



IOWA CONTRACTOR SWITCHES TO UScellular® FOR BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE AND IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

J and K Contracting Saves as much as \$60K per Machine per Month with Fleet Management

Customer Profile



BUSINESS TYPE:

An underground utility contractor, J and K Contracting specializes in deep sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water installation across Iowa, as well as grading, excavating and hauling services.

LOCATION:

Headquartered in Urbandale, IA

CHALLENGES:

- Spending 20-25 hours per week waiting to reach a vendor partner
- Undercharging for machine hours
- Lacked evidence in traffic disputes

UScellular SOLUTIONS:

MiFleet, powered by UScellular®, is a highly customizable, cloud-based GPS fleet tracking and management software designed to enable fleets with the latest technology at an affordable price.

RESULTS SINCE LAUNCH:

- Same-day customer service from UScellular
- Accurate machine hours for increased billings
- Dash camera evidence that exonerates drivers when accidents occur

Imagine spending half of your week waiting to reach a vendor partner. That was the reality for J and K Contracting. They routinely were stuck on hold for hours and waiting multiple days for resolutions with their cellular vendor. But with UScellular same-day support, they now get the help they need almost immediately and can focus on building their business.

The central Iowa-based underground utility contractor said customer service was their biggest challenge before coming to UScellular. “We had a similar fleet program through another company and customer service was just awful. So, we needed a better solution,” said Amy Durnan, J and K Accounting/HR Manager. “Our shop foreman was spending 20 to 25 hours a week just on the phone trying to resolve issues with our fleet program, tracking and systems. We needed a new solution and in walked our UScellular account manager, just at the right time.”

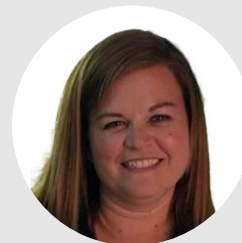
J and K had been purchasing a fleet management solution with another cellular vendor before switching to the UScellular-powered MiFleet solution, complete with GPS tracking, asset management and dash cameras. But their previous experience still resonates.

“You’d call with a problem and be on hold forever. And then you’d speak to someone, and they’d transfer you to somebody else, and then they’d ship your products, and four out of five times it was the wrong product, and we’d have to do the whole process over again. Installation was the same thing.

“We couldn’t do our own installs and it was way too much work for one person. We needed a full-time employee just to handle fleet tracking. It just got to be too much,” Durnan said, adding that they liked their former vendor’s fleet product—it did everything they needed, but “everything revolving around the product was just too much to handle.”

UScellular and MiFleet to the Rescue

Durnan said her company is much happier with UScellular’s service. “I call my account rep when I need something, and he is ‘Johnny on the Spot’.” She appreciates MiFleet’s customer support as well. “There have been times when I’ve called my personal MiFleet reps, and I don’t even get transferred. Someone answers — there’s an actual person,” Durnan said. “And I have never waited more than two hours for an answer to any of my questions. The UScellular and MiFleet customer service by far, is hands down amazing.”



“The price point for UScellular really was what we needed for our business. Our account manager worked really hard to get us rates that would fit into our budget and make it a financially good decision to switch.”

— **Amy Durnan,**
J and K Accounting/HR Manager



Pump station installation at Jack Trice Stadium at Iowa State University



Extending utilities.

“With all our excavators, dozers, skid loaders, I run a report every month to see how long a piece of equipment was used. Last month, I was able to bill an additional \$60,000 because I could prove that a machine ran for 100 hours, even though my foreman billed for only 40 hours.”

— Amy Durnan

Powering the Right Solution

J and K is centrally located in Iowa but works across the entire state, using more than 200 vehicles and pieces of equipment. Tracking them is imperative, not only to always know their location but to help prevent theft. Durnan says she has GPS trackers on their trucks, skid loaders, dump trucks and semi-trucks.

“On a daily basis, the owner and shop foreman will ask, ‘where is this piece of equipment?’ They don’t know and they log on and find it,” she said, adding, “the foreman uses it before he sends one of his mechanics to do an equipment repair, just to make sure it is where it’s supposed to be.”

They also used their asset tracking solution to recover a stolen skid loader that stopped sending a location signal. The thieves had physically removed the tracker and thrown it in a snowbank. “We didn’t even know that the piece of equipment had been stolen. Someone a few miles from our job site said, ‘hey, your skid loader’s sitting in our parking lot, can you move it? It’s on a trailer.’ And we’re wondering why it is there and we realized somebody was trying to steal it.”

At that time, J and K was only to receiving notifications from their moving vehicles. After the theft, MiFleet was quickly able to setup a new alert that includes tamper and removal events, which allows them to monitor all of their assets, even stationary ones, for unauthorized movement or tampering.

Dash Cameras Add Protection on the Road

J and K has also installed Lytx Surfsight dash cameras in their trucks. While they currently prioritize the road-facing view for safety and incident documentation, they appreciate having the option to enable driver-facing recording if their needs or preferences change in the future.

“The cameras provide a great security for us,” she said, adding that they have used footage to get out of traffic ticketing for an accident to prove their vehicle came to a complete stop. “Oh, you ran the stop sign,” they’d say. “No, we didn’t, and here’s the proof.”

MiFleet can also monitor hard braking or stopping and can time- and location-stamp a vehicle, which also helps to vindicate their drivers in a traffic situation.

Durnan said the drivers are happy to have cameras on their vehicles so long as they aren't pointed at them. To that, the owner said he didn't have any reason not to trust his crew. "And really, the purpose of the forward-facing camera is traffic, and that's going to help with the traffic violations or accidents." For now, she said there's no reason to have the other camera.

However, sometimes there's a need to monitor a certain driver and they can turn it on at the click of a button to watch what they're doing.

"We give out a bonus to our truck drivers that haven't had any accidents or tickets and there are only two of the 14 that didn't get it. And it wasn't even because of an accident. So, I think the cameras are definitely doing more than just tracking for us. I think it is helping the drivers be more aware."

Boosting Financial Efficiency

Durnan said that using MiFleet with UScellular is also making her company more efficient. "With all our excavators, dozers, skid loaders, I run a report every month to see how long a piece of equipment was used. Last month, I was able to bill an additional \$60,000 because I could prove that a machine ran for 100 hours, even though my foreman billed for only 40 hours. I can turn around and bill for that extra 60 hours that machine was in use," Durnan said.

"So, it has really helped solidify our accounting numbers and billing rates with each different piece of equipment and really zone in on our bidding and our equipment rates in general."

MiFleet also provides J and K a more accurate number when project managers bid for jobs, she said. "We can be very certain what our numbers are, in that we are very confident that our equipment and overhead are getting covered, because we have that data coming in from MiFleet, combined with what the foreman turned in, and we know exactly what utilization that machine is having versus two or three years ago when it was kind of like a shot in the dark. It was a 'well I think we used it this many hours, but I'm not really sure' type of situation and with MiFleet it is narrowed down to the minute."

J and K is also saving as much as 10% on insurance costs by implementing fleet management.



A trunk sewer extension.

"Our UScellular account manager checked all our boxes, and we enjoyed that personal relationship and personal connection versus the 800 number. We didn't look any further than UScellular. They sold us from the start."

— Amy Durnan



Why UScellular

Durnan again credits UScellular's customer service for the reason they switched. She appreciates the same-day responses from her account manager, plus she wanted one carrier for all their needs, including smartphones, fleet and voice over IP (VoIP) on their desk phones.

"And the price point for UScellular really was what we needed for our business. Our account manager worked really hard to get us rates that would fit into our budget and make it a financially good decision to switch," Durnan said.

She added that she never considered other carriers because the UScellular account rep had "great timing" in stopping by in person when he did.

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

