FROM DATA ROADBLOCKS TO DATA ACCESS

A familiar story for many communities when it comes to asset management also rings true for the Consolidated Water District in Kansas. For the District, managing data was a less than ideal situation that involved numerous systems, cumbersome processes and data entry that could only be done in the office. This meant the record keeping wasn't always completed, depending on time and the priorities of the crews.

That all changed when Mike Fulkerson, Operations Manager for Consolidated Water District, learned about the Beehive Industries solution at a local conference. Once the software was introduced to his colleagues they were excited about moving forward.

THE CHALLENGE

The District had systems in place to track and capture data such as excel, and other common solutions found across the industry, but none of these systems were connected to each other or had mobile capabilities. This meant each system required its own data entry and being in an office to complete the input.

Tasks such as fire hydrant flow tests, valve maintenance, and inspections required a lot of time and attention. "We were doing all of them but had to go to multiple technologies to log the data. And we didn't have the technology in the field to do it on-site, so we came back to the office for data entry on a regular basis," explains Mike.

He goes on to say, "With so many disparate technologies—it was cumbersome and time consuming to complete." Lack of a central database across all technologies and operations was a growing issue, and ate up a lot of time and resources the District didn't have to spare.

Sharing information was also a challenge. The District needed to share data with its fire department and others within the community to collaborate on challenges and solutions, but that task was cumbersome and difficult to accomplish. Many times the disparity resulted in variations of the truth, because input wasn't always identical across technologies.

THE SOLUTION

The District was continuously looking for a one-size-fits-all solution to bring efficiency to data capture and preservation efforts, but everything seemed to fall short. That is until Mike attended a local confernce and learned about the asset management solution built by Beehive Industries.

"We even shopped around after encountering Beehive with a list of competitors they provided to us, but it was hard to find a solution that offered the same features," explains Mike. "There just wasn't anyone who matched up to what Beehive offered, and we felt comfortable with the Beehive team and the process, so in the end it was an easy decision to make," adds Mike.

"Startup was easier than I thought it was going to be, and took a minimal amount of time, much less than I expected," he continues, "training and implementation went great, we didn't run into any roadblocks, it really

AT A GLANCE

- Increased collaboration across employees and operations through one unified system

- Improved accuracy of data entry due to Beehive mobility and offline capability

- Reduced cost of inefficiencies in data capture and preservation

- Expanded adoption from workforce due to software simplicity and ease of use

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exceeded my expectations in value."

The District had been using GPS and GIS ARCview type systems to collect map data, but the systems were too cumbersome to use in the field and required higher levels of training that they simply didn't have time for. This meant that a few folks who understood the systems entered most of the data.

The fact that Beehive sits on a Windows platform that everyone understands and is cloud-based was a welcome change. It's a platform many people are familiar with so the learning curve was drastically minimized and employees no longer needed to travel back to the office for data entry.

One of the specific time savers is really a simple functionality but it has made a huge difference for the District. When maintenance work is identified as needing follow-up, Mike's staff places the asset "on hold" in Beehive. This allows the team to query specific features in the distribution system that need follow-up work at a later date and not stop each time they come across a troubled asset. Components marked as needing follow-up can be queried out by other crews and repaired as needed, allowing inspection activities to continue while repairs are being made. "This provides us greater efficiency in maintenance, our staff is performing more inspections and being efficient about follow-up maintenance," explains Mike.

THE OUTCOME

VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Now, simple, mundane tasks of looking up physical locations, valves, and GPS coordinates are easy. In the past, questions to these answers required a phone call to the office, and if those locations were rural, workers had to guess or estimate. With Beehive, GPS locations, physical measurements, as-builts, maintenance activities, and assets that relate to those activities such as videos and images are all logged and easily discoverable from the work site.

DATA ENTRY IS SIMPLIFIED

There is no more cumbersome technology or trainings to deal with because while the Beehive software is built on powerful technology, it also encompasses an intuitive user interface and is engineered to be simple to use.

Additionally, since implementing Beehive, data entry is happening in real-time, maintenance activities are streamlined and records are logged and up-to date. "Previously all of these things were much harder to do," states Mike.

TIME IS BEING SAVED NOT WASTED

Efficiencies are soaring across operations since Beehive was introduced. Disparate data has been turned into information that is available any time to anyone—an imperative to doing more with less.

Mike adds, "We are anxious to get more components and training to drive Beehive further into our operations and integrate it more into our activities. The general day-to-day maintenance activities are streamlined and we are getting more done in a shorter amount of time."

"It's not really about money saved, it's about ease of use and accessibility in the field. We continue to improve, it's been an ongoing process and partnership with Beehive, and we've never regretted our decision," Mike concludes.

ABOUT BEEHIVE INDUSTRIES

Beehive is an infrastructure and asset management software company that helps cities maximize their productivity, improve efficiency, and make information-driven decisions.

Get in touch with us to learn how we can help your city operate productively and efficiently. We would be happy to tell you more about Beehive Industries and/or set up a demo to showcase our solutions.

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Beehive congratulates Mike Fulkerson and the entire Consolidated Water District team on their steadfast focus to improve operations and the community.

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