

# Abel Solutions Helps Charleston Water System Streamline Document Approval Workflow; Gain Process Efficiency

For public water systems, quality management is everything. Paper trails are extensive and can involve multiple approvers. When the Charleston Water System determined quality document and approval workflows were too disjointed, management was open to a better solution. After Abel Solutions implemented QMS|share, personnel were amazed at the difference.

From following standard operating instructions (SOIs) to monitoring Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) compliance, adhering to and documenting best practices is often convoluted. With quality document and approval workflow at the Charleston Water System (CWS) not flowing smoothly among departments, management was open to finding a better solution. When CWS established a corporate incentive for all departments to transfer to a unified system, the stage was set for improvement.

After implementing QMS|share, the CWS team is amazed. "Our document review process is working so much better," says Jinks Patrick, Executive Assistant to the CWS CEO. "We have a more streamlined, consistent process to manage revisions and changes. We have ended the information 'silos' that were hampering compliance management."

## AN IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE BEGINS

CWS prides itself on its continuous improvement focus, an attitude that led them to Abel Solutions. "We were exploring some improvements that [Abel Solutions customer] Nucor had done when we learned of Abel," says CWS Senior Systems Analyst Anna Sandifer. "They initially recommended Nintex, with which we could easily create workflows specific to our quality department, and Abel helped us with the installation."

At the time, Sandifer relates, CWS was also having a considerable business challenge with document management. "We started talking to Abel Solutions about our document silos and they introduced us to QMS|share," says Sandifer. "In the past, everyone in the firm created their own quality documents and spreadsheets for ISO compliance," she continues. "We knew this was inefficient and ineffective and needed to get all of the departments in the entire company to use the same process."

## A SOLUTION EMERGES

During their first meeting, Sandifer says, Abel Solutions' Senior Solutions Architect Eric Gregorich met with the major departments to demonstrate QMS|share and explain how it worked. From that point, she says, he made a concerted effort to ensure the solution would meet CWS' needs. "Eric came back asking about our design—how each department would have an approval flow, and at what levels," Sandifer says. "That was our biggest concern. Our system is very complex—so many different steps for the document workflow. Eric walked us through those steps and ensured we covered everything."



## About Charleston Water System

Charleston Water System is a public water and wastewater utility that provides water service to more than 450,000 people in greater Charleston area and sewer service to 180,000 people, primarily in the city of Charleston. Learn more at [www.charlestonwater.com](http://www.charlestonwater.com).

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As Abel Solutions’ experts were deploying and configuring the solution, they remained engaged with Sandifer and the CWS team. “We had monthly meetings, and at every stage they showed us what they were doing,” says Sandifer. “They also worked with us as we went through testing.”

In addition to working closely with CWS from planning through testing QMS|share, the Abel Solutions team trained CWS system administrators, helping them understand how the system would benefit them. They also provided Sandifer with documentation on QMS management and operations that she could adapt as the firm’s reference guide.

### QMS|share PROVES ITS VALUE

When CWS went through an Emergency Management System audit in October 2018, notes Sue Young, Executive Assistant to the Assistant CEO, having QMS|share in place gave her a confidence boost. “The audit was different than previous ones, which had not been as strenuous,” says Young. “For this audit, with QMS giving us a more streamlined, consistent way of storing our documents and managing the review process, I felt comfortable that the documentation we needed would be there.”

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When asked if CWS would recommend Abel Solutions and QMS|share, Sandifer doesn’t hesitate. “No system is bullet-proof, but if we have any questions or problems, Abel’s personnel are always there, and they are prompt about getting back to me.”

## About Abel Solutions

For 25 years, Abel Solutions has focused on helping our customers develop and deploy solutions that deliver Business Excellence in terms of profitability, productivity, and competitive leadership. We believe that the most effective solutions are those that leverage and combine a customer’s current strengths and assets with new people, process, and technology capabilities to accomplish business goals. Our consultants deliver a portfolio of services including business strategy, collaboration solutions, dashboards and analytics, and managed cloud and IT services. To learn more, go to [www.abelsolutions.com](http://www.abelsolutions.com).

