Case Study
St. Charles Parish

## How St. Charles Parish is Going Paperless with AssetWorks EAM

Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, St. Charles Parish, Louisiana is home to approximately 53,000 people and even more assets. Responsible for the maintenance of over 60,000 assets, the St. Charles Parish public works team strives to live by its mission statement: to provide the best possible roads and systems to ensure the safety and security of parish residents and their properties.

The Challenges

Within the organization, the St. Charles Parish team recognized that their existing processes needed to change.

"We were spending money on assets that probably should have been phased out of our organization," said Meme Fortier, Automation Control Technician, "But we had no way to keep track of the costs incurred by the assets." Without a concrete way to track costs over the life of an asset, the organization had to rely on the memories of their employees.

They also needed to know what costs stemmed from repairs or preventive maintenance, but did not have a preventive maintenance schedule in place.
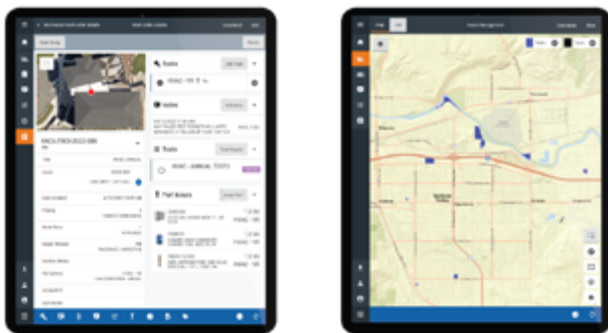
"Recognizing that we did not have either of these things, we realized that we had no way of making efficient reports for any information we might want," continued Mrs. Fortier.

Selecting AssetWorks EAM

To combat their challenges, the St. Charles Parish team published an RFP for a Work Order Management and Asset Inventory Software Solution. They ultimately selected AssetWorks Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) and the EAM Connect mobile application.

"[AssetWorks EAM] met most of the requirements requested in the RFP and was very impressive in many areas," said Terry Breaux, Senior Automation Control Technician, "In addition, in checking the references given, the software had a good reputation."

Goals

One of the Parish's main goals for its new EAM system was to create a preventive maintenance plan for their current and future assets.

"Our organization was acting more reactively than proactively," said Mrs. Fortier, "We're getting to an age where we, as an organization, can be held responsible for events that happen and we felt that [AssetWorks EAM] could help show we are being proactive with the maintenance of our assets."

The Parish also wanted to manage their assets more efficiently through technology.

"Sometimes we move assets around and forget what assets are where," said CarlyJo Cantrelle, Maintenance Processor, "We would have to rely on someone else's memory and hope it was accurate."

Within EAM, Parish employees can look up an asset to determine its location and maintenance history, and use

that data to determine whether the asset is worth keeping or retiring.

As demands for information occur more and more, the Parish needed to improve their reporting capabilities. The Parish receives many information requests from within the organization, outside organizations and the public. They needed to use EAM to create a complete history of their assets so they wouldn't have to "go fishing through paperwork for days, maybe weeks, to find information."

Lastly, the team at St. Charles Parish wanted to save space and go paperless with their asset management and maintenance procedures. "We wanted to have a history of our assets at the tips of our fingers," said Mr. Breaux. Before EAM, the organization would have to rifle through filing cabinets and boxes of paperwork until they found the information they needed. In some cases, the information would be damaged beyond recognition or never found.

Implementation & Staff Training

With over 100 employees projected to use EAM and EAM Connect, the Parish separated the implementation into groups. The first planned group has been through the complete implementation process, with the next set of groups currently going through the implementation process.

"We have observed an improvement in our documented information on our assets," said Mr. Breaux.

Confusion or resistance is a common challenge when implementing new software, and the Parish was not immune to the challenge. "We lacked preparedness and teaching backup," continued Ms. Cantrelle, "which caused confusion and resistance."

To combat the challenges surrounding implementation, the Parish suggests appointing champions strictly dedicated to EAM within the organization to really learn the software first, before bringing the rest of the users into the software environment. They also suggest, when starting from scratch (no legacy software), allotting longer than a year for a full implementation. "It WILL take longer than you originally planned," Mrs. Fortier emphasized.

Benefits of EAM

Before investing in AssetWorks EAM, St. Charles Parish was operating as a reactive organization, meaning they performed maintenance after an asset failed in order to repair it. With EAM, they plan to become a proactive organization. With the data provided by EAM, Parish employees can manage their assets in a more efficient

way, leading to cleaner data, effective reporting and a streamlined maintenance schedule.

EAM Connect Mobile Application

The Parish was looking for something that could give field personnel an easy transition to going paperless with as little confusion and push back as possible.

"We believe that EAM Connect gives our users a simpler way to use the system," said Mrs. Fortier. "It has less things to click and less to distract you. We feel that this gives our users a better chance to understand the changes our organization is making to go paperless."

Parish employees are using EAM Connect on LTE capable iPads and Windows devices. The employees using EAM Connect are all field personnel, or employees that would only use the Technician Portal within the EAM system.

Originally, the Parish had everyone working in a way where they would have to be connected to the Parish's internal network in order to download and upload any work or information needed. They would have to be in the office to turn in or receive their work. Since the initial implementation of EAM, they have swapped some of the users over to using EAM Connect through a public IP address, which means they can download or upload their work or get information from anywhere they have a cellular connection.

> " We have found that it lessens the amount of errors we get because their work orders are updated as they are filled out," continued Mrs. Fortier.

Moving Forward

"A continued friendship with tech support, project managers and all AssetWorks staff is anticipated by our organization for years to come," said Mrs. Fortier.

To learn more about AssetWorks Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) software or the EAM Connect mobile application, please contact your AssetWorks Sales representative or visit *assetworks.com/eam*.

A Smooth Adjustment

As a precaution, Scott County initially tested this change with just a few officers to ensure that it would work as they were expecting. They were met with enthusiastic results – the officers enjoyed the freedom

it brought and thought the new processes would work for their department. Mr. Kotila noted, "After starting the notifications, Keith, our Coordinator for the shop, had some communication with the operators and their Sergeants on the Notifications process asking for some slight changes and after a few adjustments… we heard positive feedback on how the process was working and as I monitored the PM compliance report it was showing proof that the process was working."

With success on their heels, they decided to roll the changes out to the rest of the Sheriff's Department. To further ensure its success, the Scott County team took it upon themselves to draft their own customized training document for the officers to reference during the adjustment.

Surprisingly, there were no major challenges for implementing Notifications to the Sheriff's Department. The system administration team needed to visit the head sheriff with the information that they learned at the AssetWorks Academy. Essentially, they told him that their process would remain the same, but they can now notify him and his officers ahead of time. Mr. Allen added that now officers could "schedule at a date and time that works for them, instead of the shop staff saying, 'hey, we need you at this place at this time.'"

When asked what the benefits of this process might be, Mr. Beam had a lot of positive things to say. "One of the other things that we are finding that is beneficial for us is that we are teaching all the departments how to utilize and monitor their access to the software and the notifications system," he said, "so they can physically go in and maximize their use of the tool as well."

While the Sheriff's Department saw immediate success with very few challenges, the Highway Maintenance Department had some additional hurdles they needed to overcome. Their trucks regularly traveled to multiple locations, where they might be far away from the shop when PM came due. In addition, they used different drivers for different vehicles, so they couldn't use the trick that the Sheriff's department did to assign the driver in FleetFocus. As a result, they decided to assign the supervisor as the operator for all of their vehicles so that he would be notified for each vehicle. From there, he would do all the assigning on his own, well in advance of the PM ultimately coming due. "This process has made it so much easier for shop staff," added Mr. Allen, "the supervisor can manage the alert for them well in advance of the PM coming due."

Results

After implementing this change with Notifications, Scott County monitored the situation and statistics for some time. When they reported on it again, they found significant results: communication for the shop time and scheduling improved dramatically since there was no more manual email creation from a supervisor. Not to be outdone, the PMC reports that were originally at 15%-20% were now up to 89.9%. In fact, success permeated throughout the departments countywide. "Since we started the notification process, we went from about 40% to 87% compliance overall in all county vehicles," noted Mr. Beam.

Delivering Success

With the success they have experienced already, they decided recently to roll out the ideas to additional departments. The Sheriff's Department is the only one that uses the same vehicles every day, so the other departments each needed their own tweaks to the solution, much like the Highway Maintenance Department. Some departments, like Taxation and Environmental Health have department vehicles where a department representative is assigned. These users can see that PM is coming up for a vehicle and they will prevent staff from using it when it is scheduled to go in for maintenance.

Like most fleets, it is important for Scott County to report on their services. Scott County Delivers is a continual improvement initiative that allows the County to take a look at their data at the service, not the department, level. This review allows the community to see their services through the spectrum of programs, processes and departments that contribute to the County's goals. For the fleet, on-time performance for PMC is an important statistic.

When they presented on the successes with communication and PMC, it was through a televised review to the Scott County board. Mr. Beam said, "We had a huge, overwhelming acknowledgment of how well we succeeded in our performance efforts." They received additional appreciation for their ability to they increase their performance with the same strong fleet management system they already had.

Moving forward, they plan to teach the other departments how to utilize notifications and learn the software so they can use it as a tool for themselves.

To learn more about the asset management software mentioned in this case study, visit assetworks.com/eam.