

Bristol Water Department, Bristol, Connecticut Success with Disaster Recovery Services

Organization Profile:

Industry: Local Government

Location: Bristol, Connecticut

Employees: 36 full time

Population: 60,000; 18,000 service connections

Years as a Tyler Client: 5

Tyler Products Used: Munis[®]; Tyler Content Manager; TylerForms; Tyler Operating System and Database Administration (OSDBA); Disaster Recovery

In their Own Words:

“In trying to resolve the issue ourselves, we spent three days saying ‘what next, what next?’ We then were able to pick up the phone and have a two-hour response [from Tyler Disaster Recovery Services] and be up and running. It is a success — there is no question about it.”

— Robert Longo, Director

Key Challenges

“We had a catastrophic server failure,” Robert Longo, director of the Bristol Water Department, told Tyler Technologies. The department was faced with a systematic hardware failure — a nightmare at the best of times, but during the department’s crunch time of monthly billing, it was devastating.

At the time of the failure, Bristol’s data was stored on 10 in-house servers which operated their Munis ERP software and other daily operations. If two servers had failed, they might have struggled to collect some important historical data. When eight failed, as happened to the Bristol Water Department, work stopped and daily operations came to a halt.

Every month, one-third of the Bristol Water Department’s client accounts need to be processed — that’s 6,000 to 8,000 bills to be issued, plus account closures, property changes, meter changes, accounting procedures and payroll to be completed in a timely manner. All of these tasks ground to a halt during the server failure, just as they reached critical deadlines.

Longo and his team faced the real threat of vital data loss and endured three days without the ability to run their daily operations — payments were not received, bills were not processed and property changes were halted.

Action Taken

Longo, who has over 20 years experience in the industry, had seen disasters strike other entities: “I had a friend who owned a small water utility in Massachusetts. The building caught on fire, and it burnt to the ground and he lost everything. At that point, I recognized the need for disaster recovery and an off-site server location.” Longo took steps to mitigate this risk at Bristol.

Years earlier when the Bristol Water Department went out to bid for a new utility billing platform, disaster recovery service was a required feature of any solution they would select. Tyler Technologies proposed Disaster Recovery Services which provides secure servers, trained specialists and daily data backups to ensure a client is never without options when it comes to data recovery.

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It proved to be a cost-effective solution which maximized Bristol's resources, secured their critical data, and minimized stress and detrimental downtime.

When Bristol Water Department was faced with server failure, Longo first charged his IT department to attempt to restore the lost data in-house. With no success after three days, Longo made the call to Tyler Technologies' Disaster Recovery team and declared an official disaster. "Within two hours [of calling Tyler Disaster Recovery Services], they had us operating on their server in Maine, which had us up and running for the first time in three days."

Results

Over the next five days, Longo and his team installed new servers, replacing the eight that had failed. During this time, their daily operations were running smoothly and the clerks saw no difference in their work. They were able to process their monthly bills, collect payments, run payroll and more.

Finally, once the new servers were installed and configured, Longo, his team and Tyler support staff worked together to transfer daily operations back to the in-house servers in Connecticut. Tyler restored the data to the day before the server failures and included all data transactions from the five days on Tyler's servers.

In the end, Tyler was able to get the Bristol Water Department operations back up in two hours. Tyler Disaster Recovery team and Longo's IT staffed worked together to ensure new servers were configured and data was restored — a success story for the Bristol Water Department and Tyler Technologies.