

CASE STUDY

Lake County finds the only partner they can trust to monitor their equipment

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Lake County Special Districts maintains over 50 lift stations, 4 wastewater treatment plants, 3 surface water plants, and 7 well systems. With a population of over 60,000, John Sparkes, the Utility Superintendent of Lake County Special Districts, and his team clearly have their work cut out for them. Needless to say, Sparkes and his team couldn't be everywhere at once. Whether it was checking in on pump failures or dealing with damages from wildfires, there simply weren't enough hours in the day to be able to execute all of their required tasks. With as many sites as responsibilities, and remote equipment at most locations, John's operations were stretched thin—there was no way he was going to be able to operate and monitor all the processes for his Specialty District.

Lake County had issues they needed addressed

Lake County and John had a few industry standard alarms they needed monitored at all times, according to John, those were, "low chlorine, high turbidity, low-pressure, pump fail." Beyond missing alarm points, John was facing reliability issues. For John, it was just as important to know the equipment was being monitored with no downtime, "A description of the application of the Raco alarm system would be autonomous standby emergency notification. The basic requirement was 24 hours a day seven days a week, I want to know if I have an alarm."

Other monitoring solutions John tried were acceptable, until their phone lines went down. Even worse, things would be running smoothly until a station was damaged, which is exactly when you need an alarm system! We asked John his pain points with other systems, and he wasn't afraid to tell us, "The potential for fines from a sewer spill if we didn't use the system. This could be very costly indeed. The lost revenue when a tank goes dry, because a boost pump system failed to fill a tank. This has happened to us before, when our alarm systems failed."

John knew he needed a reliable solution, but he didn't know where to look. The Special District had stringent requirements, which shrunk the pool of products they could use to fit their needs. Even more – John's phone lines were unpredictably going down, causing further headache and making finding a resolution a bigger priority. When John and Lake County Special Districts were researching solutions, it was clear that RACO was the only acceptable partner.

The power of RACO's reliability

Once John heard RACO has been a leader in remote monitoring since 1948, he was sure the reliability issue had been solved. After he saw the AlarmAgent product could meet his specific monitoring requirements, he was certain of it! Beyond condition based monitoring, John was thrilled with the AlarmAgent's daily check-ins, known as Watchdog Alarms. The AlarmAgent gave John a piece-of-mind because he knew if the unit was any having connectivity problems, a Watchdog Alarm would let him know. John's locations are so remote they don't always have power, so he set up an AlarmAgent that is powered by solar panels. The unit is portable, so he's able to move it to different sites and still have the same reliability.



Lake County has mounted their units so they are portable.



John's units are usually installed at his most remote locations – even power was inaccessible. He used RACO's own solar panel setup to ensure he had power.

For now, John is using the system strictly for monitoring, however he was quick to tell us, "We do see its potential [for enhanced usage]." With the wide variety of training resources available to John, we're sure he'll be able to deepen his knowledge of the AlarmAgent and get his operations using it to the potential he knows exists. Even with a simple application, John has had other districts and municipalities in California asking for the blueprint he used. We're happy to give John some needed and consistent insight into his operations, and we're proud that, in John's words, we're the only company that can do what he needed.