



CMPAS MEMBERS BENEFIT FROM ADVANCED DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Ron Melson, electric superintendent of Mountain Lake, is a Minnesota Wild fan. He likens the amount and quality of data he now receives from SCADA and Beehive to a hockey scoreboard. “It’s always nice to hear the Wild beat the Dallas Stars, but the final score only tells me so much. I want to go deeper – how many goals did Zach Parise score? How many assists did Mikael Granlund get?”

“The systems Vignesh installed allow me to monitor all the physical assets in our electric system from my office,” Ron continued. “Before those systems were installed, I had to guess at electric load scheduling by looking out the window and checking the Weather Channel. I had to call someone to confirm a generator was operating. If a circuit needed repairing, I had to guess what equipment should be loaded onto a truck. If a circuit needed reopening, someone had to drive to the site and do it manually. To monitor the health of the distribution system, we had to call Vignesh at CMPAS.

“Now we can do all that digitally, from our office, thanks to SCADA, Beehive, and Vignesh,” he commented. “Now, we can troubleshoot problems from our office, using a laptop computer, before we go into the field.

“We’re really grateful Vignesh installed and populated these systems at no added cost to us – it was all covered in our member fee.”

This work also offers qualitative and quantitative benefits and sometimes in surprising ways.

“Electric reliability is an important selling point when we speak with manufacturers who are considering building a facility in Mountain Lake,” commented Michael Schulte, city administrator for Mountain Lake. “SCADA and Beehive provide us with more and better data about the health of our electric system, helping identify ways to improve operations by increasing efficiencies.”

Michael tells the story of a customer who came into the city’s office to report a possible water leak.

“This customer had some low-lying land where there was standing water, even when there had been no rain. We couldn’t identify a leak in the water system, but because we had Beehive, we could take a look at where our electric lines were. We found an electric line that ran under that property, and we thought, if there’s a buried electric line there, maybe there’s a buried water pipe there. Sure enough, there was, and we were able to fix it.”





Vignesh Subramanian, systems engineer, provides a demonstration of SCADA and Beehive screens to monitor distribution systems.

Michael doesn't know how much water was lost because of the leak, but he thought it could be thousands, even tens of thousands, of gallons.

“Although we're not using Beehive to map our water system, we're glad we could use it to identify where water could be leaking on our system,” Michael said. “Thanks to advanced digital technology, and CMPAS, we are taking better care of our customers. We only have three employees in the electric department, so digitizing our system and leveraging CMPAS' expertise helps us stretch our resources.”