

SMART WATER PAYS OFF IN SMALL TOWNS



The Case of Smart Hydrants in Lincoln, Ontario

Small Town with a Pirate Ship

Smart water technology has taken the water world by storm in recent years. But for most municipalities, the idea of a major change to their water system can seem intimidating. The small town of Lincoln, Ontario was no different.

“*Smart Water*”

In the lush heart of Niagara wine country, Lincoln is home to 15,000 residents. Each summer, tourists flock to the vineyards, breweries, and

farms that dot the region. Visitors can even tour a huge pirate ship in the town’s harbor—a replica of one of Cartier’s ships he used to explore the St. Lawrence River.

“We have one pumping station. Two water systems. We don’t even have a SCADA system,” says Gillian Harris, the Manager of Environmental Services in Lincoln. For Harris, updating their organization with smart technology seemed like a good idea in theory. However, she wasn’t sure the difference it would make.

Data On-the-Go

The Town of Lincoln was Excel city. When Harris joined the crew, they were using a whole slew of spreadsheets. No one quite knew where information was or what was happening with it. “I knew immediately we needed to figure out how to retain organizational knowledge,” says Harris.

Enter eRIS MAX. Instead of a tangled mess of spreadsheets, eRIS provides a single source to Lincoln’s information. It also removed the traditional boundaries of the office. “My guys can access everything they need on-the-go,” Harris says. Her team is equipped with laptops with

cellular data and portable printers. “They can be functional wherever they are.”

Since the team is small, the flexibility eRIS provides is invaluable. Getting rid of additional steps and the busywork of spreadsheets with eRIS has empowered Lincoln with a verifiable data stream that’s easily accessible. A large portion of her team enters manual data crucial for chain of custody reports. With eRIS, the data entry is easily verified and keeps their data clean and consistent.

“*The Power of Data*”

The Difference One Smart Hydrant Makes

Once Harris solved the challenges of Lincoln’s data mess, she knew they were ready to fully benefit from smart hydrant technology. As a small town, the financial investment of a smart hydrant wasn’t insignificant. So, Lincoln started with four cloud-hosted smart hydrants.

The investment has certainly paid off. “We decided to strategically place the smart hydrants,” shares Harris. “There were leaks and main breaks frequently happening in one area with old pipes.” The team has found that just four hydrants in a high activity area makes an impact.

“Turning Data into Information”

The team is actively monitoring for fluctuations in PSI and acoustic pressure—effectively predicting leaks before they happen. Once the pipes are repaired, the smart sensor pod is easily moved to a new hydrant, making its potential cost-saving value even greater.

One Pump Station, Four Hydrants, One eRIS

“Even though our water operation is comparatively small, the benefits of smart technology have been huge for our organization,” Harris shares. eRIS isn’t only for big city municipalities with scores of data and complex operations. Its benefits are far reaching and sets cities up for long term success in the digital age.

