Reedy River, Greenville, South Carolina

Greenville Water

Boosting efficiency, communication and adoption

Greenville Water provides water services to nearly 500,000 residents in upstate South Carolina. Recognizing that water service is critical to the health and well-being of its customers, as well as for the growth and economic vitality of the community, Greenville Water ensures reliable delivery of high-quality water through careful stewardship of its resources.

About Greenville Water

Greenville Water is committed to providing exceptional service and using safe and effective methods for providing water, while adhering to and surpassing health and safety standards. Greenville Water is governed by an elected Commission of Public Works, and is South Carolina's largest water utility.

Greenville Water has a GIS department that consists of four team members: a GIS supervisor and three GIS technicians. The GIS department uses Esri and Geocortex technology to support various departments, including field operations, engineering and customer service.

The Challenge

With GIS supporting many departments and operations within Greenville Water, they needed a technology solution that could conform to complex business processes. They did not have the development skills to build the required tools from scratch — nor was this an approach that would best position Greenville Water for the future.

They considered hiring a consultant to build custom tools, but also needed the flexibility to respond to evolving business processes, and didn't want to be stuck modifying and maintaining what an outside firm had created. Greenville Water was looking for technology that would allow them to configure and deploy complex tools quickly, and would be easier to maintain over time.

The Solution

Geocortex Essentials' workflow capabilities were exactly what Greenville Water needed. They provided a means for the GIS team to quickly build and deploy tools to meet their complex business requirements, without writing custom code.

With the support of Latitude Geographics' technical support team, and in close consultation with Wayne Benson, Manager of Field Operations, Greenville Water's GIS team developed a comprehensive application that included tools to support and streamline operations across their departments. Greenville Water

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also integrated Geocortex with their SQL Server database, allowing them to display and work with important asset information inside their application.

A few of the tools included in the application are:

> **Report Pipe Break Tool:** This tool provides multiple departments with visibility into pipe break incidents; field operations staff can add a pipe break to the system as soon as it happens, and can update the incident when the pipe is repaired. This is important as there is often a lag before a break can be fixed due to local legislation, and the tool allows customer service to track the breaks in real time and provide information to customers around the anticipated repair date.

> **Water-off Notification Tool:** This tool allows staff in the field or the office to quickly add a water-off incident, which automatically sends an email to relevant Greenville Water staff and fire department personnel. The email includes a map of the affected area, and a hyperlink that opens the application and zooms to the location of the water-off incident.

> **Inspection Tools:** The inspection tools - which are integrated with Greenville Water's SQL Server database - allow field operations staff to add and view valve inspections, hydrant inspections, and leak detection inspections within the application. The tools auto-fill fields and offer combination boxes to simplify inspection data entry.

> **Report GIS Error Tool:** This tool streamlines Greenville Water staff's ability to report errors with the application. They can automatically send an email to GIS staff with information about the error and a map of the affected location. This has improved the GIS department's ability to correct issues in a timely manner and keep teams productive.

The Result

The Geocortex application that Greenville Water has deployed is still new, but they are already seeing efficiency gains and an increased interest in GIS by other departments within the organization.
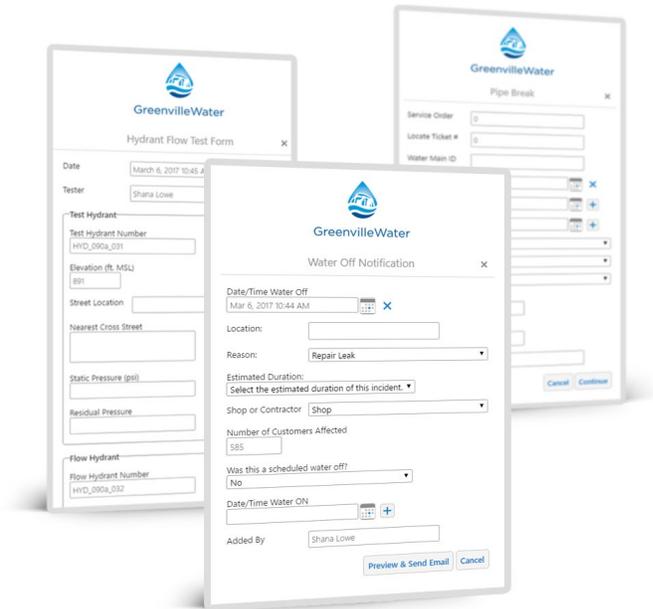
Greenville Water's application includes input forms to simplify the end-user experience.

Initial tests show that the time to complete the water-off notification process has been reduced significantly. Prior to implementing Geocortex, the process took roughly seven (7) minutes to complete; with Geocortex in place, the process now takes a mere 30 seconds.

Greenville Water's Geocortex deployment has also improved data flow and internal communication by providing visibility across multiple departments. For example, the water-off tool is primarily used by field operations staff, but it provides customer service insight into what work is being done, allowing them to keep customers informed about water service interruptions.

Greenville Water plans to continue developing tools to help streamline work processes. "We are excited to see the increased interest in GIS," explains Shana Lowe, GIS Supervisor at Greenville Water. "Geocortex has helped us sell the concept of GIS throughout the organization. Now that departments outside of engineering and field operations see how the tools work, they have expressed interest in using GIS to support their operations."

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