

IQGeo[®]

Case study

Unitil Corporation is a public utility holding company with operations in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.



Unitil's operating utilities serve approximately 106,000 electric and 83,000 natural gas customers. Its service territory includes business districts and recreational centers, as well as commercial and industrial business.

iqgeo.com



Challenge

Unitil, as with all utility companies, faces a wealth of compliance and safety regulation. It has an affirmative obligation to make its systems safer. To do so it must prioritize risks, which need to be supported by accurate data. This data is then used to help Unitil demonstrate system improvements over time.

In 2011, the business had some strict operational goals set, covering two key areas:

Knowledge of facilities

- Increase data collection on new installations
- Fill in the data gaps on existing assets
- Real time data collection

Measures to address risk

- Improve leak management program
- Ability to respond to field observations more quickly
- Aid in compliance



The utility wanted to automate survey tracking and sought a solution to replace the antiquated process of highlighting maps of survey areas or “From/To Street Lists”. Although widely used by utilities, this system does not offer definitive proof that the exercise was satisfied.



Solution

In 2016, Unitil started deployment of IQGeo Inspection & Survey to conduct driving surveys using laptops, replacing paper-based systems and providing a simple, clear audit trail that allows field teams to see which areas have been surveyed.

It enables Unitil office staff to respond to field observations in real time. Working online and offline, Inspection & Survey delivers asset data digitally to users in the field, which has increased accuracy and enabled them to identify the exact location of facilities.

Inspection & Survey consumes and displays data from various sources. Its ability to create surveys using polygon or attribute filters has allowed Unitil to be more proactive and expand the use of Inspection & Survey from beyond Mains Surveying. It has the ability to set recurrence with greater frequency; Daily, Weekly, Every other Week, Annually or X amount of years.

With Inspection & Survey, Unitil's supervisors can easily generate reports of current and historic activity, including print maps where required. It also supports walking surveys and inspections such as critical valve, meter and atmospheric corrosion.

“IQGeo Inspection & Survey makes it lightning fast to create a survey definition and push out to a survey tech in the field. It allows us to expand utilizing the product beyond prescriptive surveys to other activities such as Blasting Surveys and Uprate Projects. Establishing MAOP is a real focus in the industry now. Uprate procedures are being scrutinized. Every 20 pounds both mobile and leak survey must be conducted. We can use Inspection & Survey to prove we are following our procedure.”

Stacey Kilroy, Sr. Integrity Management and Pipeline Safety Coordinator at Unitil,

Results

By 2017, Unutil had achieved all six operational goals set in 2011.

In September 2017, Unutil was awarded **NGA Excellence in Safety and Health Recognition Program** in recognition of Unutil's safety program that positively impacted the lives of employees, customers or the general public. It was noted that Unutil's program improves the accuracy of pipeline material and incorporates GPS Aided location data to enhance threat identification and increased threat mitigation efforts they have lowered their risk.

The Inspection & Survey software gives you an easy-to-use geo operations hub that reflects your unique operational ecosystem, visualizing the complexities of people, data and things.

“After adopting the IQGeo Inspection & Survey product, Unutil has increased operational efficiencies and has been able to produce verifiable, traceable and complete audit records in support of mobile leak survey activities. We look forward to expanding the use of the IQGeo Inspection & Survey product to other operational areas of the business. I am excited about our continued partnership.”

Stacey Kilroy, Sr. Integrity Management and Pipeline Safety Coordinator at Unutil

Accelerate your network operations

IQGeo Inspection & Survey gives Unutil:

- Improve system data quality
- Improve data accessibility in the field
- Improve system of record accuracy
- Improve leak mgt and DIMP risk analysis
- Improve threat identification and mitigation
- Improve overall public safety



Photo courtesy Unutil