



# Florida's Largest Public Utility Recovers One Billion Gallons of Unaccounted for Water

SENSUS OMNI METERS, A RIGOROUS TESTING PROGRAM AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES SAVE JEA TIME AND MONEY

## CHALLENGE

*Upgrade aging meters and infrastructure to protect revenue in commercial and industrial markets*

## SOLUTION

*Replace failed valves and legacy meters with Sensus OMNI™ meters*

## REACH FARTHER

*Use Sensus meters to accelerate meter testing program, boost productivity and provide enhanced customer service utilizing the OMNI's smart meter functionality*



Business is booming in Jacksonville, Florida. The most populous city in the southeastern United States, Jacksonville, consistently rates in the top 20 in Forbes' annual ranking of the Best Places for Business and Careers. The task of providing water for all those businesses—plus thousands of residences—falls to JEA, the largest municipal electric utility in Florida and one of the largest water and sewer utilities in the nation, providing electric, water and sewer service to residents and businesses in northeast Florida.

“As a municipally-owned utility, we are directly accountable to the community we serve,” said JEA Meter Specialist Foreman Jody Godsey. “We understand the important role we play in the local economy, so we’re always looking for ways to improve our services and plan for the future.”

In 2013, JEA faced a challenge: their legacy large turbine and compound water meters had reached their end of life. This put a significant amount of JEA's water revenue at risk, as



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JODY GODSEY *Meter Specialist Foreman, JEA*

the commercial and industrial (C&I) market accounts for approximately one-third of their water and wastewater revenue.

The utility needed a solution to recapture unaccounted for water and revenue across 25,000 C&I accounts.

### Starting the process

When JEA discovered that their meter assemblies needed replacing, the team decided to invest in an advanced meter upgrade program to protect revenue streams and preserve the city’s natural resources. The upgrade plans could also help them streamline their large meter testing program and would provide additional benefits to the utility.

“We wanted a long-lasting system that would bring efficiency as well as easy installation and maintenance,” said Godsey. “When the situation arose in 2013, we researched best practices and met with other utilities across the state to explore the best options.”

JEA worked closely with long-time partner [Sensus](#), a Xylem brand, to develop a phased, large-meter change-out program.

JEA decided to replace its legacy meters with Sensus [OMNI™](#) meters with floating ball technology for greater service life

and accuracy within a wider flow range. In selecting the OMNI meter, JEA developed three top requirements:

- Catalog the deployed meters
- Gain access to 30 days of hourly usage data
- Quickly address customer concerns

### Change-outs lead to changed outcomes

After conducting their first meter change-outs in 2014, JEA began tracking data through their testing program to determine criteria for identifying further outdated meters and/or assemblies in their system. They replaced an additional 400 outdated meter assemblies over the next three years. These upgrades occurred on a customized schedule with little to no downtime for customers.

“Findings from our initial change-outs helped kick-start our larger meter replacement project,” said Godsey. “It was clear how much the upgrade would help us protect revenue streams and improve customer service.”

In one significant instance, a municipal facility that required water to be in operation 24/7 had the meters tested. The meters tested accurately, but a valve was allowing millions of gallons of water to bypass the meter.





The portable OMNI Verification (V<sup>2</sup>) portable test meter is placed in-line to check the accuracy and performance of large, commercial meters without interrupting service.

“A discovery like that really puts things into perspective,” said Godsey. “Over time, with millions upon millions of gallons in lost water and revenue on the line for the utility, we knew it was time to accelerate our meter replacement program.”

Since first addressing the issue of aging meters in 2013, JEA has experienced an overall gain of **one billion** gallons of measurable water, achieved using a solution that includes the new Sensus OMNI meters, advanced meter testing and valve maintenance best practices.

### Benefits extend further

In addition to assuring the revenue stream from their C&I accounts, JEA’s meter replacement program has led to improved

processes at the utility. The OMNI meter also enhanced customer service through the data logging capability.

“The size and positioning of the meter has proved advantageous in enabling ease of maintenance for deployments at large accounts,” said Godsey. “The change-out program has also helped us identify and address issues at large legacy installations, including valve failures and backflow problems.”

Godsey also reported greater productivity. His team used to average three large meter test per day; now they can test upwards of six meters per day.

Godsey and his team look forward to more revenue stabilization and greater productivity and the doors these trends might open as a result.

“From the money we save with our meter upgrades, we can invest those resources back in the community,” said Godsey. “It all goes back to our goal to meet the demands of our customers, both today and for generations to come.”