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Washoe Water and Sensus Announce Low Cost Migration to AMI via FlexNet

Raleigh, NC (March 31, 2009) – Nevada’s Washoe County Department of Water Resources has selected Sensus, its current water metering system provider, to assist in the organization’s upgrade to a fixed-base, Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) solution.

The 47.5 square-mile rural, suburban, mountainous service territory that surrounds the Reno-Sparks metropolitan area is now covered by the Sensus FlexNet communications system. FlexNet is an advanced, wireless fixed-base meter reading and communication system, which employs a primary-use, licensed radio spectrum to transmit data at up to two Watts of power. The system is capable of long range transmissions, resulting in a minimum amount of collection infrastructure. The system provides advanced metering functionality while simultaneously enhancing customer service. About 22,000 pit-set water meters will migrate from the Sensus Mobile RadioRead system to the Sensus FlexNet Fixed Base data collection program. More than 4,000 meters have been fitted with FlexNet endpoints, with excellent results.

“FlexNet lays the foundation for our conservation efforts and re-allocation of utility personnel and capital,” said Scott Smiley, Meter Operations Supervisor of Washoe County. “We currently read meters every month by sending out reading personnel. Our goal that we expect to meet is to read all meters, every month, efficiently and safely without a visit.”

One of the biggest challenges facing Washoe is its transient population. Department officials were spending significant time and money completing final reads, which required dispatching a service technician to each meter. The wireless communication and hourly reading capability of FlexNet eliminates that practice.

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“We developed an economically-phased, hybrid approach to implementing this program by changing out meters and transceivers on an as-needed basis,” said Smiley. “This will allow us to integrate the meters using existing personnel while allocating budgetary expenses over a longer period of time, which in turn will lower initial capital costs. We like to call it ‘Cost Flexibility.’”

Smiley added that the cost savings realized in this program will be reinvested into the community for additional capital improvement projects.

“By using existing tower locations for the FlexNet Tower Gateway Basestations (TGBs), and leveraging the powerful primary-use licensed system, hourly meter readings can be collected from many miles away.” explained Doug McCall Director of Conservation Solutions Marketing at Sensus. “The hourly reading data can also be used for water use profiling, water demand planning, water conservation, and customer education programs.”

Based on results of system performance testing by Washoe County, and a radio propagation study performed by Sensus, just three TGB collectors are needed to cover the entire Reno/Sparks metropolitan area, including Washoe County’s 22,000 meters spread over 47.5 square miles. And because Washoe already has the TGBs deployed on mountain ridges overlooking the city, no new infrastructure is needed to achieve full-service territory deployment. Additionally, the existing FlexNet infrastructure already deployed has the capacity and coverage to serve at least 190,000 additional water meters in the Reno/Sparks area.

About Sensus

Sensus is a time-tested technology and communications company providing data collection and metering solutions for water, gas and electric utilities around the world. Sensus is a transforming force for the utilities of tomorrow through its ability to help customers optimize resources, as well as to meet conservation and customer service objectives. Sensus customers rely on the Company for expert, reliable service in order to meet challenges and exceed goals. For more information, visit www.sensus.com.

About FlexNet®

FlexNet provides the utility industry’s most reliable and flexible AMI fixed network. Utility customers benefit from the dependable, mission-critical performance of a dedicated, primary-use, FCC licensed and protected communications network combined with ANSI compliant metering, IP-based wide area communications, open standards home area networking, advanced smart grid products, and IP-based information systems. Sensus delivers timely and accurate AMI communications through crystal-clear and massively redundant RF data paths with double the RF power of competing systems. This empowers utilities to communicate with a complete range of endpoint devices including smart water, gas and electric meters, intelligent home devices, and distribution automation equipment in any mix of rural and urban terrain. Forward-thinking utilities confidently choose FlexNet to provide a single-technology solution that reduces cost, mitigates technology risk, enables pricing flexibility and demand response, and improves operational efficiency.