Central Lyon County Fire Protection District

Success Story

Heat from County Officials Led this Fire Protection District to a New Accounting System

The Central Lyon County Fire Protection District (CLCFD) in Nevada is a full service fire district providing fire protection, hazardous materials response and mitigation, public education, fire investigations, plan review, and emergency medical services with mutual and automatic aid locally, regionally, and nationally.

CLCFD is a combination career and volunteer fire district with 7 stations, 65 personnel, and 47 pieces of equipment serving a population of approximately 25,000 across 600 plus square miles in Nevada's Lyon County.

New Charges from the County Forced the District's Hand

Even though the Central Lyon County Fire Protection District is a separate government entity and has its own financials, its accounting was being handled by Lyon County. CLCFD had an IBM AS400 system to pay bills, process time cards and manage its general ledger, and used a VPN connection to access accounting information with the county. When the county informed the CLCFD that it was going to start billing the fire district for accounting, CLCFD's board determined that would be cost-prohibitive.

The CLCFD knew of one accounting solution that a couple of local governments were using but wanted to seek out a competing solution so they could pursue two bids. That's when the fire district discovered the AccuFund Accounting Suite. After putting AccuFund and the other solution side by side, the CLCFD found the AccuFund Accounting Suite to be the easier system to learn and to use.

"It really came down to training," explains John Gillenwater, chief of Central Lyon County Fire Protection District. "Both companies provided demonstrations that were very helpful, but the other solution was more cumbersome and harder to use, and the company wouldn't train us unless we went to their location. That relationship was difficult. AccuFund flew someone out to our site to work with and guide us through getting up to speed on their accounting system."

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AccuFund’s Blazing Speed Makes Payroll and Accounting Easy

With AccuFund, the Central Lyon County Fire Protection District has been able to stop using paper time cards and move to an automated payroll system. The CLCFD has a complex payroll because of its unique shift system, but even the initial payrolls with the AccuFund Accounting Suite went smoothly. Only four weeks after implementing AccuFund, the CLCFD noticed dramatically increased efficiencies.

“We went from using paper time cards to inputting information to a database and generating a payroll report automatically,” relates Gillenwater. “AccuFund’s reports can show us where any errors are so we can conduct quality assurance. We found one error that was an overpayment of a vendor. Before implementing AccuFund, we would not have found that detailed a piece of information.”

AccuFund’s customizable and easy-to-use reports make it possible to locate any essential information quickly and easily.

“The reports have logical, linear progression and are very easy to read,” explains Gillenwater. “Information flows through the document in a common sense way.”

In addition to reducing errors, the CLCFD has saved numerous hours as a result of eliminating time cards and automating payroll. The fire district no longer has accounting tasks being performed twice (once by its staff and then again by the county staff). AccuFund users include the CLCFD’s office manager, accounts payable technician, and a contract accountant, as well as Chief Gillenwater.

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AccuFund Remains a Valued Partner

The Central Lyon County Fire Protection District got up to speed on AccuFund very quickly, due in part to the attentive support of AccuFund reseller representative, Pete Magee.

“AccuFund customer service is amazing and outstanding,” states Gillenwater. “Pete and the folks from AccuFund got down into the heart of the system and explained it to us in a way we could understand. After four weeks, we are still learning, but the challenge of the learning curve is surmountable.”

The CLCFD has plans to continue leveraging the capabilities in the AccuFund Accounting Suite. “We look forward to continuing to smooth out our complex payroll process,” explains Gillenwater. “AccuFund modified their process to make it work for our unique situation and work very well. There are tools in AccuFund that we can use to simplify every aspect of payroll and our other accounting processes."

“We continue our relationship with Pete,” adds Gillenwater. “We’re now ready to have him come back and take us to the next level.”

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