Over the past several years, the number of water utilities implementing an automatic
meter reading system has steadily gained momentum. At the end of 2002, over eight
and a half million units have been shipped to 3,597 utilities in North America. Utilities
continue to embrace AMR technology even though they are faced with tighter budgets
and other priority projects, such as security, which compete for project funding.

A majority of all AMR systems implemented today utilize radio frequency technology to
transmit the meter reading data. These systems have gained acceptance from utilities
because this type of solution has become more reliable and cost effective through
advancements in technology.

Each year more and more utility personnel are studying AMR technology and how it
may positively impact their operations. When most utilities initially begin the review of
different AMR systems, they go in with the basic understanding that the technology will
help their utility become more efficient reading meters. But as the technology gets
installed, utilities find that there are many advantages associated with an
implementation of an AMR system.

With approximately 10% of the meters in the North America currently upgraded to an
AMR system, this paper will examine real life AMR installation programs that have been
implemented by utilities and will review the impact the systems have had on their
operations. Using information provided by Houston, TX, Philadelphia, PA, Guilderland,
NY, North Table Mountain, CO and Carpentersville, IL – this paper will demonstrate
how utilities have benefited from AMR.

These utilities have moved forward and completed their AMR projects on an
accelerated basis to take full advantage of their system. The benefits seen from their
AMR systems range from increases in efficiencies and improvement in employee moral
to increased cash flow and financial payback. Case studies from the utilities listed
above will provide a clear picture of how AMR systems can impact the operations for
small and medium sized utilities.