



## Utility billing made easy for Madison Suburban Utility District

Tennessee's first established utility district benefits from Authority Utility and the flat-fee Authority EasyPay E-payment service.

**When Madison Suburban Utility District (MSUD), in Davidson County, Tennessee, was looking to upgrade from its legacy billing system, its previous software support service provider scoured the USA for the best replacement and recommended Authority Utility from Ohio based Civica.**

According to Melissa Skipworth, MSUD's Office Manager, the independent utility services provider was previously using a customized MS-DOS based system that was built and supported by an independent software programmer.

"We were using a 20-year-old system that was written just for us and we were totally reliant on one person to maintain that system" Skipworth said. "In 2012, our software support guy started looking for the best system to replace it as he approached retirement.

"We have over 19,000 meter accounts, serving a population of 70,000, so we needed to be able to transition smoothly to a new system, while ensuring it was integrated with our automated meter reading tools."

### Benefits and outcomes

- ▶ **Satisfies all State regulatory and tax requirements for utility billing**
- ▶ **Integrates with automated meter reading tools**
- ▶ **Expanded and improved reporting capabilities**
- ▶ **Convenient self-service online payment options for customers**
- ▶ **Improved staff productivity**



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**Melissa Skipworth**  
Office Manager  
Madison Suburban Utility District

## After an exhaustive search, MSUD started the implementation of Authority Utility in early in 2014 and went live in August of the same year with its new utility billing management solution.

"None of the other options we looked at in the marketplace were a good fit," Skipworth said. "There was a popular solution in the water and utility billing that was going to cost half a million dollars to implement and it would only have done half of what Authority Utility can do at the onset, so on that alone, Authority Utility has proven to be much better value.

"Our implementation went really well. We had a great team of people that would come down and stay a few days providing ongoing onsite and remote support as we made the transition.

"We had to undergo a lot of change in the way we did things. All of our account numbers and general ledger numbers were changed so there was significant customization of the Authority Utility solution to suit us.

"Change is always scary, but it went well from our point of view and we were very happy with the results. When the 'go-live' process began, we were fully transitioned within two weeks."

According to Skipworth, MSUD immediately started to experience the benefits of using Authority Utility.

"I am easily able to balance the books to the penny and that's a big comfort," she said. "It is much easier to find and fix anomalies when and where they occur.

"Meanwhile, the Authority EasyPay electronic bill payment and presentment (EBPP) system works well and we have more and more people paying that way which improves productivity.

"Previously, our customers were paying a 3.4 per cent credit card processing fee on top of their bill if they chose to pay that way," Skipworth added. "Now, with EasyPay there is a flat fee of \$1.95 per transaction. That equates to a significant savings for the majority of our 19,000-plus customers."

Melissa said that reporting capabilities and bill visibility inherent in Authority Utility are also big efficiency improvements for MSUD.

"There are a few regulatory and tax implications around utility billing that are unique to Tennessee but the Civica solution was able to accommodate these," she said. "Civica has been able to customize their products to meet our particular needs regarding billing and reporting.

"There is much more reporting capability available to me in Authority Utility. We have many innovative ideas here at MSUD, and we want to keep improving the way we approach our billing of utility services. To date customizing Authority Utility to meet our needs has been a positive experience.

**Customer support from Civica has been a positive experience for MSUD. "We needed a solution that came with good support and we have had a great response from Civica."**

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