

The 2 Things That Saved Western Turnpike Rescue Squad from Hours of Tedious Work

Western Turnpike Rescue Squad, Inc. has been providing basic life support and transport in the state of New York since 1939. They have two stations with five fully equipped ambulances.

“We envision a community with healthy and happy families that receive the highest levels of health care in the state and the nation, regardless of age, race, or economic status. We are committed to being a part of that vision by providing the highest levels of service and by increasingly promoting health and safety awareness and education.”
www.wtrs.org



Western Turnpike Rescue Squad has been using PlanIt EMS for 7 years. We had the pleasure of speaking with Executive Director, Drew Chesney, who has been with the WTRS for over 16 years. He has held positions as an EMT and Paramedic as well. On top of scheduling, Drew handles at least 6 other duties as an Executive Director.

When WTRS was looking for a scheduling solution, they knew they needed something that would be real time and accessible for everyone. Instant access to everyone at any given time was essential.

There was some uncertainty whether all the employees would accept the change of new software in the organization. However, when asked how the transition went, Drew responded:

“Fairly easy and it was received fairly well. For the most part, employees adapted really well. It is a very user friendly program, so it does not take much for someone to understand it.”

On top of the smooth transition, Drew explained there were two key aspects of PlanIt that saved his organization the most time:

1. Centralized & Accessible Schedule
2. Communication Tools

Centralized & Accessible Schedule

Before Western Turnpike Rescue Squad had PlanIt, they would have to email an excel spreadsheet schedule to each employee each month. As they made changes, it became difficult to keep everyone informed about all of the updates.

It would take several hours to make each monthly schedule. Additionally, they would spend more time adjusting the schedule and communicating with employees about call offs, trades, etc.

Now, with PlanIt, everyone has access to see the live schedule from their tablet, smartphone, laptop, or desktop. They can schedule out one year with templates and are able to make changes. They can make their employees aware of these changes instantaneously and with ease.

Communication Tools

“The communication tools provided by the program is huge when considering texting, emailing, and most importantly the embedded voice-blast system. The maintenance of the schedule after publication is also very easy in that shift requests, trades, and similar events that commonly happen are easy for all parties. The connected time-clock and time sheets allow for a very easy payroll process, especially with the function of holidays.”

The communication tools in the system allow common processes to be more efficient for the WTRS. For example, if they have a call off and need coverage, they can go to PlanIt’s voice blast feature. From there they can pick the people or groups of people they want to contact and hit “start.” With a few clicks, they can get someone to fill the shift instead of manually calling each person to find out who is available. Once they find someone to cover the shift, it is simple to drop them into the schedule and become visible for everyone in the organization to see.

In addition to scheduling and communication blasts, the WTRS uses PlanIt for certification tracking, vehicle checklists, the time clock, and employee information storage.

“I love PlanIt, and I am a huge proponent for the program. For the costs and benefits, there really is no competition that I have seen that can compare.”