

Cripple Creek, Colorado

Success Story

Mining Town Strikes Gold with AccuFund

CITY OF CRIPPLE CREEK, COLORADO—Cripple Creek has played an integral role in the rich heritage of Colorado. Incorporated in 1892, shortly after the discovery of gold in the area, Cripple Creek became a storied gold mining town during the great North American gold rush of the early 1900s.

Now one of three old gold mining towns in Colorado that has legalized gambling, Cripple Creek has become a tourist destination, with 12 casinos that do roughly \$125M in gross revenue each year as well as numerous attractions related to its gold mining history. The city has a herd of donkeys that roam the streets, neighborhoods and hills and are believed to be descendants of the donkeys that once worked the gold mines. Cripple Creek is located approximately an hour west of Colorado Springs and is behind Pike's Peak in the heart of the Rockies. The city has an annual budget averaging between \$10 and \$18 million each year.

After Thorough Review, AccuFund Set the Gold Standard

The City of Cripple Creek, Colorado's finance department had occasionally considered replacing the accounting software package it had been using since the early 1990s. However, when the vendor that owned the software announced it was discontinuing its support of the product, Cripple Creek understood that it was time to start a search for a new accounting package.

"We knew that there are other products that have a lot more capabilities that our old software just did not have, but it's a major undertaking to jump from one accounting package to another," said Paul Harris, "This situation forced our hand and made us look around and see all the new bells and whistles being offered out there and how they could make life easier."

Cripple Creek's vendor recommended some software packages, but they were geared to nonprofits and not to municipal governments. Cripple Creek had been using AccuFund's Utility Billing since 2003, therefore, they were very familiar with AccuFund, the breadth of its product features and its service.

"We looked at other products, but AccuFund stood out," said Harris. "Their pricing was competitive and we liked that they have a presence in Colorado and that they would come onsite and conduct the training in our environment with our own data. A number of other vendors required us to travel to another state and sit in a classroom for training."



AccuFund Dazzles with Efficiency, Reporting, and Security

Cripple Creek installed the complete AccuFund Accounting Suite in May 2014, working with Becky Wittmer, owner of BW Consulting, Inc.

“Becky’s company had worked for our previous vendor when it was located here in Colorado, so they were very familiar with our existing software and that made the data conversion to AccuFund very easy,” said Harris. “Some of the other folks we talked to didn’t make us feel super confident they were going to be able to get all our data across.”

Harris and one other person make up the City of Cripple Creek finance department. In addition to them, there are two view-only users of the AccuFund system in the city clerk’s office who are handling utility payments (water and sewer bills) and questions and issues from residents regarding their utility billing. Harris reports that everyone is “very pleased” with the AccuFund Accounting Suite.

“The accrual process is very easy and saves a tremendous amount of time — in excess of eight hours with the year-end process,” said Harris. “AccuFund also has a very easy method to reverse journal entries, and enables you to simply copy a group or set of line items from one department to a new department.”

Cripple Creek found that the year-end process — moving from one year to another — is very easy. With their previous accounting package, there was a post and roll process they had to go through each time and that required them to make multiple iterations. With AccuFund, they don’t have that process.

“AccuFund also offers great reporting capabilities,” said Harris. It’s very easy to send reports to Excel or a PDF, which is a big plus for us. Another neat feature is the ease with which we can email a report directly from the system to a department manager.”

“AccuFund’s reporting matches the reports that the Cripple Creek finance department needs to produce so that they don’t have to go outside the system to create them,” said Wittmer. “They have the ease of creating reports in Excel and the ability to pull information out of the system quickly and at any time they need it, especially for the reports they need to generate for City Council meetings.”

Cripple Creek also likes the fact that AccuFund offers very robust security features, providing

control over who can access what, even down to the process level. “You can click on what you want the specific person to be able to do within a specific process, which is great,” explained Harris.

The accounts payable process, from inputting to cutting checks, has also proven to be much faster with AccuFund. As a result, Cripple Creek has seen some productivity gains.

“When you are operating with a department of only two people, that means a lot to you,” said Harris.



For Cripple Creek, Time Is Precious, Too

Overall, Cripple Creek has experienced or projected an annual times savings of 76 hours using AccuFund. With year-end accruals and reversals, the city saves eight hours; with accounts payable processing, they save 12 hours; and with the year-end post and roll process, they save eight hours.

With generating the Cash Requirements reports for the City Council, the finance department saves 24 hours — a total of three average workdays. With the month-end reports to department managers and the website, they save two hours per month or 24 hours annually.

Let's Get Started

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