

CITY OF
BURLESON
Texas

Idle or productive? The City of Burleson monitors closely—with ThingTech

CHALLENGE Burleson, Texas, a community of 44,000 located in the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex, has two top priorities: Public safety and operational efficiency. City leaders suspected that idling squad cars were putting citizens and officers at risk, and needlessly wasting fuel.

SOLUTION The City of Burleson turned to ThingTech to provide real-time monitoring of its fleet of police vehicles. An enterprise intelligence solution was put in place to identify risky behavior. Using GPS tracking, unnecessary idling is identified—and measures put in place to prevent it from happening again.

RESULTS ThingTech enables the city to distinguish between legitimate idling—when vehicles are kept running for safety reasons (e.g. to power computers and cameras)—and when cars are kept running irresponsibly. The ability to identify unsanctioned idling is driving significant fuel savings—and preventing unnecessary vehicle wear and tear.

See what's happening now, predict what's happening next.

Burleson's Department of Public Works maintains the city's infrastructure. Aaron Russell, department director, selected ThingTech to capture and report real-time data about police cars and their drivers—as well as vehicles, heavy equipment and assets (and their operators) throughout the city.

Replacing a manual tracking system with one that automatically gathers location, utilization, diagnostic and condition data using multiple devices and sensors enables this government entity to access information it needs to make smarter management decisions. “ThingTech gives us the real-time data from things out in our world—to provide real-world value to our organization,” said Russell.

Safety first

Ignition on or ignition off. What’s in the best interest of the police office and the public? It depends, according to Russell. “ThingTech gives us the ability to distinguish good idling from bad idling,” he said.

Keeping batteries charged so communications are open and cameras are operating is vital to safety. “It makes good sense to make sure electronic equipment is up and running--and sometimes that entails idling time,” said Russell. A rules-based engine triggers alerts, creates workflows and generates actionable data. So, when a squad car is idling but the overhead beacon is on (meaning equipment is being charged) an idling violation isn’t recorded. “We can differentiate between legitimate idling and idling violations--which helps us stay aligned,” he added.

Improved maintenance schedules

The ThingTech asset tracking solution also allows fleet managers to plan vehicle maintenance by engine hours in use, rather than by the mile. Basing predictive maintenance on hours is more cost-effective, but requires a fleet tracking system capable of accurately capturing and reporting meter-based data.

“We’re able to look at usage from multiple angles and predict optimal timing for vehicle maintenance,” said Russell, noting that planned maintenance prevents unexpectedly pulling a squad car out of service—and potentially impacting public safety.

Optimized asset replacement

Capital planning processes are made more precise, thanks to data generated by ThingTech. Planned maintenance keeps vehicles and equipment running longer, and analytics capabilities enable accurate predictions of when an asset needs replacing.

“Our team built a scorecard system based on metrics,” said Russell. “Now, instead of saying ‘we’ll just keep this vehicle for seven years’ we take an analytical approach that allows us to score the value of each asset, every year—so we only replace when needed.”

What’s it take for a government entity to make its infrastructure stronger?

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