

# AUTOMATING 811 PROCESS, SAVES TIME & IMPROVES COMPLIANCE FOR EAST ORANGE COUNTY

customer story



SEDARU



The East Orange County Water District (EOCWD) is responsible for managing over 15 square miles of sewer and water service areas for approximately 100,000 residents. Like many smaller utilities, EOCWD must juggle resources for competing priorities. One of the ways to manage it all is to streamline processes and improve efficiencies through digitizing everyday operations. This approach led EOCWD to implement Sedaru, a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution that enables utilities to automate common daily tasks, such as the processing of 811 tickets.





If you are a contractor working on an excavation project in the United States, the law requires you to dial the 811 number before digging begins, so that the utility can mark buried lines with flags or paint for safety and protection of infrastructure. Managing these tickets can be a full-time job for large utilities, and if mismanaged can lead to service disruptions, costly repairs, and in the worst-case serious injury or death.

On average, EOCWD receives 17 DigAlert tickets from 811 dispatch every day, and, on occasion, as many as 60. Before implementing Sedaru, EOCWD used emails, phone calls,

and texts to sort, dispatch, and confirm the completion of 811 locate tickets. This was not only time-consuming and tedious for staff, but also made it difficult to manage without visually seeing where all the locations were, and the status of each ticket.

The App has a tape measure feature that allows the field crew to determine the distance of the area, record information such as field status, pictures, and comments, and then automatically submit the Positive Response to DigAlert.



## Streamlining through automation

Now when EOCWD receives DigAlert tickets, Sedaru parses the ticket information into the utility's GIS, digitizes each ticket's attributes and presents the location on a map. The program reports all tickets and prioritizes those qualified as an emergency.

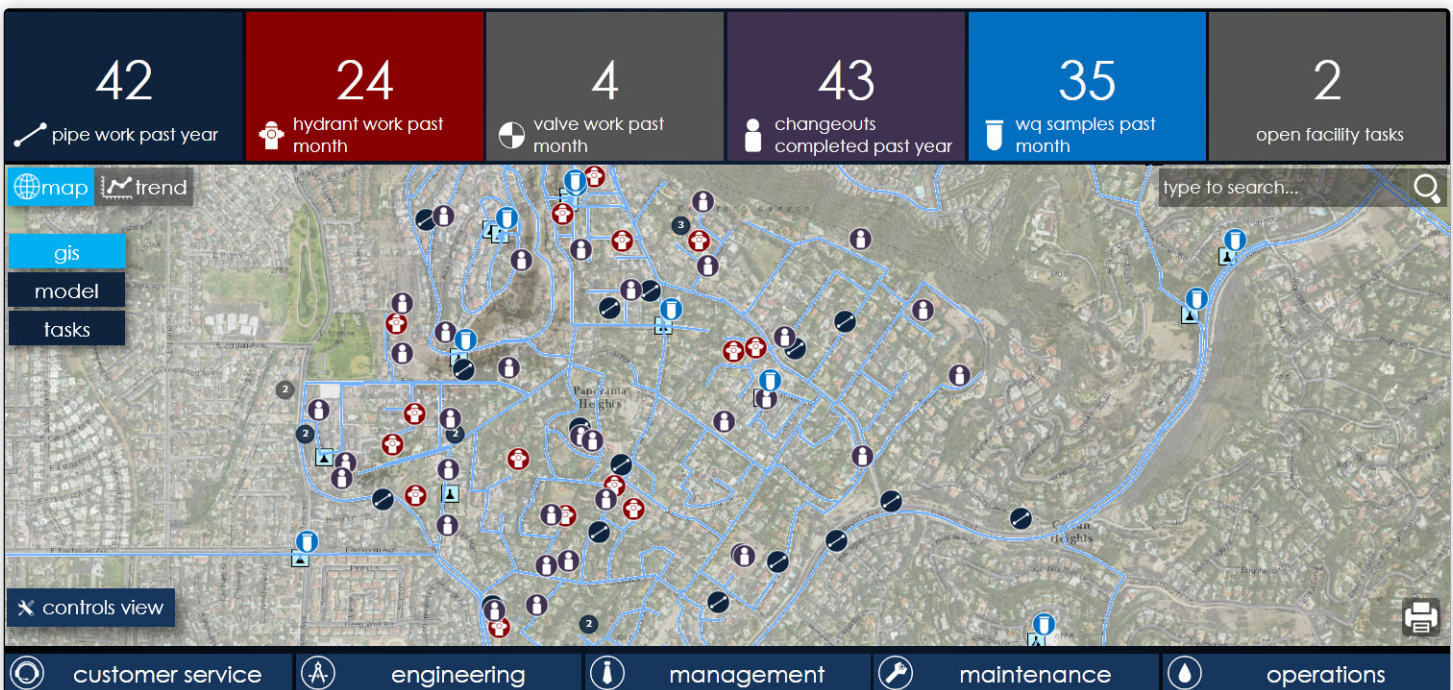
Work orders can be automatically assigned or an administrator can assign field personnel based on current location, expertise, or workload, and add any special instructions before sending to the field locator's mobile device. "We typically mass assign tickets to the field staff. This way they can see it on the map and take care of DigAlert tickets within their work assigned area of the day," said Jerry Mendzer, Operations Manager of East Orange County Water District.

Assigned tickets can be seen on a map and details can be drilled down in the Sedaru Fieldforce app. The locator can measure the area from the app, record information such as field status, pictures, and comments, and then automatically submit the Positive Response to DigAlert. If the ticket is not

within the EOCWD service area, an administrator needs to verify there are no utility assets in the area, before closing the ticket. In most cases, all potential utilities in the area are notified, and all are required to respond even if it is to inform DigAlert that the asset is not in their area.

**Justin Davis, Wastewater Supervisor for East Orange County Water District said, "Sedaru makes it easy to identify tickets outside our service area and close them without going into the field. Using Sedaru, Dig Ticket has easily saved us up to 6 hours a week for marking USAs (underground service alerts)."**

EOCWD can now track, locate, and view tickets on a unified map and by streamlining the administrative side, DigAlerts can be processed quicker. And by digitizing the process, the utility gains an accessible historical record that provides defensibility in the event damage occurs. This new automation has freed up vital people resources that can now be allocated to other projects and moved the district further along its path to complete utility optimization.





## Digitizing the 811 process improves compliance

All states have existing dig legislation and progressive states like California are tightening up the regulations on January 1, 2023. The state will require that all new subsurface installations will need to be mapped using a geographic information system (GIS) and maintained as permanent records of the operator. With the heavy fees associated with compliance issues, it's integral that utilities are equipped with solutions that provide an intuitive and transparent 811 locate process.

In 2019, the [DIRT Report](#) released by the Common Ground Alliance estimated the annual societal costs of damages to buried utilities in the U.S. to be approximately \$30 billion.

So, it makes sense that the new legislation is going into effect to protect utility budgets and infrastructure as well as mitigate risk and liability. Digitizing 811 programs can equip utilities with what they need to comply with new and evolving legislation. It is also another tool in the box for digital transformation that can raise morale as smart utilities can streamline processes and do more with less.



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