

WATER & WASTEWATER UTILITY SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY

Long-Term Wastewater Operations Partnership Saves Tens of Thousands of Dollars for Expanding Arizona Town

Once known as the “Hay Capital of the World,” the Town of Gilbert, Ariz., has transformed from a sparsely populated agricultural region in the early 1970s to the growing, young, affluent community it is today.

Experiencing unparalleled growth and expansion over the last 30 years, this community located 20 miles southeast of central Phoenix grew from a population of just fewer than 2,000 in 1970 to over 208,000 in 2010, making it one of the most populous and fastest growing incorporated municipalities in the nation.

Since 1999, Severn Trent Services has successfully provided reliable, cost effective environmental services for Gilbert’s Neely Wastewater Reclamation Facility. The facility includes an extended aeration activated sludge plant that uses 100 percent of its effluent to irrigate municipal parks, golf courses, neighborhood common areas, as well as recharge facility basins.

Even as the Neely Facility grew from an original capacity of 5.0 mgd to 11 mgd in 2005, Severn Trent Services continued to reduce operational costs while enhancing service levels.



For more information on water and wastewater utility solutions visit www.severntrentservices.com



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\$100,000 Saved in Operational Expenses

By performing many operations tasks internally, Severn Trent Services reduced the Town's reliance on outside contractors for maintenance and upgrades, decreasing outsourced vendor fees and project timelines. For example, by rehabilitating the plant's large rotors and clarifiers and programming SCADA controllers and software as part of a new computerized maintenance management system, the company saved Gilbert more than \$55,000. Severn Trent Services also periodically conducts energy management audits — at no additional service costs — to make ongoing plant efficiency recommendations.

Through competitive bidding and leveraging its supply chain, Severn Trent Services also reduced prices for chemicals used at the Town's lift stations and the Neely facility. By negotiating a price break for the 3,000–6,000 gallons of bleach used weekly at the Neely facility for odor control and disinfection, the company potentially achieved an annual savings of \$12,800 for the Town based on average chemical usages. Severn Trent Services also negotiated with the chemical supplier to provide tanks to the Town at no cost for an additional savings of \$20,000.

Previous enrollment in a power shedding program saved \$13,000 during the first two years of implementation. When the power shedding program was replaced by a new 2MW solar power system, that is expected to provide approximately \$2 million in energy cost savings over 20 years, Severn Trent Services was a key player in both referring and evaluating the Gilbert solar project and programming the SCADA system to reduce power demand during low or no solar production during on-peak hours, saving an estimated \$2,000–\$5,000 per month.

With all these cost reductions, Severn Trent Services reduced its own annual service fees by approximately

seven percent in 2010 and continually gave back to the Gilbert community through donations and by supporting various community initiatives and programs.

Safety First

While committed to plant cost efficiency, Severn Trent Services also maintains high safety standards at the Neely Wastewater Reclamation Facility that have been recognized by the AZ Water Association with numerous safety awards. In addition to providing in-house training and support to plant and municipal staff, the company maintains a “Man Down” system to protect employees working alone at plant during off hours. Notably, the plant has operated 1,900+ consecutive days without an injury.

“Large Wastewater Treatment Plant of Year”

The high standards maintained by the plant, dedication to safety and staff, and new innovative initiatives such as the solar power program, have attracted ongoing recognition for the Neely Wastewater Reclamation Facility year after year. For 2012, the facility was again honored as “Large Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year” by the AZ Water Association, an award previously achieved in 2009 in addition to safety awards and other commendations.

By delivering on its promise of providing strong technical leadership, cost control, compliance and strong community ties, Severn Trent Services has built a strong business relationship with the Town of Gilbert. “The Town of Gilbert is proud that the partnership with Severn Trent Services has contributed to receiving national recognition of our Neely Wastewater Treatment Plant,” says Gilbert Town Manager Patrick Banger. “Severn Trent's dedication to quality service and focus on innovative techniques continues to benefit the Gilbert community, allowing us to offer best in class services at an affordable rate.”

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