

Case Study: **Government**

Client: **St. Louis County, Minn.**



TEEG Helps County Streamline Telecom Services and Control Costs

St. Louis County in northeastern Minnesota is the largest county east of the Mississippi River, spanning roughly 7,000 square miles and stretching from the international port city of Duluth to the Canadian border. More than 200,000 people live in its cities, towns and rural areas. The county maintains courthouses in Duluth, Hibbing and Virginia, plus a government services center in Ely and numerous other facilities to serve its citizens.

Managing the telecommunications needs of an organization this large and complex is extremely challenging.

“We have approximately 3,000 phones and 2,500 data communications connections in our local area networks, with services provided by multiple telecommunications providers, based on costs and what is available in various communities,” said Martin Buscombe, director of management information systems, St. Louis County. “Our telecommunications budget is around \$600,000 per year.”

As a government entity, the County is under tremendous pressure to operate efficiently and spend taxpayer money wisely. Since 2002, principals of The Evergreen Energy Group (TEEG) have worked closely with Buscombe and other St. Louis county officials to strategically manage telecom services for cost savings and performance. It has required an ability to work effectively within and across several government departments.

“We have had at least three contracts with (TEEG CEO) Tom Thackery and his group to identify and correct errors in our telecom billing system, eliminate unnecessary circuits, and negotiate the best rates from existing and potential providers,” Buscombe said. “This has helped us save hundreds of thousands of dollars per year.

“From a professional standpoint, we’re always looking for the most cost-effective way to provide the best solutions possible,” Buscombe added. “There is no question that if we need telecom auditing services again, TEEG will be my first phone call.”

Call TEEG at 800.608.5341 or visit us online at www.teeg.net.



Strategic Telecom Management

IMPROVED VISIBILITY

- Comprehensive telecom service inventory, itemizing all accounts, vendors, and charges
- Onsite verification of all telecom lines, trunks, circuits, and networks
- Telecom audit, including evaluation of tariffs, rates, taxes, fees, and surcharges
- Call record and traffic study assessment
- Network mapping and diagramming of wide area network (WAN) and site-specific connections

GREATER CONTROL OF TELECOM SERVICES AND COSTS

- Recovery of past overcharges and correction of billing errors for future savings
- Customized cost-cutting strategies
- Immediate and long-term cost savings that create room in your budget for upgrades and other priorities
- Valuable time savings for your busy IT staff
- Improved vendor management and accountability
- System optimization

Customized ongoing services, such as monthly bill analysis, bill paying, network design, service procurement, contract negotiation, comprehensive wireless services management, and telecom consulting also are available.

Contact:

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St. Louis County, Minn.

CHALLENGES

- Manage a complex, countywide telecommunications system with thousands of telephones and data communications connections in multiple facilities over a broad geographic area, served by numerous providers
- Reduce telecommunications expenses and free up county resources for reinvestment in new equipment, technology and services

SOLUTIONS

- Provided telecommunications audits to analyze accounts, identify billing errors, recover overcharges, eliminate unnecessary services, and secure the best available contracts and rates from providers
- Assisted the county in organizing and managing its telecom services with comprehensive inventories of buildings, vendors, lines and trunks, WAN services, and LAD and OPX circuits

RESULTS

- 2002—Identified ongoing cost savings of more than \$100,000 per year by reducing local and long distance rates and eliminating federal taxes, circuit overcharges, and unused services; found one-time credits and refunds totaling nearly \$30,000
- 2004—Reviewed county digital, analog and long distance services in Duluth, Hibbing and Virginia and recommended service provider and contract changes resulting in \$42,200 in annual telecom savings; identified service promotions and negotiated a one-time, upfront credit of nearly \$15,000 from one provider as a contract incentive
- 2008—Identified potential annual cost savings of approximately \$25,000 through cost reductions on existing services, equipment upgrades, cancellations of unused services, and billing errors

“I have been very impressed with (TEEG’s) professionalism, thoroughness, and follow up in providing telecom auditing services to St. Louis County. They have found significant cost savings for us.”

Martin Buscombe, St. Louis County
