

Oakland County Uses IP Video to Protect County Infrastructure

Mainline provides IP video surveillance solution to protect the county's infrastructure and citizens.

Oakland County is located just outside Detroit, Michigan. It includes 62 communities within its 910 square mile border. The county has a population of more than 1.2 million people, which is more than each of these 10 states: Vermont, North Dakota, Montana, Alaska, South Dakota, Wyoming, Delaware, Rhode Island, New Mexico and the District of Columbia. More than 509,000 households are located in Oakland County.

As with any community, safety and security of its citizens is a primary function of the Oakland County government. And using technology as a "force multiplier" has proven an effective security tool for Oakland County recently.

"We have an obligation to provide security to our citizens," said L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive of Oakland County. "When we see a potential threat to that security, we do whatever is necessary to eliminate the threat."

The Challenge

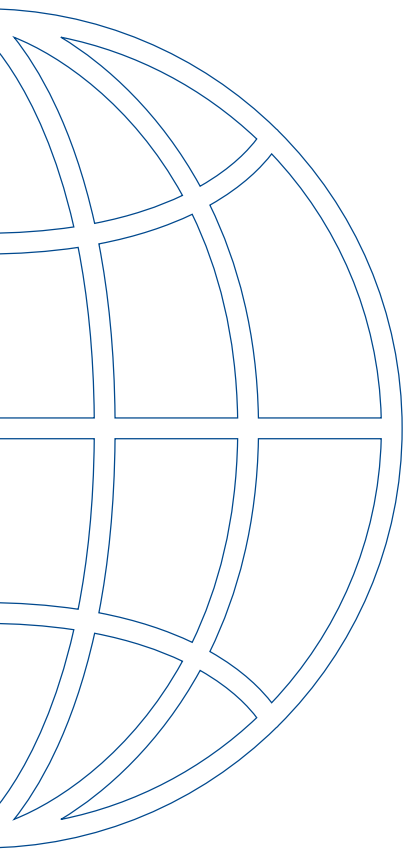
Copper theft is a national epidemic. While scrap metal theft is nothing new, high metal prices have made thieves bolder and more inventive than before, as they now have over twice the financial incentive for the same amount of risk. Since 2003, the cost for copper has more than doubled. Some drive pickup trucks while accomplices 'yank-and-run' with gutters in the middle of the night. Others deliberately pose as construction workers at vacant homes, figuring that neighbors won't question why guys in hardhats are working with radiators, gutters or siding. But the thieves are not just targeting residential sources of copper; they are breaking into warehouses and other industrial settings too for larger quantities.

Oakland County was struck at several public safety radio communication towers where copper thieves stole bus bars, antennas and other metals. Not only was the theft of the copper a problem, but in the process the emergency (911) dispatch voice communication towers were incapacitated. Until the tower was repaired, the emergency response systems in the county were denigrated. Without voice communication between the 9-1-1 dispatchers and public safety personnel in the field, police, firefighters and residents were subjected to unnecessary emergency risks. In addition, it was very costly for the county to repair the towers each time an incident occurred.

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- L. Brooks Patterson,
County Executive of Oakland County

"In reality, we were dealing with a homeland security issue," said Joe Sullivan, manager of Oakland County's CLEMIS. ([Learn more about CLEMIS.](#)) "One of the first things a terrorist group will attempt to do is take down communication tools."



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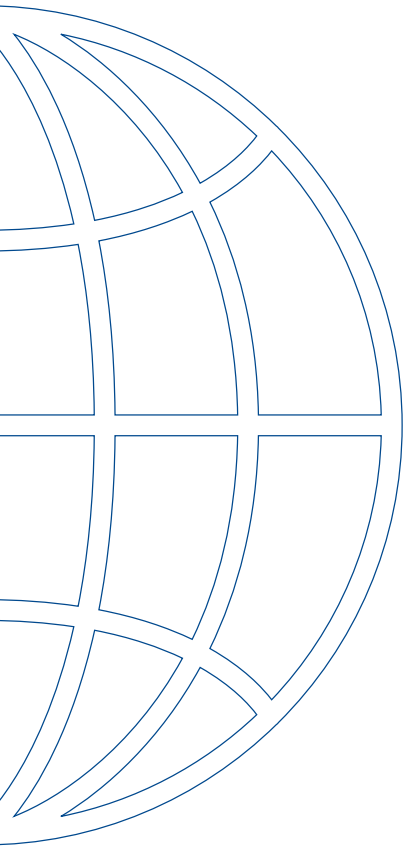
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The Solution

Mainline and the Oakland County information technology organization worked closely as a team in developing the solution. Mainline consulted extensively with the county's infrastructure team to develop a solution that was appropriate and cost-effective for the county. The solution includes hardware, software and services from Mainline.

The project plan includes a video surveillance solution for more than 20 tower locations. Ultimately, at least 65 cameras will be installed. The cameras are motion activated and attached to the county's existing fiber network and monitored by the Sheriff's Office. Now, 9-1-1 dispatchers can remotely monitor the towers and be audibly notified if there is a problem at one of the tower locations. The system has a proactive alarm built in based on motion; if there is motion when there should not be any, an alarm is sent to the dispatch office. The high quality images from the cameras will assist in determining if the intrusion is of a criminal nature. The county expects to see a dramatic reduction, if not elimination, of the vandalism problem at its communication towers.

The Results

Oakland County has not had any security breaches at its communication tower locations since implementation of Mainline's surveillance solution.

"The implementation went very smoothly," said Bob Pence, project manager for Oakland County. "The Mainline team became an extension of our own team and was with us every step of the way."

"Mainline is unique in that they can provide all aspects of an IP video solution – from consultation to installation to training," said Pence. "The Mainline team is a step above their competition, particularly in terms of support."

- Bob Pence,
Project Manager, Oakland County

"Our goal of having a critical area remotely monitored for intrusion, theft and vandalism has been met," said Pence. "Our in-house officers are notified by an alarm if there is activity at the site and they can immediately view the situation and determine if an officer needs to be dispatched. In addition, the motion-activated alarm that is part of the Mainline solution immediately illuminates the tower area and serves as a deterrent to the would-be thief or vandal."

Plans are underway to extend the solution to the county's water treatment facilities.

Why Mainline

Oakland County needed a business partner that could provide a complete solution.

"Mainline is unique in that they can provide all aspects of an IP video solution – from consultation to installation to training," said Pence. "The Mainline team is a step above their competition, particularly in terms of support."

"It did not take us long at all to learn that Mainline delivers on its commitments," said Sullivan. "We have had experiences with vendors that have been less than positive. And this relationship has been top notch since day one."

For more information about this solution, call your Mainline account representative or call Mainline directly at 866.490.MAIN (6246).



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