

Engineers Without Borders uses Siemens clamp-on flowmeter to restore water supply in Les Anglais, Haiti

Process Instrumentation

The situation

The Siemens Channel Partner in Oregon, has a customer from an engineering firm who also volunteers for Engineers Without Borders (EWB). The Portland chapter of EWB took on a project in Les Anglais, Haiti, to restore their drinking water supply system that had been disrupted in the Fall of 2008.

The problem

The EWB, Les Anglais project began when the Portland chapter was approached by a local church group with a request to assist the community of Les Anglais with their drinking water problems. The group had determined that some of the Les Anglais community's health problems were due to a contaminated water supply. Two engineers from

the chapter traveled with the church group to Les Anglais in March 2008 on an exploratory trip to gather information for the project.

Les Anglais is served by two separate water source springs that feed two reservoirs. The distribution system was gravity fed with about 600 taps between the reservoirs and town. The system serves an estimated 12,000 people. The water system was 20 years old and was operational in early 2008, but had some maintenance issues that reduced capacity, enabled contamination to infiltrate the system, and left the system vulnerable to future damage. When hurricane Hanna blew through in the Fall of 2008, the system was damaged further. It could not be used without considerable repairs.



Both water source springs were contaminated and people had to walk about 15 minutes to a working tap. The Les Anglais water board and mayors were supportive and very willing to work with the EWB team. Based on findings from the March 2008 exploratory trip, the Portland Professional EWB chapter agreed to take on the project.

They put together a team consisting of engineers with backgrounds in civil, mechanical, environmental, electrical, agricultural, geo-technical, and transportation engineering, as well as public health professionals with backgrounds in water, sanitation and hygiene in international health, nutrition, and evidence-based health policies

The challenge

In mid-June 2009, the customer/EWB volunteer, called the local Siemens representative to see if he could get a Siemens clamp-on flowmeter to take with him to Haiti – the following week. He needed it to help troubleshoot the failed water supply system in Les Anglais.

The solution

The Siemens representative put in a quick call to Siemens Process Instrumentation. They immediately arranged a shipment of the requested flowmeter to Portland for arrival the next morning. The Siemens representative delivered the meter to the customer, and he was able to take it with him on his trip to Haiti.

The EWB volunteer used the Siemens clamp-on flowmeter to troubleshoot the water supply system in Les Anglais. He and his team were able to restore drinking water to the community, and he said, “The people were dancing in the streets with joy”. It was a true team effort, including the Siemens representative and many people at the Siemens Process Instrumentation facility, that resulted in getting the flowmeter to the EWB engineer in time for this important humanitarian effort. The representative also commented that “watching an industrial giant like Siemens respond so quickly was extremely impressive”.

The product

SITRANS FUP1010 is ideally suited as a check meter for existing conventional meters and to monitor applications that do not have existing metering. Single and dual channel models are available that come with both WideBeam transit time and Doppler technology, making them fitting for plant testing and survey applications.

The SITRANS FUP1010 is also available as a pre-configured, all-inclusive water kit that comes in a weatherproof and sturdy rolling case. The case holds all equipment needed to conduct flow measurements, including cables, multiple sensors and the ultrasonic flow computer.

Background on this project comes from the Portland EWB website <http://www.ewbportland.org/haiti>

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