Anderson County Expedites Alerts and Expands Reach with Everbridge

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

ANDERSON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Anderson County, South Carolina is located roughly halfway between Charlotte, NC, and Atlanta, GA in upstate South Carolina. Comprised of nine municipalities, multiple communities and home to 20 international manufacturers.

Everbridge Reach: Population of 205,000 through different departments including fire, EMS, law enforcement and city administration.

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"Everbridge is more fluid, intuitive and user-friendly."

JOSH HAWKINS
Anderson County Director of Emergency Management

Highlights

+ Anderson County was able to grant the managers of each municipality and department the ability to manage their contacts and send updates themselves.

+ Speed up the notification process drastically, especially on the reverse 911 side. "On the employee notification side, the Manage Bridge app has really sped things up. Just being able to jump in, click on the group I need to contact, and send that out immediately… those simple things make this all worthwhile for us."

+ The onboarding and setup time was so fast that it beat the cutoff date for their previous system. "Everbridge knocked it out of the park to get us set up quickly. We were live and running in less than two weeks, and that was even before the cutoff date for our previous system."

Challenges

Even though the county population is about 205,000, Anderson County only reached about 26,000 landlines with their previous solution. On top of the struggles in reaching their residents, Hawkins described the old system as bulky and difficult to navigate. Directors had to manage all small accounts and users themselves, when it really should be individual agencies managing their own contacts. Even the data they were gathering was either inaccurate or outdated. Compounding the small reach with poor data and usability issues led to a switch to Everbridge.

Some of the other goals Anderson County sought to achieve with a new solution include notifications on criminals who could cause harm to the general public, natural disaster alerts, and access for vulnerable needs populations for health facilities.

Solution

For Anderson County, the biggest value in the switch to Everbridge is message speed and convenience. Previously, they were using a system that required a launch code, personal code, and username to send notifications. This was time-consuming and cumbersome when in a hurry. Everbridge speeds up the notification process drastically, especially on the reverse 911 side. They can send messages with FaceID and rebroadcast past messages without reselecting groups for the new message. "These 'little things' make a huge impact on our enjoyment of the software," Hawkins said.

Additionally, a priority was to add more contacts and improve data collection. Neighboring counties highly recommended Everbridge, and after exploring multiple options on the table, the vote was unanimous to move forward with the switch. Since their office covers every municipality, fire department, law enforcement, and more within Anderson County, one of the biggest selling points was that group managers could add contacts and send updates themselves. Using Resident Connection was also a key differentiator for Hawkins and the decision makers, helping the team establish faster communications with the residents of the county before, during, and after an incident.

The transition and implementation were streamlined and completed quickly. Everbridge began the process around mid-June, and the Anderson County team was up and running in less than two weeks. "They knocked it out of the park to get it set up quickly. They did a very good job," Hawkins said.

Advice from Anderson County:

Analyze what systems you are currently using, what you are using them for, and what your biggest needs are.

For example, an agency may say they are just looking to use reverse 911, but you could have a system that goes beyond that and also messages all your employees.

"You can set it up to allow different agencies access to their own side of the system, and now you're saving money and time," Hawkins said. You could do away with other disparate systems and do it all with one complete platform, building more connections even between agencies in one county. "I've used other systems here and with other counties, and Everbridge just seems to be a more robust, well thought out, and easy to work with system," he added.

Let's Chat

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