

San Diego Gas & Electric

Itron Technology Enhances Meter Reading & Customer Service Across Gas Service Territory

OVERVIEW

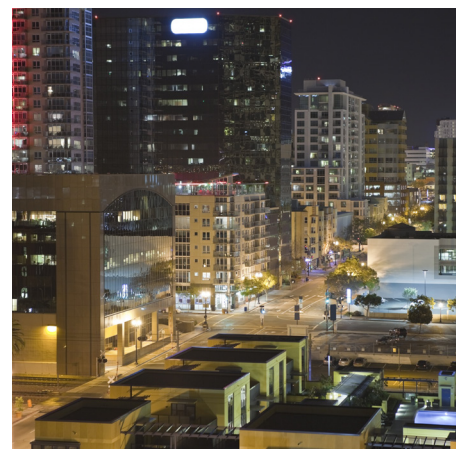
San Diego Gas & Electric provides energy service to 3.5 million consumers through 1.4 million electric meters and more than 850,000 natural gas meters in San Diego and southern Orange counties. In 2008, SDG&E launched an initiative to modernize its electricity and natural gas infrastructure.

NATURAL GAS SOLUTION

SDG&E selected Itron for the smart grid portion of this project as well as the natural gas system modernization. SDG&E installed Itron gas modules to all meters across its service territory. These gas modules collect advanced meter data and provide it to the collection system. There, Itron Enterprise Edition™ (IEE) Meter Data Management software is utilized to manage the data for integration between back-end utility systems and data analysis applications. SDG&E was particularly interested in delivering data to its CIS system to streamline billing.

At the outset of this project, more than 270,000 of SDG&E's gas meters were more than 40 years old. A benefit of Itron's broad form fit was that many meters could be retrofitted to accommodate the gas module. SDG&E was able to perform their system upgrade while only changing out 35,000 meters, saving costs as well as deployment time. In addition, visiting each meter site to install the gas module gave the company the opportunity to perform other maintenance activities throughout its service territory.

"Key to the project success was SDG&E's requirement for a positive customer experience. Early and detailed planning was key to the overall success of the project", said Farrell Cox, smart meter deployment manager for SDG&E. "The entire team, from the project management office to the individual installer carried that focus to each and every job. We recognized early on that the addition of the ERT impacted the customer's property. For example, some gates and cabinet doors were unable to close as a result of the additional space the ERT required. The team collaborated on a proactive reporting system that enabled the meter to be moved back a couple of inches prior to the addition of the ERT. The result was a better customer experience."



CUSTOMER

San Diego Gas & Electric

TYPE

Combo Natural Gas & Electricity Utility

NATURAL GAS SERVICE AREA

850,000 natural gas meters in San Diego and southern Orange counties across a service territory of 4,100 miles



BENEFITS

SDG&E currently collects two daily reads from each gas meter in the system, which are used for billing as well as transportation and distribution analytics. With frequent data collection over a secure network, SDG&E's meter readers no longer need to access the customer premise to acquire reads. Automation has streamlined meter reading activities and reduced re-bills, as well as the high operational costs associated with hard-to-read meters—all while ensuring billing accuracy.

In addition to automated reads, SDG&E has realized a number of economic benefits. The reduction of re-bills and estimated reads eliminated the need for regular visits to customer sites by meter readers, reducing costs associated with rolling a truck such as fuel costs and CO2 emissions. SDG&E is now able to more proactively schedule maintenance activities reducing the need for overtime and unplanned vehicle trips. The safety of employees is also enhanced as a result.

"The long term benefit from the project belongs to SDG&E customers. Easy access to their energy usage with on-line tools empowers them to make decisions that impact their energy bills. Automation enables the utility personnel to be safer through reduced visits to customer property, contributing to fewer utility trucks on the roads, which benefits the environment through reduced Co2 emissions."

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*Farrell Cox,
Smart Meter Deployment Manager*



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