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Keena is an Expert at Sniffing out Leaks

Using a dog for water leaks is a relatively new tool for the drinking water industry. While it's new to Del-Co Water, it is very similar to training any other detection dog. Dogs use their senses far better than any human, and their nose is one of the best. Del-Co is the first drinking water company in the state of Ohio to put this to use!

Enter K9 Keena: Keena is a four-year-old Belgian Malinois who was selected for this important leak detection job based on her drive, training aptitude, and retention ability. Belgian Malinois' are not your average canines – they are true working dogs. Keena has just one 'mode' and that is work mode. From the moment she jumps into her vehicle in the morning until the moment she jumps out, she is ready to work.



Keena and her handler, Zach Lohr, underwent a twelve-week training course

specifically tailored for Keena & Del-Co. During the twelve-week course, Zach learned the important skills of leash control, reading canine behavior, and how to set up Keena for success; while Keena learned how to sniff out the chlorine in drinking water – water that could be leaking from a broken water main.

To learn this, Keena was trained with a chlorine solution that was made in Del-Co's Water Quality Lab. Then, in real-world conditions, Keena was trained to sniff out and identify potential leaks based on the chlorine smell. When she smells chlorine in a suspected leak area, she sits or stops in her tracks to indicate to Zach that there is a leak....leaving no doubt that there is a leak present!

– Zach Lohr, Canine Leak Detection & PR Specialist

Del-Co Ushering in New Billing System in 2025

Product will feature updated customer portal and payment options

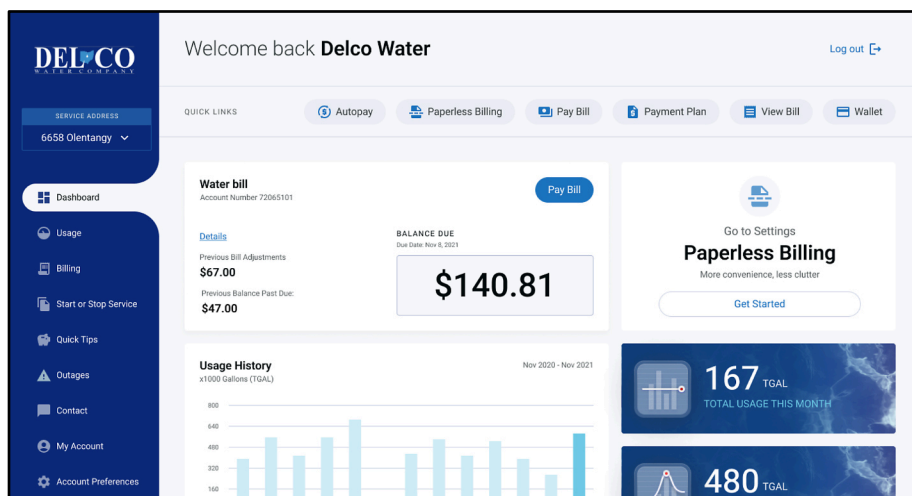
In late 2023, Del-Co began the process of replacing our current billing system software. Recognizing that our current system was at the end of its useful life, we embarked on a project to not just replace, but improve what we have. The new system will be deployed early in 2025. It is a state-of-the-art system that offers many improvements.

What does this mean to me as a customer you ask?

There are a few changes that you will notice. The most significant being a new online customer

portal. The new portal will have many of the same features as the current one, but will also include additional capabilities! The look and feel are somewhat different, but navigating is pretty intuitive, so the transition should be easy. One change you will notice is the ability to accept new electronic payment types, such as PayPal. We will also offer text notifications, including the ability for text-to-pay.

Some things will not be changing. For example, you will not see any change to your printed bill. All of the information you



have today, both on your bill and in the portal, will remain. You will continue to have the choice of whether you want electronic or printed bills. However, if you previously signed up to receive both, you will only receive the electronic bill.

We want to leverage new technology to benefit our

customers in any way we can. This project is part of that effort. By offering and promoting electronic communication and payment options, we reduce the overall cost of providing service and, at the same time, improve our carbon footprint. We're excited about these changes and hope you are

too! In the coming weeks, you will see more information from us about the exact date the new portal will be available, as well as highlighting specific changes. To learn more please visit: www.delcowater.org.

– Brian Schrantz, Strategic Project Manager

Del-Co to Change Rate Structure in 2025

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing high-quality water services, we want to inform you about important, upcoming changes to our water rates and rate structure. After completing a cost-of-service rate study with a national consulting firm, we have determined that modifying our water rate structure is necessary. These changes will take effect in May of 2025, and provide a strong price signal related to significant outdoor water use, such as lawn sprinkling.

significantly to the utility's operating and infrastructure costs. This decision allows us to continue to provide essential services for maintaining and enhancing our water services, ensuring that our water resources are managed effectively and remain sustainable for future generations. Thank you for your understanding and continued support. Together, we are ensuring our community a secure and sustainable water future.

– Rick Dunlop, Economic Development & Innovation Manager

Outdoor water use on our system adds



Helping create a ThankFull Holiday

Del-Co Water will again volunteer with Lutheran Social Services at their ThankFull Holiday event on Thursday, November 21st. The ThankFull Holiday event provides participating families with a turkey, plenty of sides, and all the fixins' for a Thanksgiving meal! Staff members will be part of the volunteer effort in distributing food to over 3,000 families in Central Ohio. For anyone who would like to donate to this wonderful cause, please visit the Lutheran Social Services website at lssnetworkofhope.org/ways-to-give. Del-Co wishes you all the best in this season of giving and gratitude.

– Lori Terry, Facilities Coordinator

JOIN OUR TEAM!

As Del-Co continues to grow, there is a continuous need to attract talented individuals who can help support the mission of the company. Are you service minded? We would love to have you consider joining our team! Please visit us at delcowater.org and take a look at our Careers Webpage. Del-Co believes in fostering a collaborative and inclusive work environment where everyone's contributions are valued. We offer opportunities for professional growth, competitive benefits, and the satisfaction of serving a vital public need. We look forward to reviewing your application and getting to know you better!

– Jim Wasil, Human Resources Manager

Did you know?

Distribution Department

Del-Co Water's distribution system consists of approximately 2,071 miles of waterline, 21,248 buried valves, 8,819 fire hydrants and 56,648 meter pits. To maintain this system, the Distribution Department employs 25 staff members – three Office Personnel, 21 Field Personnel, and a Distribution Manager. The Distribution Department, using only our in-house crews, perform all new meter installations, fire hydrant and valve installation/repairs, waterline and water service repairs, OUPS ticket requests, yard restoration, and many other tasks.



We respond to calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year with on-call personnel that respond to a variety of service requests. These calls range from minor issues like a leaking fire hydrant, to major issues like a broken waterline. Every call is important to Del-Co Water, that is why we have staff ready to respond as needed to resolve any situation. If we need to contact our customers, we use an automated call system to notify customers of planned and emergency outages.

– Rusty Griffith, Distribution Manager

Winterization Guide

As cold weather quickly approaches, consider taking these steps to make sure your water system functions properly all winter long.

Outside: Make sure your irrigation system is turned off and winterized for the season. Drain excess water out of hoses and disconnect them from outdoor spigots. If you have an internal shutoff for outside water lines, turn it off inside.

Inside: Make sure exterior walls and crawl spaces are well insulated to keep pipes from freezing. If you have water lines in any rooms with no heat, such as a garage or outbuilding, consider extra insulation or on-demand heat during times of extreme cold. Letting a faucet drip slowly may add extra use to your water bill, but in times of extreme cold, can help prevent a line from freezing.

Snowbirds: If you would like your water turned off for the winter while you are away, please contact our customer service department and we can seasonally shut off the water at your meter. We request at least one business days' notice for all turn-offs and turn-ons.

– Jason Tharp, Senior Customer Service Lead