



## CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR SAVES \$10K/MO. USING ASSET TRACKING

Henriksen Washout Systems also saving thousands on fuel costs and insurance.

### Customer Profile



#### BUSINESS TYPE:

Henriksen Washout Systems, in business for 10 years, with 8 employees, provides watertight containers for contractors and paving companies to contain excess concrete wash water and solids.

#### LOCATION:

Grimes, Iowa  
(near Des Moines)

#### CHALLENGES:

- Struggled to manually track hundreds of containers
- Did not know if containers were sitting idle at job sites
- Needed to provide customers with accurate delivery timing
- Wasting \$64,000 per year in fuel on excessive truck idling
- Using older trackers that lasted 2-3 years and didn't provide detailed reports
- Wanted to integrate dispatch and back-office applications

#### RESULTS SINCE LAUNCH:

- Saving \$10,000+ per month by tracking containers, reducing loss and more efficiently allocating them to job sites
- Reduced idling by 50% in first month, for a fuel savings of \$34,000 per year with larger savings expected.
- Working with insurance company to reduce premiums due to safer driving initiatives

#### UScellular® SOLUTIONS:

- Rechargeable TopFly solar trackers that last 7-10 years
- Versatile MiFleet app and UScellular® connectivity
- Vehicle trackers to monitor driver behavior, idling times and truck maintenance
- Personalized service from local account manager

Small businesses are always looking for ways to save money and increase profits. So, imagine saving \$379,000 over a three-year term simply by adopting asset tracking. One Iowa business doesn't have to imagine. It is seeing those savings and more by switching from another carrier's solution to UScellular.

Henriksen Washout Systems, a construction industry sub-contractor, was manually tracking its concrete washout containers, which were scattered among construction sites across Iowa. "For the first four years of our company, I did everything. I did the sales, I did the service, I delivered all the containers. I knew where every single container was off the top of my head," said Brad Blackman, chairman and partner.

### ***Container Losses Curbing Efficiency and Revenue***

As the number of containers grew, so did the headaches. With just 20 bins, he tracked them using a whiteboard and later implemented a workflow system with carbon copy work orders that he manually completed and tracked on a spreadsheet. But he now has 220 washout containers and 45 trash dumpsters to track, with more on order.

"Quite frankly, we were losing containers because we didn't have a tracking system that would accurately tell us if a container was sitting at a job site not generating any revenue," he said.

"Either that construction project is still going, or we can call that customer and say, 'are you guys done?' because sometimes they just forget to call when they're done," Blackman said, adding that his company loses money when containers are not in use because they are not available for other customers.

About 3 years ago, Blackman implemented an asset tracking system from another carrier that he said wasn't even a step above having a paper sheet. "The other trackers didn't tell us anything except that they were out there. It pinged once a day, but there are times we might move a container twice a day. And the vendor never offered geofencing or any kind of real tracking. It was just very cumbersome.

"We didn't have a mobile app; we didn't have it on our laptops or iPad. It was only on our desktop. So, if we weren't at the office, we didn't know where anything was," he said. In addition, the trackers were battery operated and when the battery died after 2-3 years, the entire unit had to be replaced.



*"In Iowa, you get out into the country and coverage can be spotty. But UScellular has always been great for us. I don't have a guy ever calling me saying he has no signal."*

— **Brad Blackman,**  
chairman and partner,  
Henriksen Washout Systems



*A container holding concrete excess that will be recycled and reused as gravel.*



*A solar tracker is attached to each Henriksen Washout bin to monitor location.*

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**— Brad Blackman**



*A driver prepares to deliver a concrete washout container*

## ***Innovative Tracking Solution***

That’s when UScellular Account Manager Jason Allen stepped in to offer a better solution. He presented to Brad a plan to use MiFleet’s TopFly magnet-mounted solar trackers with rechargeable batteries that last 7-10 years. “The magnets on these new solar trackers are insanely strong,” Blackman said, noting that they installed quickly.

The accompanying app constantly tracks their assets, including notices when a container has left or arrived in a geofencing area. “The technology they have now at their disposal is incredible, and helps them run their business more efficiently,” Allen said, adding that they are able to track their bins at any time of day.

Allen also recommended that each driver have a smartphone in their truck to access the app. If a driver is having trouble finding a container, they can pull up a map and find the exact location as opposed to driving around trying to find the bin.

Blackman is already seeing increased efficiency in the field. “We were on a big warehouse project where there were eight containers for four customers. One customer needed their two containers switched out, but they were all commingled. The driver called to ask which ones he should pull and we were able to tell him, ‘it’s these two, look at your app.’ So, it’s really just us utilizing it and remembering we actually have the power right in our hand,” he said.

## ***Improving Customer Service and Driver Safety***

Blackman also agreed with Allen’s suggestion to install vehicle trackers to always know the location of their trucks and provide better customer service. “We had a customer who needed to know where the driver was. I was able to pull up the truck on the app and call the customer to say, he’ll be there in 30 minutes,” Blackman said.

In addition to location, vehicle trackers monitor truck maintenance to proactively address mechanical issues before they become costly. They also monitor driver behavior such as speeding that could result in accidents or cost drivers their license. Blackman often coaches his team about safety. “I’m trying to save careers and reputations.”

“Brad cares about his employees. He wants to build that trust. A lot of companies don’t have that anymore,” Allen noted.

By monitoring driver safety, Blackman also expects to save money on insurance premiums in the coming months. “Anything we can do to show safety and efficiency, our insurance people love,” he said. Allen added that “most insurance companies will give them a break when installing cameras or fleet tracking or asset tracking.”



## ***Saving Dollars from the Smokestack***

Vehicle trackers also help Blackman save money by monitoring truck idling, which he estimates burns \$64,000 in fuel per year.

“Our drivers used to turn on their trucks in the morning and not shut them off until night. But now we get an idling report every Monday. I sat everybody down and shared some figures on what it’s costing us to have the trucks just sitting idling. And all the drivers said, ‘oh my gosh, I had no idea’.

“So, I broke it down. The final number was \$64,000 of fuel burning a year. I point out that 64 grand can be bonuses, pay raises, new equipment. Instead of sitting in your cab eating lunch, turn the truck off. It doesn’t need to be running the whole time,” he said.

Another example: when his team brings a container back to the yard, they dump and wash it, a process that takes 10-15 minutes. “The truck does not need to be idling while they’re washing the container. We’re just burning fuel. Dollars just going out the smokestack.”

With this new information, Blackman said his drivers have already cut their idling time in half, or \$34,000 per year, with more savings expected.

## ***Generating Revenue by Reallocating Containers***

Blackman emphasized that it’s also important from a productivity and efficiency point of view to turn around containers and get them onto new job sites. “We don’t generate revenue if we don’t know where they are. We’ve had containers that sat on jobs for an entire winter. Our paper system lost it, our memories lost it. They don’t make us any money just sitting in the yard,” he said. The new solar trackers will ensure that all containers are located efficiently and reallocated more productively.

## ***Streamlining Operations by Integrating Platforms***

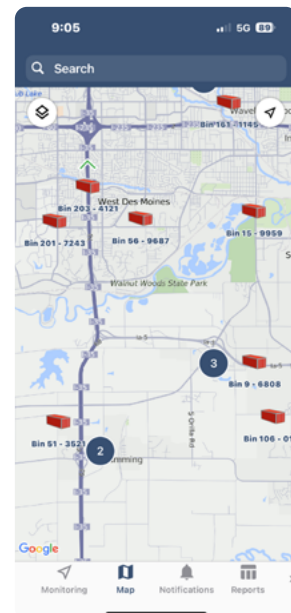
The MiFleet application with UScellular connectivity offers Henriksen Washout Systems another benefit to increase efficiency. Blackman’s team is integrating MiFleet with Foundation, the construction-based accounting software from which they currently run dispatch. The result will be one platform to track assets, run dispatch, invoice customers and clock-in/out, among other functions.

This ability to integrate applications into a single platform is one of the reasons Allen recommended MiFleet to Blackman. “We see it as a coming trend, a lot of people wanting back-door integration to get rid of as much paperwork as possible,” Allen said.



“Brad has been instrumental in the implementation from day one. He’s been there right alongside helping the guys. I think that shows a lot to his employees that he cares about them. He wants to build that trust. A lot of companies don’t have that anymore. Brad is an outstanding business owner.”

— **Jason Allen,**  
UScellular Account Manager



*A portal shows on a map the location of concrete washout containers.*



*A Henriksen truck lowers a container onto a construction site.*

“With my old trackers, my contact person was in San Diego but my UScellular contact is here so if I have an issue, bam. Jason’s right here. I never was offered a local person for my old company.”

— **Brad Blackman**

## **Why UScellular**

Henriksen’s parent company has been a UScellular customer for 14 years and when asked why he chose UScellular for asset tracking, Blackman simply named Jason Allen, his account manager. “When we started, we had UScellular on our phones. And as we’ve grown and added devices, the relationship has grown to where all we need is a simple text. ‘I need this or that,’ and Jason responds in about 30 seconds usually. The response time is amazing.

“And with this rollout, he’s been here with us, up in the shop, with our mechanic showing him what to do, getting on meetings with MiFleet. We’re not even using this app as well as we need, and we’ll learn. But we’ll learn with the help of Jason,” Blackman said.

“With my old trackers, my contact person was in San Diego but my UScellular contact is here so if I have an issue, bam. Jason’s right here. I never was offered a local person for my old company.

“I can’t say enough about what Jason does for us—what UScellular does for us. They’ve been a great partner as we’ve grown the company in 10 years and he’s a fantastic rep for your company.”

Jason returns the admiration. “I think Brad is revolutionizing the industry. He started it from the ground up and the sky’s the limit for this business. I mean, they started with 20, and now they’re going to be over 300 containers in 10 years. That’s unreal in my opinion.

“And Brad has been instrumental in the implementation from day one. He’s been there right alongside helping the guys. I think that shows a lot to his employees that he cares about them. He wants to build that trust. A lot of companies don’t have that anymore. Brad is an outstanding business owner,” Allen said.

Blackman also cited UScellular’s service and reliability. “In Iowa, you get out into the country and coverage can be spotty. But UScellular has always been great for us. I don’t have a guy ever calling me saying he has no signal.”

In fact, the Henriksen Contracting parent company is so impressed with the Washout division’s results that they too are considering working with UScellular to add trackers to their heavy equipment and trucks, Allen said.

To see how UScellular can help your organization, call **866-616-5587** or visit **our website**.

