

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District Shows Savings are a Breeze with Wasp Inventory Control

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Four to five parts replaced weekly in 30 air quality monitoring stations with no coordinated effort to manage inventory parts received from over one hundred suppliers. Staff spent up to 750 hours annually searching for parts on hand, which delayed equipment and monitoring station service needs

SOLUTION

Accurately tracking parts on hand enabled the group to increase the variety of items stocked and to manage minimum quantities. Delays that once occurred in the repair of key equipment have virtually been eliminated.

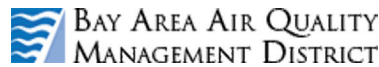
BENEFITS

\$30,000 saved annually
750 labor hours saved annually

Positive ROI in 3 weeks

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Air quality monitoring service with 30 locations around the San Francisco Bay area, tasked with providing sample data to area authorities



What used to take hours now requires less than five minutes. Technicians avoid the frustration associated with hunting for parts. Plus, they can spend more time on high-value tasks.

- Bryan Bibeau, senior air quality instrument specialist

At the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, accurately measuring air quality is a top priority. Air quality monitoring stations rely on sophisticated technical equipment, which must remain up and running around the clock. Ongoing operation requires a stable supply of replacement parts, which can cost anywhere from 50 cents to a few thousand dollars per item, sourced through roughly 100 different suppliers.

With no formal inventory process in place, the Ambient Monitoring group struggled to keep accurate counts of its replacement parts. The group relied on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, which was supposed to list all of the parts housed in a central supply room. The spreadsheet was rarely accurate and did not account for parts housed at each field station. Instead, the parts stored in the field were tracked on a clip board at each monitoring station.

“When a technician needed a replacement part, he would spend between two and three hours calling around to the various field technicians looking for it,” said Bryan Bibeau, a senior air quality instrument specialist for the Ambient Monitoring group. “Since we

replace between four and five parts a week, as a group we were wasting between 500 and 750 hours a year just tracking down parts.”

Because there was no central tracking method, the group frequently ran out of needed parts, which then had to be ordered from a supplier. This delayed the repair time for critical equipment. Also, parts that were overstocked languished on the shelf.

“Each year, we budget for \$100,000 in replacement parts, in addition to \$250,000 that is available to buy new equipment,” Bibeau said. “Yet when management asked how our budget was being used, we could not provide an accurate answer.”

A Breath of Fresh Air

Bibeau purchased Wasp Inventory Control, which offers the extensive features of an enterprise-level inventory management product without a hefty price tag or complex implementation. He began implementation by relocating all parts to two central supply rooms, which are neatly organized with shelving and bins. Each part has a barcode that can be easily scanned.

Bibeau established the organization's initial inventory levels by scanning in the replacement parts already in stock. When the barcodes were scanned, the Wasp Inventory Control database was automatically updated with the data, including quantity, supplier and location. Now, technicians can instantly search for available stock using any PC, relying on Inventory Control for accurate inventory counts.

"What used to take hours now requires less than five minutes," Bibeau said. "Technicians avoid the frustration associated with hunting for parts. Plus, they can spend more time on high-value tasks."

Stock replenishment now takes a fraction of the time. Bibeau can review parts on hand from his desk, rather than manually sorting through the stock room. He can quickly scan new parts received into the system. Inventory Control even provides a suggested location for new parts in the stockroom, eliminating any guesswork.

Faster Repairs, Less Frustration

Kincheloe now has visibility into the quantity of each part he uses every month. He can use this information to negotiate better prices for inventory items. Best of all, customer service has

improved, since technicians are able to immediately find the parts they need to complete a job more quickly.

After successfully improving the inventory tracking process, Bibeau now is moving to improve the purchasing process. Using Wasp Inventory Control's purchase order capabilities, he is anticipating additional cost savings and efficiencies.

"When I joined the group and saw the current manual process, I just couldn't imagine how anyone could track inventory using Excel," Bibeau said. "Now, using Inventory Control, life is a lot easier for me, and the whole process is better for everyone involved."

TANGIBLE BENEFITS OF WASP INVENTORY CONTROL INCLUDE:

- Up to \$30,000 per year of time saved that was formerly used searching for parts. Instead, technicians can focus on value-added tasks that are more fulfilling and more profitable
- Up to \$6,000 per year of time saved that was formerly consumed by managing & replenishing the stockroom.
- Better use of inventory dollars. Now, the Ambient Monitoring group stores a broader variety of items and an ideal number of each part. Needed items are always on hand, eliminating delays in equipment repairs. Overstock has also been eliminated, ensuring that a wider and more effective mix of parts is always available.
- Improved accountability for management. Accurate reports are available at the touch of a button, demonstrating exactly how each dollar is spent.

When I joined the group and saw the current manual process, I just couldn't imagine how anyone could track inventory using Excel. Now, using Inventory Control, life is a lot easier for me, and the whole process is better for everyone involved.
- Bryan Bibeau, senior air quality instrument specialist

MORE CASE STUDIES



Precision Drilling
Primes the Pump



Automating Inventory
Control Smooths the
Sales Process



Maxim Integrated
Products