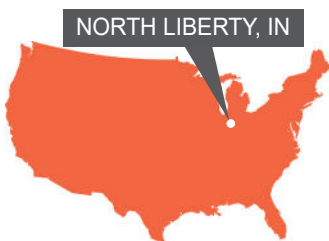




USG WATER  
— SOLUTIONS —



## Providing peace of mind to a small single tank community in North Liberty, Indiana



NORTH LIBERTY, IN

### Project Summary

#### Customer:

North Liberty Water Works  
Town of North Liberty, IN

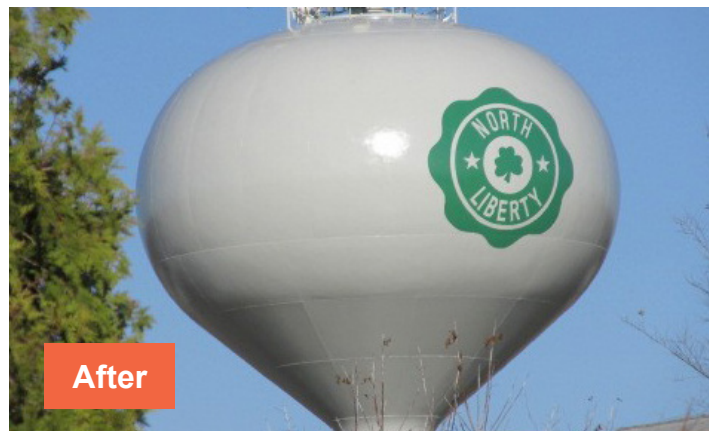
#### Type of Project:

- Implementing a strategic tank asset management program provides peace of mind to a small single-tank community

North Liberty is a town of fewer than 2000 people located in Northern Indiana. Dubbed “A Great Place for Family and Business!”, the small but vibrant community is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been named a participant in the state’s three-year Stellar Communities program. Subsequent grantfunded ‘stellar projects’ in North Liberty included the expansion of housing for seniors, the restoration of a downtown historic building facade and new equipment for local parks but no improvements to the town’s aging water infrastructure.

The town’s water system consists of two wells, a filter plant, a single elevated steel storage tank and a distribution system with approximately 700 connections. As in so many older communities, North Liberty’s water infrastructure was slowly deteriorating. The water department historically set aside funds each year for maintenance, but the funds were saved annually until they were sufficient to do the minimum maintenance thought necessary at the time. In 2013, the town contracted an engineering firm to inspect and prepare a request for qualification for the maintenance of their storage tank. The bidding process generated multiple offers but all beyond the budget set aside by the water department. Town officials didn’t want to take on more debt, so the tank rehabilitation was postponed. For three consecutive years, North Liberty went through the same process with no better luck.

*“Despite saving funds annually for maintenance, this small community couldn’t afford to get its water storage tank renovated for many years.”*



### An asset management alternative

In 2016, after conducting a visual inspection of the North Liberty water tank, Marc Hansen, Water System Consultant with USG Water Solutions (USG), presented the town with an alternative approach: an innovative tank asset management program (AMP™). Asset management is a framework that is being widely adopted as a means of achieving a sustainable water infrastructure. The concept is simple. A municipality enters into a long-term agreement (up to 20 years) with a qualified professional to rehabilitate and maintain their water tank. After the initial rehabilitation, the municipality transfers the responsibility of the annual inspection and maintenance of the asset to the professional who, in other words, assumes all maintenance risk for a set annual cost. Funds are also accrued annually for all future rehabilitations.

North Liberty town officials were immediately interested. “The USG asset management program had recently been presented at the town council of a neighboring community and we had heard good reviews,” explains Skip Davidson, Utility Superintendent.

“We are a small community with a water department of only four employees,” adds Davidson so the fact that “we could transfer the maintenance risk of a major component of our water system infrastructure to USG was a big incentive. Being able to use private monies at no interest cost to fund the initial tank rehabilitation definitely sealed the deal,” concludes Davidson. The funds of the town were used instead to purchase and install an in-tank water mixer to maintain the quality of water during storage and prevent any ice damage during the winter months.

### The ‘no change order’ clause

The initial rehabilitation of North Liberty’s water storage tank started in 2016. Right away, an additional benefit of the USG tank

management program – a “no change order” clause included in the contract – came to light.

Upon starting the project, USG field crews discovered that the logos on the tank were not painted but were actual decals that had been glued to the steel structure. After trying unsuccessfully to remove the decals with heat guns, USG crews had to revert to using a water and garnet blaster. Although efficient, the technique can cause significant spillage especially when used on an elevated tank.

The location of the tank adjacent to a busy parking lot complicated the situation. The site configuration did not allow for installation of a containment system, so crews had to take extreme precautions with blasting the tank. Though the process took much longer than a regular power wash, the Utility wasn’t charged for the additional work or costs.

“USG stood by their word and didn’t charge us for the change order. Their tank asset management contract is a true peace of mind solution,” says Davidson.

*“We are a small community with a water department of only four employees. To transfer the maintenance risk of a major component of our water system infrastructure to USG was a big incentive”*

- Skip Davidson, Superintendent

Contact Us Today!

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