

Wireless GIS on a BlackBerry

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“The City of Houston”

Public Utilities Division Enables Freeance Mobile

Currently, with a rapid growth in the amount of GIS data available, the major problem ahead will not be in the generation of the data, but in its accessibility.

While more and more organizations move away from a manual field data collecting practice to more automated processes, accessibility will continue to be an issue.

For the **Drinking Water Operations/ Water Quality/Customer Service Group**, 20 field Investigators respond to 311 customer complaints and document all information pertaining to the inspection onto hard copy forms. Data entry was then entered and maintained into an access database

To try and enhance this workflow for DWO, **GIS Services** worked to introduce a wireless handheld device as a solution.

The goal was to provide alternatives to use of **Laptops enabled with wireless cards** to access GIS data and manually capturing field



“Water Utilities”

investigation reports.

Since the City has a **BlackBerry Enterprise License** the devices were readily available to DWO. Implementing a solution such as TDC’s Group Freeance Standard addition provided the ability to leverage **existing hardware** thereby affording huge cost **savings**.

As a result, when responding to customer concerns, investigators now no longer need to manually fill out paper forms and perform data entry at the end of each

shift. Now they only need to access the forms from their BlackBerry which is directly connected to a database.

This enabled the **City’s Drinking Water Operations Branch** the capability to access critical GIS water utility data through a BlackBerry device. They also have the ability to access in real time customer complaint information collected in the field by the investigators.

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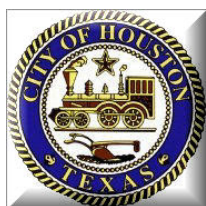
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GIS Services is a group within Operations Support Branch which is tasked with providing GIS technology to all branches within the Public Utilities Division. The group is comprised of Data Management and Applications Teams working towards a common goal of developing the most accurate GIS data sets. These data sets are made available to all branches within PUD, enabling them to perform their Core Business functions effectively. The Data Management Team creates and maintains quality geospatial data for the City's water distribution systems and wastewater collection systems while the Applications Team focuses on data analysis and the implementation of GIS technology.



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