

Indiana Conservancy District Saves Windshield Time with GIS Capabilities



Maintenance
Management

CLIENT	Cordry-Sweetwater Conservancy District in Indiana – Josh Hawley, Water/Grounds Superintendent
CHALLENGE	Establishing a recordkeeping system and maximizing field workers' time
RESULTS	Increased efficiency by decreasing drive time with mobile software

The Cordry-Sweetwater Conservancy District in Nineveh, IN includes 2,300 acres of land and water, two large lakes, 35 miles of road and a water utility that services 1,350 homes. A team of six utility and grounds staff, along with sheriff's deputies, office staff, a building officer and a conservancy manager, oversees the various needs of the community.

On that team is Water/Grounds Superintendent Josh Hawley, who has been in that role for two years. Josh said that historically his team struggled to keep up with the needs of the community and tried four or five different software programs to help track things.

"A lot of history of what was going on in the individual addresses was falling off the grid," Josh said. "This place has been here since the 60s, and for the most part it has been run by paper and pen. I wanted to ensure that everything we're doing out here that costs the conservancy money was recorded in a way that we can access it."

One of their biggest challenges was wasted windshield time going to and from work orders (as far as a 25-minute drive), not knowing where their next assignment was before they got back to the office.

"Most of our days were spent driving, as opposed to actual work orders getting done. The idea of the work orders being mobile and set to our phones was the main reason I wanted to look into something like [Dude Solutions]," Josh said.

GIS CHANGES THE GAME

Josh said that after his first conversation with Dude Solutions, he was sold on the mobile and tracking capabilities of Mobile311.

The GPS capabilities have been a game-changer for their district. "I know for a fact that we're getting more work done on a daily basis than ever before – and that's because we don't have the drive time."

With Dude Solutions, Josh says that now field workers don't have to come back to the office after each work order to get their next assignment. Before, the office would get a hold of Josh, then he had to figure out who might be closest to the request by calling his guys, and they would have to return to the office to complete the necessary paperwork. Now, if there's a request like a tree being down, Josh gets a call, knows exactly which guy is closest to the site, and they can get it cleaned up in a matter of minutes.



I wanted to ensure that everything we're doing out here that costs the conservancy money was recorded in a way that we can access it."

Without any data about their work orders, Josh said they didn't know how long work orders were open, and they weren't able to show how and when they were getting things done. This has all changed since implementing Mobile311.

"[Our administration] can't believe how quickly we can get something done," he said.

Josh uses key performance indicators (KPIs) to show the volume of the work orders being completed and the time it takes to complete them. He said this has been a huge "wow factor" for their board and others.

One of the biggest changes is what they can accomplish with the GPS capabilities. Josh said now when they have a project like installing new water meters, fire hydrants, etc., they have the GPS coordinates for each of them and can track any routine maintenance, repairs and even replacement needs. They now have work orders that are only open for 20 minutes, and can fix a water leak in only 3 hours.

"We've seen a significant drop in our fuel costs since the windshield time is a lot less," Josh said.

CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT

Josh said that the mobile solutions have changed the way they do things so much that he couldn't live without it.

"I could not live without the mobility that [Mobile311] gives me," he said. "I could not live without the work orders being on our phones."

Without our mobile solution, Josh said his team would be "back to missing work orders with guys driving 10 miles just to get a piece of paper."

BOOST FOR STAFF MORALE

Josh's staff include three full-time employees and three summer employees. His full-time employees have been in the industry for 15 years between them, and he said they have been "floored" by the technology aspect of the solution and have bought in 100%.

"It makes them feel empowered when they have all of the information on their phone while they're out in the field," Josh said. This is the same for the employees in the office. After a two-hour training for the software, they were off and running.

In fact, communication between these two groups has significantly improved. He said a part of their problem was that the field team would take work orders in the field, where they would get dirty, lost or filled out incompletely. Sometimes they would indicate if a work order still needed a task done on the sheet, but the office workers would have trouble translating their notes before they put the completed work order in a folder.

Now, if there's a water leak that an employee sees in the field or they notice that a meter needs to be changed out, they can put in a new work order right there and then, creating more efficiency in communication and workflow.

As far as ongoing support, Josh says that his support representative, Jenny, is always there to help. Although he says the software is easy for anyone who is computer literate, anytime he sends in a question he gets an answer back usually within 15 minutes.

The change has come so easily to their district that the way they used to do things is just a memory now.

"It has been such a blessing for my job," Josh said. "I can't even remember the difficulties we used to have."



LEARN MORE
dudesolutions.com