

SMALL WATER AND SEWER UTILITY SYSTEM INSIGHT

BACKGROUND

WHG's client runs a small utility providing water and sewer services to approximately 1,500 customers. The township's water and sewer utility had been losing money for several years. An aging metering system, estimated bills, infrequent monitoring, and a high water loss (water purchased but not sold), were all contributing to customer dissatisfaction and increased rates to cover these losses.

PAIN POINT

The township used a drive-by radio metering system to read meters over the township's 36 square miles. The system was failing, with 40% of the meters unreliable, which resulted in time and resources diverted to manually reading meters, hundreds of estimated bills every cycle, and angry customers contacting the township to complain about an incorrect bill.

THE WOODHILL GROUP SOLUTION

WHG conducted a review of the existing metering system. The existing radio read system was obsolete, with replacement parts unavailable. With 40% of the radio transmitters failing, and failures accelerating as the system aged, it was recommended by the township's engineers that a meter replacement program should be implemented, using a cellular AMI system to provide real-time usage data, eliminate manual reads, and virtually eliminate estimated bills.

Woodhill Group worked with the township staff, engineers, and contractor for the project, assisting in the planning and execution of the RFP. Our team provided existing account and meter information, analysis of meter

As part of the project, an audit of commercial customer meters was completed. This audit uncovered multiple issues in configuration of the existing meters and the township's billing system, which had resulted in over \$800,000 in unbilled water and sewer charges over nearly twenty years.

RESULTING BENEFITS

Ensuring that existing customers are properly billed for their water and sewer usage is essential to proper operation of any system. A thorough review of large customers can assure you that every customer is correctly billed, and that you understand your system thoroughly for long-term planning.