



Company

- A wastewater treatment agency based in Carlsbad, California
- Regulates approximately 600 businesses in a 125 square mile service area

Challenges

- Needed to protect their workers in potentially dangerous environments and at all hours
- An inefficient and ineffective manual call-in process

Solution

- Intrinsically Safe Loner® IS monitoring devices from Blackline Safety
- Blackline indoor location beacons map an employee's exact location

Benefits

- Instant alerts in the event of an accident and the fastest response time
- Better use of company time and reduced false alarms
- Intrinsically safe device for environments with risk of explosive atmosphere

What everyone likes

- It's easy-to-use and durable
- Features include manual safety triggers and automatic incident detection
- Everyone wears Blackline Safety devices — "...it's just part of the uniform."
- Maps an employee's exact location indoors using location beacons



ENCINA WATER AUTHORITY TAKES EMPLOYEE SAFETY TO TECH LEVEL

Customer Background

The Encina Wastewater Authority (EWA) is a wastewater treatment agency based in Carlsbad, California. EWA serves over 400,000 residents and regulates approximately 600 businesses in a 125 square mile service area of Northwest San Diego County.

Recently, EWA's management team reaffirmed its commitment to personnel and set out to address the challenge of monitoring the wellbeing of their lone workers. EWA employees work beyond sight and sound of others in several scenarios:

- Personnel working remotely and independently where they could slip and trip into waste water or suffer an injury from the heavy machinery
- Older workers face an increased risk of a health incident
- Workers are in and out of multi-floor pump stations and throughout the facility in above-ground buildings
- Team members work alone during the day and around the clock, sometimes being called out in the middle of the night to check on the pumps by themselves
- Employees perform safety checks, maintain equipment, operate systems and respond to various process alarms

Initial Steps to find solutions

Personnel Safety and the well-being of its employees is a top priority for Encina Water Authority and with leadership insisting on an improved system to address the lone workers which are a constant reality for this industry, Ms. Jean Tobin began conducting research into potential solutions.

A call-in system was initially considered where employees called safety supervisors every half hour. When evaluated, it became evident that the call-in system would reduce productivity and many did not want the burden of constant call-ins every ½ hour.

A technological solution was sought to address the productivity gap and also increase robustness of an overall system, removing human error and complacency. Not all employees were equipped with smartphones so a safety monitoring app was not the answer. Not only that, finding an intrinsically safe smartphone was challenging and monitoring apps couldn't detect falls or locate employees working indoors. A more robust solution was needed.

Jean Tobin, Encina Water Authority's Safety and Training Manager began to research several different devices by reviewing safety trade magazines and purchasing guides, plus attending workshops and safety seminars where lone worker safety was being discussed. Ms. Tobin was introduced to Blackline Safety and worked with her team to evaluate its capabilities and subsequently piloted the system before electing to purchase and deploy safety monitoring solutions and indoor location technology for her team at Encina Water Authority.

"What I liked about Blackline was this — the devices are small, easy to use, not complicated and the price was right," said Ms. Tobin. "There were some options that were really expensive but unlike Blackline Safety, those companies would not allow us to conduct a live demo and we needed a pilot project to prove the capability of such new system or process."

Team Reaction

As with any change inside an organization, some employees responded with more apprehension than others. "They didn't like it, but we were all won over in the pilot testing phase," said Jean, "If a fall or no motion alert was triggered, we called them immediately to see if they were all right and our team could see that we all really did care about their safety."

Finding Success for Lone Worker Safety

After considering a myriad of options and comparing the Blackline Safety Loner® Intrinsically Safe monitoring system against competitors such as CISCOR, CTI, TTI Guardian and other more expensive solutions, the Encina Water Authority elected to choose Blackline Safety for its portability, size, comfort attractive price point and the ability to conduct a trial before purchasing the products outright.

The indoor location technology delivered a sense of confidence in knowing the employee would be connected and the system would work indoors to pinpoint an employee's exact location if they were in need and had pulled the emergency latch. The Blackline Live safety monitoring portal delivered the critical information details needed to manage any potential incident through to resolution efficiently and confidently.

Employees wear Loner IS devices throughout their day and evening shifts. A green SureSafe™ light confirms that the worker's safety is constantly connected to the Blackline Live portal and EWA supervisors.

"The Loner devices came to be regarded as an accountability buddy system," said Ms. Tobin. "Employees would say 'You didn't call me right away' if they pulled the emergency help latch to test us as managers on duty. Everyone quickly understood how there is now responsibility and accountability on both ends."

Blackline's Loner IS device can detect falls and man-down events where a worker is motionless. "Should an employee fall down in our basement, I know immediately about the situation," said Jean.

Encina Water Authority is well-positioned for supervisors and administrators to directly monitor their personnel using the Blackline Live monitoring portal, however, clients can also utilize the 24/7/365 Safety Operations Center live monitoring service that is dedicated to exclusively serve Blackline Safety customer.



"Blackline Safety Solutions are so much easier and effective than manual call-in systems—you'd be foolish to NOT use a Blackline Safety Lone worker device. Remote supervisors all feel confident that the safety of our employees is in good hands. It's a good program, the price is right and Blackline serves our unique needs for safety in the wastewater industry."

Jean Tobin,
Safety & Training Manager