over time helps identify recurrent patterns and allows the Utility to understand if and when a true discrepancy occurred, thus reducing billing disputes.



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