Orlando Regional Healthcare

Background

Orlando Regional Healthcare is one of Florida's largest and most comprehensive, private non-profit healthcare networks. The hospital system serves more than 644,500 local and international patients annually. It was nationally recognized as one of the most wired hospitals of 2005, according to U.S. News & World Report, and received the Employer of Choice award from the Herman Group the same year. Orlando Regional has more than 80 years of experience serving the Central Florida region, and its dedication to patients, staff, and community are exhibited daily. The Operations and Technical Service organizations contribute a major component to the healthcare system's success by ensuring smooth day-to-day operations.
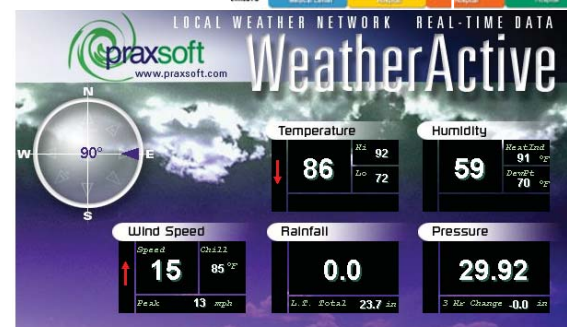
The Challenge

Orlando Regional Healthcare system encompasses half a dozen hospitals, a medical center, a cancer center, a healthcare foundation, and a research institute. This healthcare network relies on timely and accurate forecasts to ensure safety during daily and emergency operations. The patients and the community expect the hospital operations team to provide for their well being and to issue alerts in the event of sudden or unexpected, dangerous weather conditions. Nothing would be worse than not being prepared for a potential disaster, and then to have injuries or infrastructure damage as a result.

The hurricane season in Florida was tremendously active in 2004, and a survey conducted by the Florida Hospital Association found that unexpected costs from damage and facility modifications to repair those damages totaled over 200 million dollars. The community wants to know that they will be cared for safely in any type of inclement weather, be it in the path of a hurricane or a severe afternoon thunderstorm.

The WeatherActive™ Solution

Orlando Regional Healthcare's major reason for purchasing a WeatherActive™ system was the need for more accurate, on-site weather information during both emergencies and daily operations.

"During a hurricane or other weather events, wind speed, rainfall, temperature and other conditions vary at each facility," said Mike Braden, Corporate Director, Technical Services, Orlando Regional Healthcare. "The weather

www.praxsoft.com

monitoring technology at our downtown and community campuses provide additional tools to help us make decisions during emergency operations mode such as patient evacuations and facilities management issues."

Using the WeatherActive system from Praxis Software, hospitals, clinics, and research facilities have access to meteorological data from their location—not a National Weather Service site or airport several miles away that may only report hourly.

"In the past we had to rely on local weather stations to give more general weather information as to what speeds were projected in an area," stated Braden.

With WeatherActive, temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, wind speed/direction and rainfall are measured and reported every 2 seconds.

As dangerous conditions develop, built-in alarms will page, e-mail, or fax to alert Operations and Technical Services of potential hazards. Hospital personnel use this valuable information to decide whether or not they need to secure outside assets, or move patients and equipment away from windows.

Staff, visitors and the community may also access WeatherActive's data from each hospital on the Orlando Regional corporate Web site.

Results

"In addition to helping our team members protect patients and safely deliver care during inclement weather, the information from the monitors provides information for everyday planning," Braden adds.

Ron Carroll, Corporate Director of Telecommunications at Orlando Regional Hospital, says, "WeatherActive gives us time to determine if there is a need to evacuate patients, and also helps warn of possible flooding concerns to equipment. It reduces potentially stressful and costly situations."

Client's View

"We have determined the system to be pro-active, especially when storms are approaching. It provides up-to-date weather information for Orlando Regional and surrounding hospitals to give us a chance to appropriately evaluate potential dangerous weather situations. All of the Orlando Regional campuses are linked to WeatherActive enabling Operations teams to monitor a storm's approach." This information is also made available to the general public as a community service. "Anybody in Orange County can come see our Web site and view the weather data."

-Ron Carroll, Corporate Director of Telecommunications, Orlando Regional Hospital

praxsoft
www.praxsoft.com