

Kissimmee Utility Authority

Best compilation of products from one company



PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Project Type

Operational utility solutions

Location

Kissimmee, Florida

Number of Customers

68,000

Applications

To get the data into the hands of virtually every member of the KUA and be more informed when completing specific tasks

Solutions Implemented

ArcFM™ Network

ArcFM™ Design

ArcFM™ Operations

CUSTOMER BENEFITS

- Operate off one version of the truth
- Guaranteed to have the most up-to-date information
- Quickly identify power outages - keep track of where power was restored and what areas still need work



Kissimmee Utility Authority (KUA) owns, operates and manages the municipal electric system established by the City of Kissimmee in 1901. Compared to the other municipally-owned electric utilities, KUA is the sixth largest utility in Florida. KUA's more than 300 employees serve approximately 68,000 customers in Kissimmee and surrounding areas.

KUA first started working with Schneider Electric in 2003, and since then has implemented Schneider Electric's ArcFM™ Network, ArcFM Design, and ArcFM Operations solutions.

Challenges

Prior to implementing Schneider Electric's solutions, KUA was using an AutoCAD-based system to plan, map and manage its electrical grid. When its provider stopped offering the product in 2002, KUA was left scrambling to find a replacement system to take its place. However, instead of making a quick, un-informed purchase, KUA saw this change as an opportunity to upgrade its system to a more efficient GIS platform.

The existing platform had a very basic interface for displaying the connections within the system. This left KUA relying on a very error-prone method to collect and analyze the data.

“We knew we needed to convert from our old system, which included field viewing, design, outage management, and more, and we needed to get it replaced and up-and-running as quickly as possible,” said Ken Beville, manager of GIS at KUA. “However, we also wanted to make a solid long-term investment in our new technology system.”

Solution

As KUA began researching options, it became clear that Schneider Electric solutions offered a utility a superior GIS-based platform in which to manage its electrical grid.

Schneider Electric’s ArcFM Solution was the first step KUA took in updating its system. The utility was impressed by both the control they had when using ArcFM technology, as well as the ability to use graphic connectivity.

“Being able to control quality and to know that circuit connection was complete at any point was extremely valuable to us,” said Beville. “It made our operations more reliable and efficient.”

From there, KUA wanted to add designer and outage management functionalities. The ability to seamlessly integrate Schneider Electric’s ArcFM Design and ArcFM Operations solutions, combined with the products’ superior capabilities made it an easy choice.

The interconnectedness between the products meant that KUA was able to take the data from ArcFM and give it to the field users, office administrators and engineers. The entire team could now operate off one version of the truth that was guaranteed to have the most up-to-date information. The efficiency in the system provided KUA with productivity gains and reduced operational costs.

“The true gains came when we were able to establish an outage management system that could be configured to directly tie in to our core GIS data,” said Beville. “Now, if we make a change to our system it is automatically available in our ArcFM Operations, ArcFM Design, and ArcFM Viewer components.”

The Bottom Line

Since KUA’s existing platform was going away, time was of the essence for getting the new technology up-and-running. Within eight months of selecting Schneider Electric solutions, KUA had the entire platform — ArcFM Network, ArcFM Design, and ArcFM Operations — implemented and had begun taking advantage of the benefits of Schneider Electric technology. In fact, in 2005 KUA was awarded Esri’s Special Achievement Award for its swift transition from the old AutoCAD-based system to the new ArcFM-based GIS technology.

Additionally, KUA saw an uptick in performance throughout every department of the company, with the entire workforce operating smarter and more efficiently.

“ArcFM solution has helped take GIS data and push it beyond the walls of the engineering department or the IT department,” said Beville. “We are able to get the data into the hands of virtually every member of our utility so they are more informed while completing their specific tasks.”

For example, when there is a service outage, KUA employees can see the effected area on a web-based map. The dispatchers know where to send the repair crews, line crews can determine what needs to be repaired while in the field, and everyone can communicate with each other through the system in real-time.

This is exactly the situation KUA found itself in when its service territory was hit by three hurricanes within six weeks. After the first, Hurricane Charley, hit in 2004 there was 100 percent outage in the service area. Using ArcFM Operations, KUA quickly began restoring power. The ability to track where power had been restored and what areas still needed to be worked on proved invaluable as teams worked quickly to get power back up-and-running.

“When building a Smart Grid information technology system it is often thought that it’s best to pick and choose the top products from multiple companies,” said Beville. “It’s a rare thing when you find the best of breed all at one company, and that’s what we have found with Schneider Electric.”