Optex ISeries Battery-Powered Wireless Detectors Enhance Construction Site Security By Countering Thefts

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Multiple Construction sites in the Albuquerque area are managed by Shumate Constructors, Inc., an Albuquerque, New Mexico-based construction contractor, that is also renowned for building educational facilities. In addition to building schools from the ground up, Shumate Constructors completes school additions and remodels.

Construction site thefts

Three years ago, the company began having problems keeping thieves out of its construction sites during non-working hours. Unwatched construction sites are hot beds for a variety of thefts - from copper pipes and wire to hand tools to heavy-duty machinery.
The loss of machinery, such as front-end loaders, would cost hundreds-of-thousands of dollars. Sometimes workers will arrive to a site in the morning only to find materials, such as copper pipe, gone along with their tools.

**Enhancing construction site security**

The sites also presented a challenge due to changing construction conditions. The result is the loss of a whole day and sometimes multiple days of work. On top of the lost time, the contractor has to cover the cost of replacing materials, file an insurance claim for each theft and complete additional administrative paperwork that they weren’t planning to invest time in.

The sites also presented a challenge due to changing construction conditions. Equipment or storage containers are delivered and removed, the sites are graded/re-graded and as sections of build were completed, tools, materials and supplies were moved to different areas.

**Flexible, reliable wireless solution**

At a contractor trade show a few years ago, Mark Shumate, President of Shumate Constructors met Dave Meurer, President of Albuquerque’s Armed Response Team. Meurer introduced Shumate to the idea of a flexible, reliable wireless solution that could continually monitor the entire site without the need to trench around the perimeter.

“Mark [Shumate] was fed up with theft at his construction sites so we started to discuss some prevention ideas,” said Meurer, adding “I knew this was a great fit for the combined Inovonics transmitter and Optex sensor solution.”
Optex sensors installed

He further said, “At the Armed Response Team, we refer to this solution as the never sleeping, non-blinking eye. Shumate was not aware of any reliable solutions that could provide this type of theft prevention, but we explained that we were very confident in this application and he was definitely interested.”

To install each combined sensor, the Armed Response Team attached the Optex sensors to a freestanding steel post with a base plate on it and deployed them throughout the site. This allowed the flexibility to be easily moved to accommodate site changes. Once installed, a signal was easily achieved.

iSeries Optex/Inovonics sensors

The amount of iSeries Optex/Inovonics sensors needed at Shumate’s sites vary

The sensors in the combined solution often need to communicate as far as an entire city block and the perimeters can be several thousands of feet. The iSeries Inovonics/Optex solution was able to easily accomplish this feat. The amount of iSeries Optex/Inovonics sensors needed at Shumate’s sites vary. For some sites, it can be as few as a dozen, and others it can be as many as 30 or more.

“Together, the products offer a great solution,” noted Meurer, adding “The Optex sensors can handle varying weather conditions and Inovonics’ wireless connectivity offers less signal drop and more consistent reporting signal than any of the other transmitters we’ve tried.”

Efficient perimeter security solution
“Between the perimeter technology by Inovonics and Optex, and the Armed Response Team’s follow-up, we have seen zero thefts for all projects since installation. With the integrated wireless solution, the construction sites are monitored on a real-time basis and immediately notify the Armed Response Team upon unauthorized access,” said Mark Shumate, President of Shumate Constructors.

He adds, “We look at the perimeter security solution as a great investment. Annually, the cost of manpower, replacement of lost or stolen items and damage repairs could easily cost three times more than we spend on Armed Response Teams’ services with the Optex and Inovonics solution.”
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