

WATER FLOW SENSOR SAVES SCHOOL BOARD THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS



Jessica Kukac, Environmental & Energy Systems Coordinator, Simcoe County District School Board holds Flowie in front of Nantyr Shores Secondary School

SUMMARY

Jessica Kukac is the Environmental & Energy Systems Coordinator with the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB). She oversees utility costs and monitors consumption of electricity, water, and natural gas for over 120 schools and public buildings, across 16 different municipalities. After installing the Alert Labs Flowie water flow sensor at one of the schools, she discovered a urinal and faucet were leaking. The plumbing fixtures were repaired and the amount of money saved in wasted water is estimated to be in the thousands of dollars for a single school. She recommends Flowie for any public sector building.

RISING COST OF WATER

Managing water consumption at schools has never been more important for people like Jessica. With water prices increasing across municipalities, the cost

of water is using more of the Simcoe County District School Board's (SCDSB) budget than it did in the past. "For the first time ever, our water budget is approaching our natural gas budget," she says. Despite the portion of the budget allocated for water, the SCDSB did not have a workable system for managing daily water consumption.

HIGH WATER BILL ALERTS

Occasionally, Jessica would receive a letter from a municipality to let her know that water consumption at one of the schools was higher than normal and that she should expect a higher bill. Jessica compares attempting to identify the source of the unusual water use with playing a "guessing game."

“Without real time data, fixing water leaks is a guessing game. Relying on monthly or quarterly billing data is not conducive to conservation.”

Even if her team was able to identify and fix the source of the high water use, the school board was still responsible for paying for the water that had been wasted.

BAS TOO EXPENSIVE

When asked why SCDSB didn't rely on a Building Automation Systems (BAS) to manage water use, Jessica raised concerns with this approach. The large

up front cost of installing BAS and the compatibility of the existing water meters were the biggest barriers. "To be able to get a new server and to store that data would be very expensive and the monitoring that comes with Flowie is so much more affordable and so much more robust," Jessica said. With a lack of insight into real-time water use and alternatives being too costly, Jessica welcomed Alert Labs solutions for better water use management.

EASY TO DEPLOY WATER FLOW SENSOR

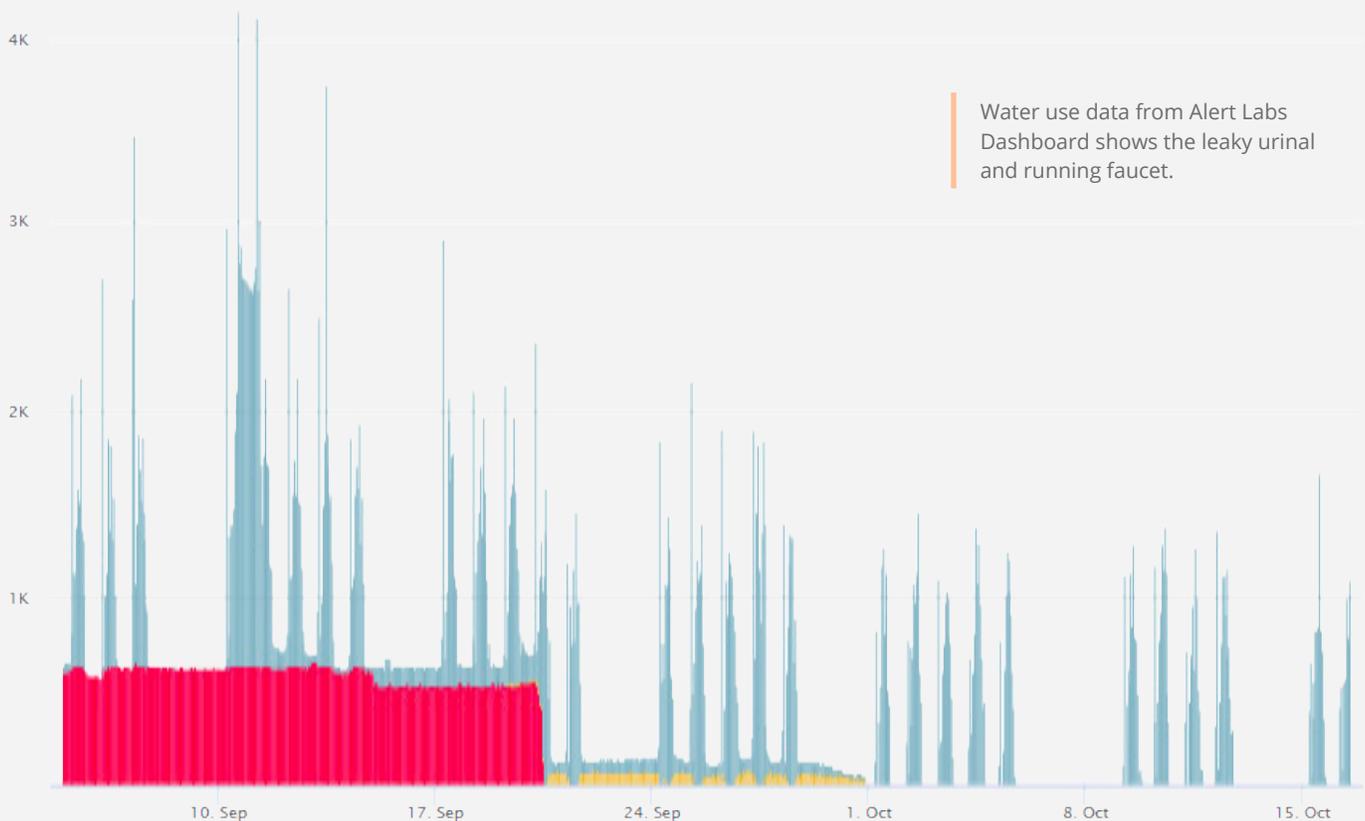
Jessica installed the Alert Labs Flowie water sensor at various elementary and secondary schools across Simcoe County. She also has plans to install Flowie in administrative buildings and maintenance shops. She commented on how easy it was to create accounts, verify flow rates and calibrate Flowie's water meter readings.

"The registration process is very simple. I can do it on my cell phone."

SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS AFTER LEAK DETECTED AT BRECHIN PUBLIC SCHOOL

On the same day Flowie was installed at Brechin Public School, Flowie sent Jessica an alert telling her that water was running 100% of the day. As a school building that should be unoccupied in the evening, this pattern of water usage was unusual. With the help of the real-time water use data visible on the Alert Labs Dashboard, Jessica was able to identify the source of the constant water usage. "When taking a closer look at the graphs on the Dashboard we were able to see that there were actually two time frames of water that were being used," she says.

Jessica analyzed the amount of water usage per minute and recognized that the most likely source of the water use was a leaking urinal and leaking faucet. She told the maintenance staff about her discovery, which made repairing the leaking fixtures much faster. Because SCDSB did not track water use in real-time before installing Flowie, Jessica does not know how long these leaks had been occurring. Regardless of the exact duration of the leak, Jessica is certain that



Brechin Public School has made significant savings on their water bills.

“Fixing these leaks at one school likely saved us thousands of dollars. We have almost 120 buildings.”

Jessica told Alert Labs that the savings on water costs are significant for the Simcoe County District School Board:

“The money goes against our budget and allows us to create opportunities for energy savings on utilities - including water - allows us to provide more environmental stewardship programs for our students.”

ONE PLATFORM TO MANAGE WATER CONSUMPTION AT PROPERTIES IN MULTIPLE CITIES

Another challenge for an Environmental & Energy Systems Coordinator is monitoring water use at different buildings that have different billing cycles and are located in 16 different municipalities. Jessica stated that Flowie is affordable enough to put into every building even if that building may not currently have an issue with high water use. She also described how having one platform for all buildings gives her greater insight.

“With Flowie we have access to minute-by-minute data for schools all across the County regardless of their municipality. We’re able to see the varieties of consumption patterns that we have which is really great because there are some areas that we would never understand consumption until 3 or 4 months later if they’re billed quarterly.”

FLOWIE FOR ANY BUILDING

Flowie is helping school boards across North America, like the SCDSB, make significant savings on water costs. In addition to school boards, Flowie has been installed at civic properties, multi-family housing, commercial buildings, and single detached homes to help reduce bills and prevent damage. In just over a year, more than 50 million gallons (189 million liters) of water have been saved which has led to water bills being reduced by 18% to 23% on average.

For more information, contact

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