

CASE STUDY

Badger[®] ORION[®]

Radio Frequency System



Badger Meter's ORION[®] Radio Frequency System laptop equipped in the City of Montgomery, Minnesota's utility vehicle.

Montgomery, MN Uses Badger's ORION[®] Meters to Serve its Customers and Protect its Business

By: Dave Marsh

Montgomery, Minnesota is a rural community located south of Minneapolis. Like those living in small towns across America, Montgomery's 3,129 residents look out for one another and take pride in their community. Its Public Works Department is proud to offer their customers the Badger Meter ORION[®] Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) System, offering leak and meter tampering detection.

Montgomery first implemented AMR technology in 2000 when it adopted the Badger Meter TRACE[®] system. Back then, a single full-time employee was responsible for Montgomery's 1,800 water meters. The TRACE system was a big step forward because it made the time consuming task of walking customer routes to read meters obsolete.

Today Bryan Frase has assumed the responsibilities for meter reading, and because Montgomery decided to upgrade to Badger Meter's new ORION AMR system, Frase does even more than his predecessor. "I now do meter installs, maintenance, shock the lines, and leak detection," said Frase. "I also do street maintenance and many other things outside of the water department." And this is something Terry Hayes, Director of Public Works, appreciates.

Frase can read Badger[®] ORION[®] equipped meters from even greater distances than he could with the TRACE system, which means he saves even more time. "It used to take me about two days to read all of our TRACE equipped meters," said Frase. "Given our experience with the 350 ORION units we've already installed I'll eventually be able to read all 1,800 meters from my laptop in the few hours it takes to drive down Montgomery's streets."

Although additional boosts in productivity were the key reason for upgrading to Badger ORION with the Recordall[®] Transmitter Register (RTR[®]), Frase has been very impressed with the leak detection feature.

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TRACE[®] is a registered trademark of American Meter Company.

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MONTGOM CASE



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“With our meters, our billing clerk, Melissa Harstad is responsible for detecting leaks by looking at each account and comparing the highs and the lows with previous months,” said Frase. “If she believes an account’s water consumption is unusually high she’ll send it to me to check for a possible leak. We’re depending on Melissa to guess right. But if she guesses wrong and attributes a spike in consumption to water usage instead of a leak it could cost our customer a lot of money. With Badger® ORION®, there is no guessing involved. If there is a leak the system will tell you.”

“When I’m out reading an ORION equipped meter it will indicate a possible leak. I’ll write out a work order and visit the homeowner to verify that there is water moving through the residence. If there is, I help the customer locate the leak, allowing them to repair it. In the past leaks could have gone on for months, but with the ORION system we can detect them much sooner.”

Frase is very pleased with the performance of his new Badger ORION system. “We’ve shown it to three or four cities, and it’s so impressive to be driving along and have the system indicate a leak. We stop, knock on the customer’s door,



Melissa Harstad and Bryan Frase from the City of Montgomery, Minnesota

identify ourselves, and inform the customer of a possible water leak. When we find it the homeowners are ecstatic and can’t believe what a powerful tool this is.”

Montgomery purchases its Badger® meters from Hydro Metering Technology and appreciates the

service they provide. “About two days after I had installed a new ORION equipped meter Brian Jandahl of Hydro Metering Technology was driving with me to check out our new laptop,” said Frase. “One resident popped up as a tampered meter. We stopped to investigate and sure enough they had cut the wire. We prosecuted and they eventually admitted to it. With the ORION system when a wire is cut, the system indicates that it’s been tampered with. With the old system I wouldn’t have been able to catch them like that.”

When it came to upgrading TRACE, Frase said Montgomery never considered anything other than Badger ORION.

“We’ve been happy with Hydro Metering Technology and Badger Meter. Why switch from something good?” ■