

AMI Consulting Services

On Time, On Target: RPU's AMI Success



Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) is the largest municipal utility in the state of Minnesota, serving more than 61,000 electric customers and 42,000 water customers across a growing service territory. The utility recently undertook an initiative to replace meters at the end of their life cycle and move from automated meter reading (AMR) to AMI. From the outset, “success” meant more than simply installing new meters; it meant coordinating multiple procurements, integrating disparate systems, minimizing operational risk, and hitting a firm go-live date without overburdening internal staff.



Business Challenge

RPU’s AMI program was ambitious by design and complex by necessity. The project required three separate procurements and three different vendors: an AMI vendor, a meter data management (MDM) system, and a meter installation vendor (MIV). Adding to the complexity, RPU needed to support both electric and water operations within a single integrated AMI solution.

Managing multiple vendors introduced high-stakes challenges. Each vendor brought its own assumptions and system dependencies, creating a risk of siloed decision-making and misaligned designs. Critical integration decisions carried downstream implications for data flows, business processes, testing, and operational readiness. Any misstep, whether a delay in system integration, an underestimated testing effort, or misaligned business processes, could have pushed go-live dates, increased costs, and strained internal resources.

Util-Assist's Role

Building on Util-Assist's earlier involvement in the utility's AMI procurement project, RPU engaged Util-Assist to support system integration. With a deep understanding of RPU's objectives and the vendor landscape, Util-Assist served as RPU's trusted AMI advisor throughout the 15-month system integration effort.

Util-Assist provided overall project management, coordinating the vendors and aligning schedules, risks, and decisions. While RPU was still in the contracting phase with system vendors, Util-Assist facilitated a cross-vendor coordination meeting to establish project timeline guiderails and align expectations. Experienced AMI subject matter experts represented RPU's interests during design workshops and technical discussions, helping the utility navigate complex, interdependent decisions. Finally, Util-Assist developed AMI business processes and standard operating procedures and led planning and execution across the testing lifecycle, reducing risk while easing the burden on RPU staff.

The Result

Util-Assist helped RPU maintain momentum across a complex, multi-vendor environment by proactively managing risks, resolving cross-system dependencies, and keeping all parties aligned to shared outcomes. When challenges arose, Util-Assist worked with vendors to adjust sequencing and priorities without extending the overall project timeline. With consistent oversight and proactive risk management, RPU achieved its January 2026 go-live milestone on schedule without disruption to ongoing operations. According to RPU's AMI operations supervisor, Lawrence Scheel, "Util-Assist proved to be an invaluable partner in successfully executing our Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project. Their team was vital in overseeing intricate system integration and deployment."

RPU's project demonstrates that success in AMI initiatives can depend as much on coordination, governance, and execution discipline as it does on technology. By addressing integration risks early, aligning vendors around shared outcomes, and investing in thorough testing and operational readiness, RPU positioned itself for long-term AMI value.

For utilities navigating multi-vendor AMI programs, RPU's experience shows how independent advisory support can be the difference between a delayed deployment and an on-time success. RPU's project is one of more than 100 AMI initiatives Util-Assist has supported across North America, reinforcing our role as a trusted advisor helping utilities deliver complex AMI programs with confidence.

Contact Us



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