

Town of Arlington, MA

Microburst Response

"This project proved the utility of PeopleForms, the ease at which untrained staff could successfully work with new technology, and the benefits of mobile mapping capabilities."

- Adam Kurowski, GIS Coordinator

"Through the use of Peopleforms during this year's microburst, the Engineering Division was able to help create an organized attack plan to track downed trees and organize restoration efforts. By being able to collect real-time data with multiple field crews simultaneously, we were able to realize the ease-of-use and utility of Peopleforms and PeopleGIS."

- Kurt Kelley, Engineering Division

The Need

In the Town of Arlington, a typical summer thunderstorm produced a rare and unexpected microburst that impacted the eastern third of the town, which is a dense residential area. Significant tree, sidewalk, and personal property damage occurred. The clean-up response was immediate and well practiced, but the documentation and loss estimates seemed lengthy and undefined. Our timeline to submit damage estimates to the state was very short.

The Solution

Having only had MapsOnline and PeopleForms services for two weeks, the Town developed a Damage Inventory form for use in the field on an Android tablet.

The Result

As it turned out, 2 Engineering staff members who had not yet been formally trained on PeopleForms, were able to conduct the inventory to meet their needs. Using tablets with Internet connectivity, they conducted a visual inspection with data input, GPS point collection, and photography of the entire affected area in a single day. They then compiled the data to meet the needs and deadline for state reporting.

Benefits

There was definitely a time savings realized by using this all-in-one mobile data collection approach over conventional pen and paper methods. The compilation of the collected was also more efficient, as it was in a ready to use format.