



The Challenge: Keeping Vehicles Safe

Operating the largest wastewater treatment facility in the world, DC Water has a wide range of services that must be running smoothly at all times. In addition to providing drinking water and wastewater treatment services for the Washington D.C. area, the agency also treats water main breaks, delivers drinking water, and maintains the infrastructure both above and below ground.

DC Water's Fleet Management is in charge of 610 vehicles and about 1,200 other pieces of equipment, including tow-behinds and construction equipment. Director of Fleet Management Timothy Fitzgerald wanted to find a way to keep track of how safely the vehicles are running.

"Driver profiles, risk management, and safety are very important to what we do," he says. "We wanted to find a metric in which we could look at the business of fleet and understand how to best improve the services we render to the public. In the position of public trust, we wanted to measure what we manage."

Industry:
Utility

Based in:
Washington D.C.

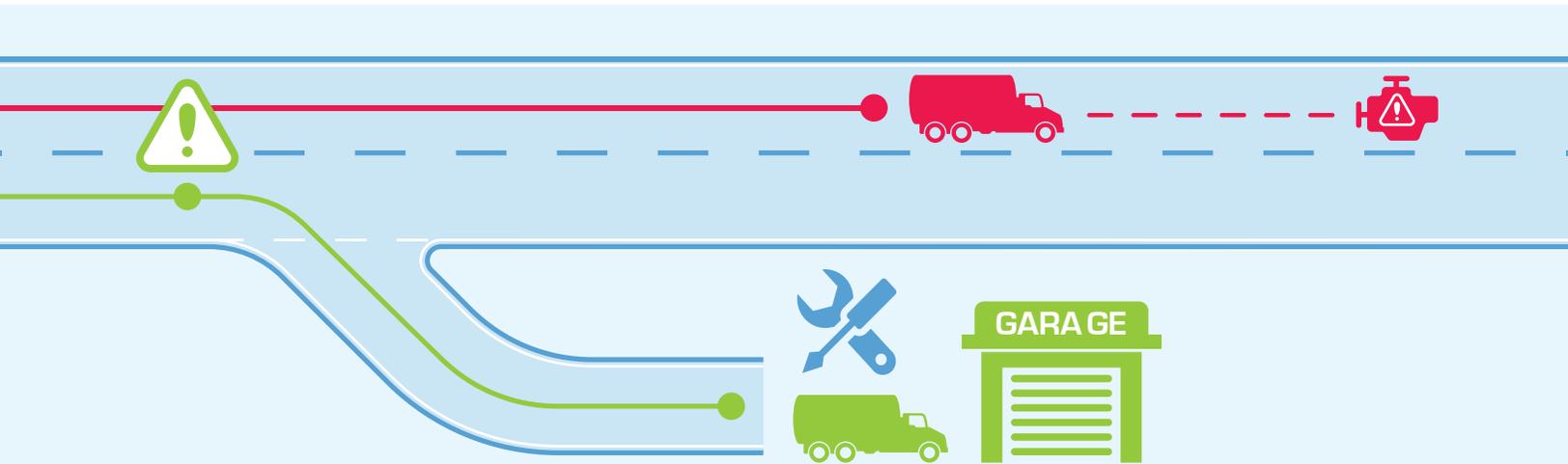
Types of Vehicles:
A mix of utility units

Fleet Size: 610

The Solution:

Getting To A Place Of Predictive Maintenance

Already using a fleet management software, Fitzgerald wanted to learn more about his fleet's operations in a way that integrated with the existing system.



“We wanted to get to a place of **predictive maintenance** rather than just **preventive maintenance**,” Fitzgerald says, adding that he chose Geotab for its flexibility, scalability, and ease of use. “It’s a plug-and-play product — I don’t need to drill holes in my units, cabs, or anything else to make it work.”

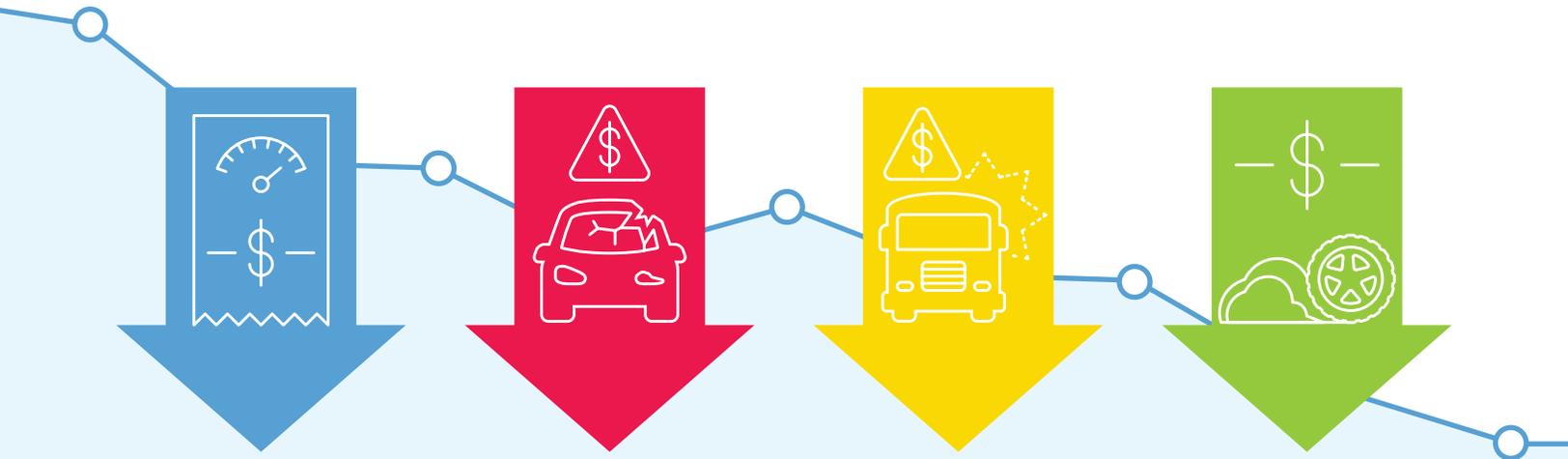
In addition to collecting useful driver and vehicle data, Fitzgerald was able to organize the information in a way that made it easier to use and present to people outside of the Fleet Services department.

“We can now tie all of these things in an integrated way with our key performance indicators — into our unit usage, into our departments,” he says. “We’ve customized the desktop so some of our directors and customers can look at their own departments’ behaviors and everyone is held accountable.”

The Results

Keeping Drivers Accountable

One advantage of the new system was the increased communication with drivers. Now that Fleet Services is able to note driver behavior like seatbelt use and speeding, they are able to have open discussions about safety.



“What it’s done is cut down the cost on **tickets**, on **accidents**, on **potential accidents**, and on the **harsh use of vehicles**,” Fitzgerald says. “We have more frequent talks with our operators and we actually have an exchange. Folks are more apt to assist in the process than be against it. We have different unions and they have all been receptive to Geotab as well — it creates an honest working environment.”

Predictive Maintenance

The biggest advantage that DC Water has seen is the ability to view how each vehicle is doing and when it should be brought in for maintenance.

“In Washington D.C. we have the second-worst rush hour traffic in the country, so it helps us to understand and know beforehand if a vehicle is having a problem with a potential breakdown,” he says. “That’s also a cost-avoidance for us and for everyone else involved when you consider being broken down on the road and backing up traffic.”

Additional Benefits

Working with their Geotab reseller, he appreciates that there is someone he can discuss options with. DC Water is looking to work with Geotab on continually advancing the technology, such as tapping into self-healing or “mesh” networks.

“In a lot of big cities, you have to go around infrastructure and internet connection is not always prevalent or secure,” Fitzgerald says. “So we’re looking at Geotab for our geographic information system (GIS viewer) and some of the other products that we have now and are looking to expand in the future.”



From the Fleet Director:

“Not everyone’s willing to have a flexible product. They have a commercial, off-the-shelf product and that’s the way it is. But with Geotab, making suggestions and having that exchange with a partner more so than with a company has made for a long-lasting relationship.”

- Timothy Fitzgerald, Director of Fleet Management