# Wireless Gauge Reader

User Training for Nuclear Plant Operators

Version 4 – July 2025





## Installed at 32 nuclear plants in N. America

- Duke Energy (Fleetwide: Oconee, Robinson, Brunswick, Harris, Catawba, McGuire)
- Southern (Fleetwide: Farley, Hatch, Vogtle)
- Xcel Energy (Fleetwide: Prairie Island, Monticello)
- PSEG (Fleetwide: Salem, Hope Creek)\*
- Bruce Power (Canada)
- Constellation Energy (Calvert, Braidwood, Clinton, JAF, Nine Mile Point, Limerick, Ginna, Peach Bottom)
- NextEra (Fleetwide: Turkey Point, St. Lucie, Point Beach, Seabrook)
- Vistra (Comanche Peak, Davis Besse, Beaver Valley)
- STP Nuclear (South Texas)
- Nebraska Public Power District (Cooper)
- Arizona Public Service (Palo Verde\*)



<sup>\*</sup> Pending Installation

## Wireless Gauge Readers – Overview for Operators

- What problem are we solving?
- What is the solution: Wireless Gauge Readers
- Why are they installed?
- Where are they installed?
- How do I read the WGR's / gauge value?
- Where is the data collected and stored?
- How can I view the data?



# Most plant data is not even digitized















### Solution: Non-Invasive Sensors — 5 Minute Install

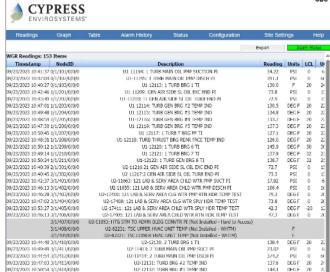


Connection via RESTful API or OPC

#### Historian



#### HMI



Wireless, battery operated, does not touch plant process:

CYPRES 10% the cost of traditional instrumentation, 5 minute install

BATTERY ROOM 110 VENT FLOW IN FT/MIN

## Why are They Installed?

- WGR's collect data automatically it reduces the labor required by operators for visual data collection.
- It collects data more frequently (typically once every 15 minutes).
- It allow trending of data for improved fault detection and analysis.







# Where are they installed?











Outdoors, Radiologically Controlled Area, Seismic Structures, Safety Related Related



### Where are WGR's Installed?

- WGR's can be installed on most types of manual dial gauges. Pressure, Flow, Level, Temperature etc.
- WGR's can be installed indoors or outdoors (IP56 and IP67 rated versions).
- WGR's may be installed in RCA up 50 mRem/hr dosage rate tested.
- WGR's may NOT be used to read any Critical Digital Asset (CDA), and the
  data collected CANNOT be used to make operating decisions (must rely on
  direct human observation).



# Optional Flip Door Mounting for Maximum Visibility



Minimal disruption to existing operator rounds



## How to Read WGR/Gauge Value

- The WGR has an LCD front display it shows the last reading sampled (i.e. for a 15 minute sample rate, the displayed value may be up to 15 minutes old).
- To force an immediate sample reading, press the middle button on the WGR, and the display will update to the latest value.
- To read the underlying gauge needle, twist the WGR counter-clockwise 20 degrees (quick disconnect) and remove from the mounting adapter.
- Caution: the WGR mounting adapter uses double sticky tape when twisting the WGR, use two hands to avoid peeling off the tape – one hand to hold onto the mounting adapter base, and the other to rotate the WGR.
- Once the WGR is removed from the adapter, you will be able to see the needle through the hole in the mounting adapter.





## Proper Removal of WGR from Mounting Adapter



#### **Detachment:**

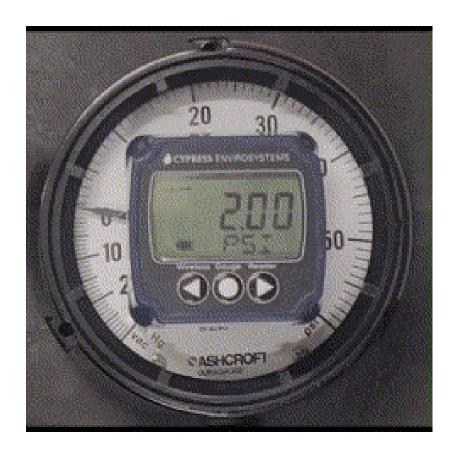
- Use two hands
- One hand secures base adapter
- Other hand rotates and removes WGR sensor

#### Re-attachment:

• Use two hands – reverse procedure above



## IMPROPER Removal of WGR from Mounting Adapter



- Mounting Adapter rotated together with underlying gauge lens
- WGR reading becomes incorrect

#### To correct:

- Manually rotate mounting adapter and gauge lens back to correct position
- Press middle button to get sample
- Compare LCD display reading with needle
- Readjust till LCD display matches needle
- Tighten bezel or use RTV to secure gauge lens to prevent inadvertent rotation



## Temporary Rapid Sampling Modes

- The WGR is typically pre-programmed to a 15 minute sample rate.
- However, there may be a need for a faster sample rate at certain times e.g. need to record transients during troubleshooting
- The WGR has two temporary modes for faster sampling:

#### **FAST Mode**

- Press right button -> FAST
- Press Middle button -> Select FAST
- Start 5 second sample rate
- After approximately five minutes, revert back to original sample rate to conserve battery life

#### **MEDIUM Mode**

- Press right button twice -> MED
- Press Middle button -> Select MED
- Start 30 second sample rate
- After approximately eight hours, revert back to original sample rate to conserve battery life



## Vibrating Needles

- The WGR takes a picture with a "shutter speed" of about 1/5 of a second.
- If the needle is vibrating fast, then it will appear as a blur in the picture, and the WGR will take the middle of the blur as the needle position (much like a person would do).
- If the needle is vibrating slowly, then the picture will "freeze" the needle in place when the picture is taken. Over time, as a trend, the needle will move between the upper and lower oscillation limits (you will see approximately a sine wave in the trend).

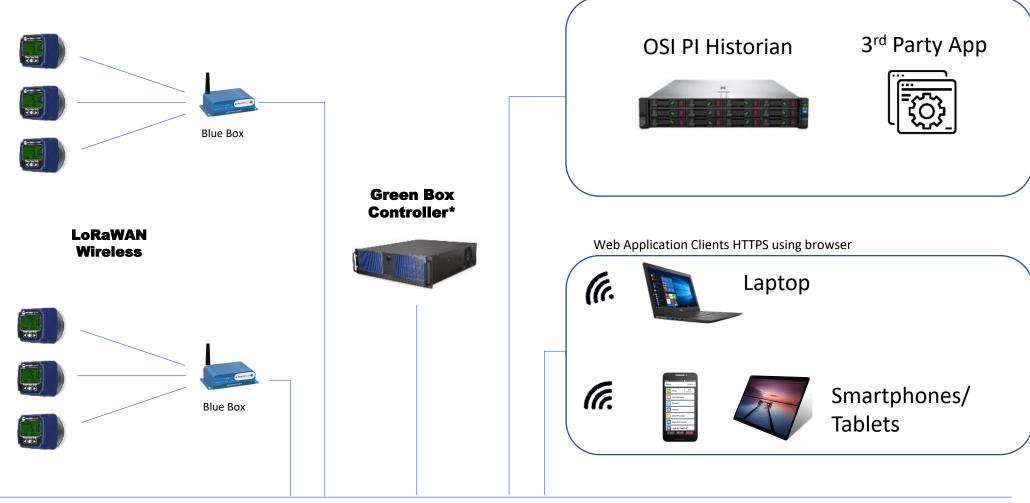


### **Error Conditions**

- Displayed value doesn't match needle
  - Press middle button to get new sample. See if it matches then.
  - If still not match, then this is a calibration problem Cypress to recalibrate.
  - Check to see if the lens is loose/rotates need to glue in place.
- Display shows "----" but no value
  - The Wireless Gauge Reader is unable to read the needle
  - Cypress may need to recalibrate
  - Check if glass is loose (rotated)
  - Check if reader is not mounted properly to quick disconnect
- Low Battery
  - Batteries last 3 years at 15 min sample rate indicator on front LCD display
  - Battery level also shown on GBC display and transmitted to historian
  - Email/Text notification of low battery (depends on IT network)



### Where is the data collected?



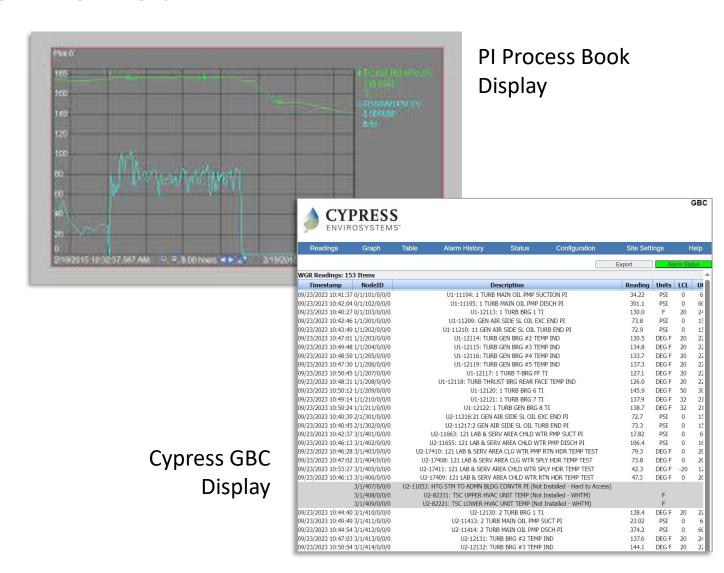
Connection via RESTful API, OPC UA, or OPC DA

Level 2 Business Network (ethernet)



### How Can the Data be Viewed?

- Once the WGR data is stored on the Plant Historian (e.g. OSI PI), users may retrieve historical data and create trend plots using PI Process Book / PI Vision etc.
- Authorized users may also use the Web Application on the Green Box Controller to view historical data without using PI.
- The Green Box Controller stores up to one month of data.





## **Additional Non-Invasive Sensors**



## Family of Non-Invasive Monitoring Solutions

Cycle Isolation Valve Monitor



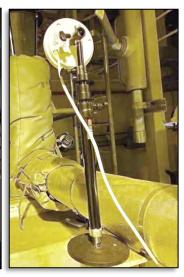


Wireless Temperature and Humidity Monitor



Wireless Rad Monitor





Vibration Sensors





Wireless Transducer Reader (thermocouples, 4-20mA, 0-5V, dry contacts, RS-232 etc.)

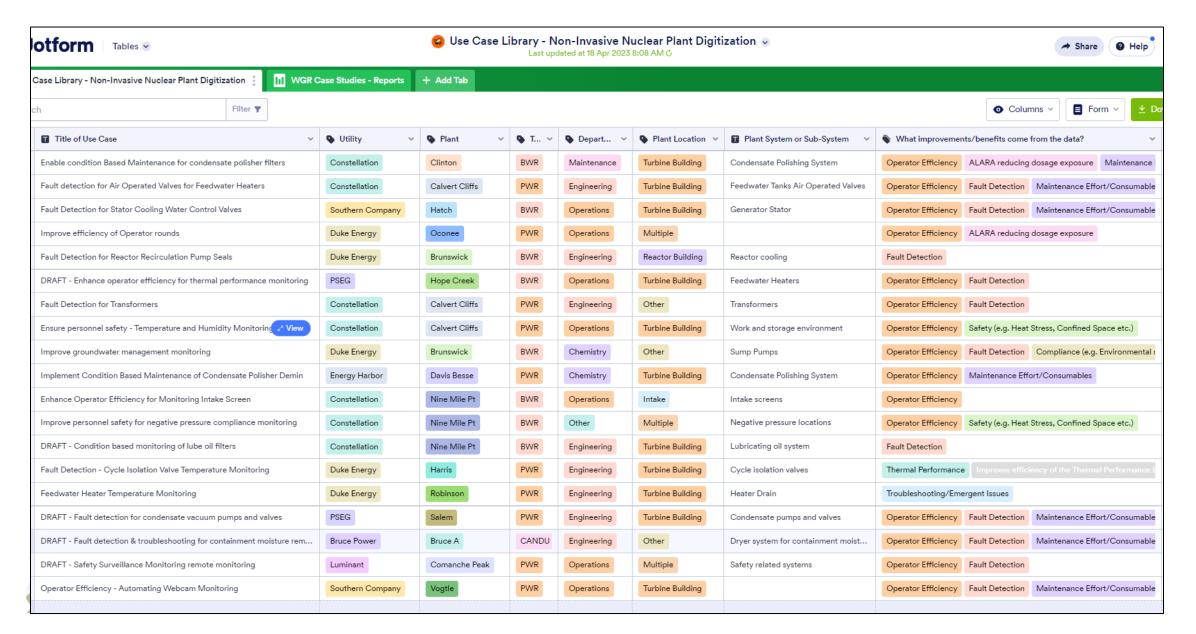
Webcam Digitization (machine vision)

Wireless, Battery Operated, Non-Invasive, Install in Minutes
10% Cost of Traditional Approaches

### Case Studies for Nuclear Power Plants



## Use Case Library - Update



### Crash Cart for Emergent Issues



#### Southern Hatch

#### Need:

 Plant needs data quickly to troubleshoot, diagnose and correct emergent issues.

### **Concept:**

- Use Crash Cart with non-invasive sensors to collect data
- Pre-approved, ready to install in 30 minutes.

#### **Benefit:**

- Avoid lengthy engineering reviews and approvals to add sensors
- Minimize operator man-hours
- Reduce plant downtime





### Feedwater Heater Level - Webcam Digitization



#### Duke Brunswick

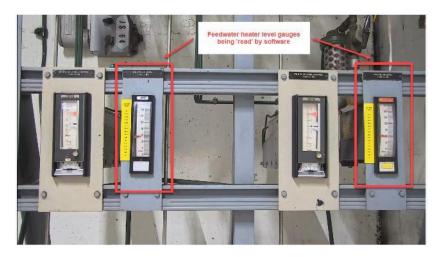
#### Need:

- Automate data collection from feedwater heater including heater level.
- Prior issue resulted in heater taken offline for repairs.
- Must rely on vertical gauge local indicator.

#### **Solution:**

- Install Panasonic IP camera, use GBC machine vision capability to digitize image.
- Data can be stored in PI Historian.
- Operator can look at digitized trend data on PI Vision instead of just watching webcam video.









Data collected and displayed via PI Historian



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### **Operator Rounds Dashboard**





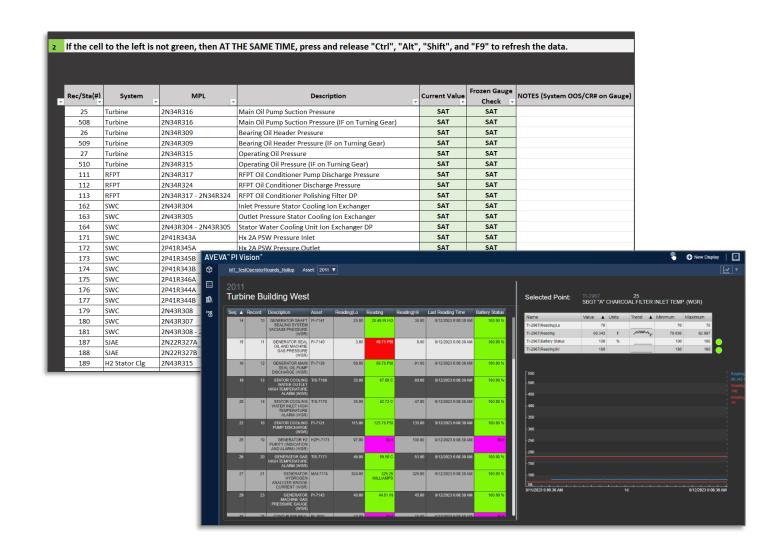
## Southern Hatch Duke Oconee

### **Concept:**

- Collect rounds data throughout day using WGRs
- Operators can review trends and identify abnormalities at start of shift
- Plan and prioritize work more efficiently

#### **Benefit:**

- Reduce operator time by 2 hours per shift
- Faster response to excursions / emergent issues

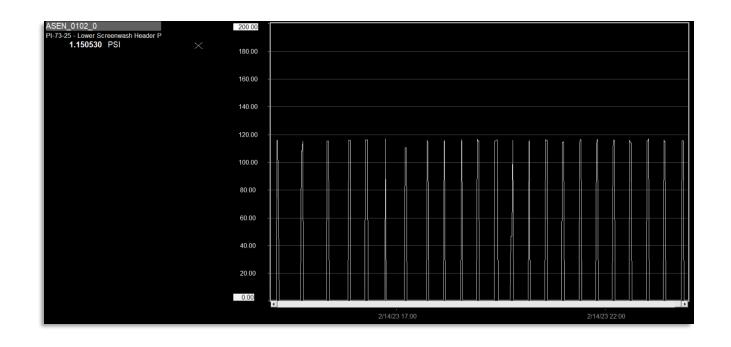




### Constellation Nine Mile Point: Reduce Operator wait time, Improve Fault Detection

### Intake Screen Wash System Monitoring

- Operators must monitor intake screen wash system for proper operation to clear debris.
- Screen wash system operates for 3
  minutes every hour operator must wait
  up to one hour to confirm.
- Gauge Readers automatically monitors delta pressure across screenwash system.
- Saves 30 minutes per operator shift, two shifts per day.





## Duke Brunswick: Environmental Compliance

- As part of a Groundwater Protection Plan, Cypress installed wireless gauge readers on sump pump hour meters to track electrical manhole sump pump run-time.
- No current method to monitor sump levels automatically.
- If tritium is detected the sump pump runtime data may be useful to determine where it came from.
- Catch two types of faults:
  - Pumps not running when they should (sump level too high)
  - Pumps running too much (must be a leak)







### Condition Based Monitoring – FRF Filters



#### **Bruce Power**

#### Need:

- Apply Condition Based Monitoring to FRF filters. Replace consumables only when data shows it is necessary.
- Note: FRF Filters remove impurities which can cause damage or malfunction to the hydraulic system.

#### **Solution:**

- Use WGR's to monitor and trend delta pressure across FRF filters.
- Replace filters at designated delta P.

#### **Benefit:**

- Save filter consumables.
- Avoid system damage or downtime due to undetected filter rupture or clog.



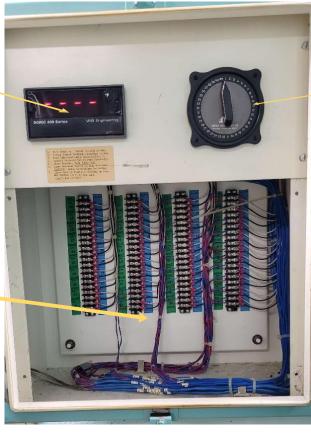


# PSEG Hope Creek and Xcel Monticello: **Automating Thermal Performance Monitoring**

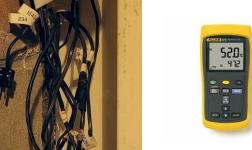
**Xcel Monticello** 

**PSEG Hope Creek** 

**Temperature** Display



Thermocouple Selector dial



Handheld Thermocouple Reader

**Thermocouple Selector Panel for Manual Readings** 

**Thermocouple Connectors** for Manual Readings



Thermo-

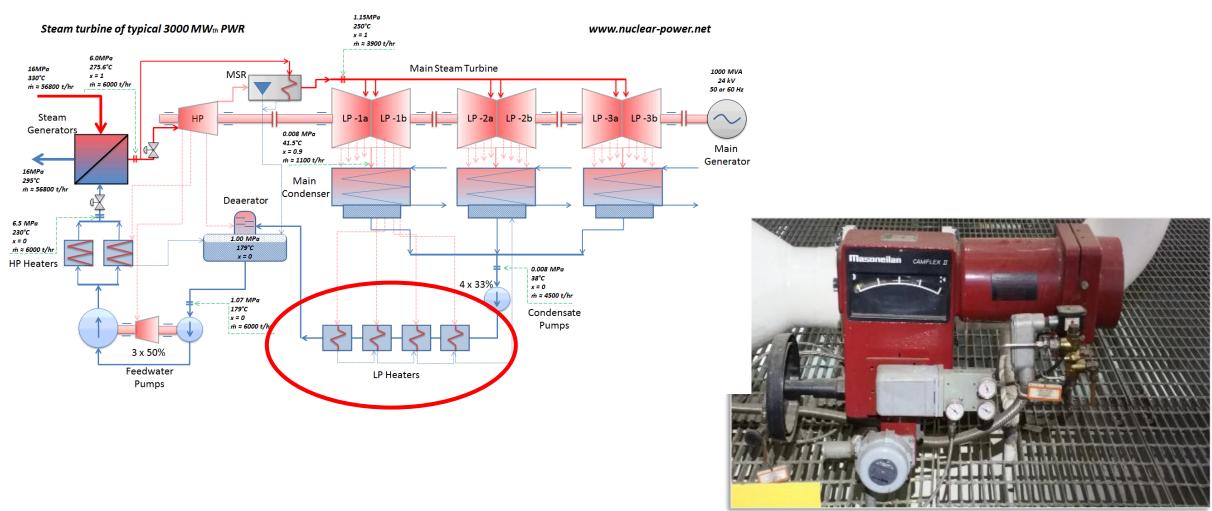
connections

couple

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### Feedwater Heater Level Fault Detection

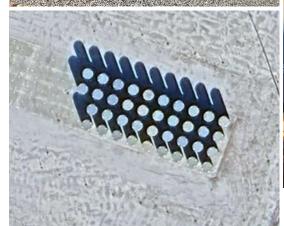






# Drone Integration: Dry Cask Inspection









### Skydio Drone

- May be piloted
- Or autonomous



### Skydio Dock

- "Garage" protection
- Recharging
- Data download



### Dry Well Temp / Humidity Monitoring



#### Southern Hatch

#### Need:

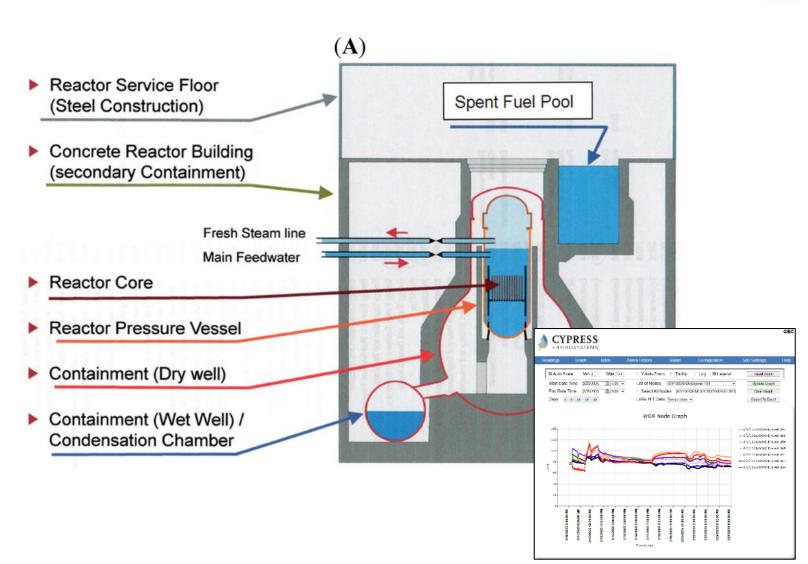
- During outage: Monitor temperature and humidity for worker safety.
- Minimize time and dosage exposure for RP Tech to gather data each shift.

#### **Solution:**

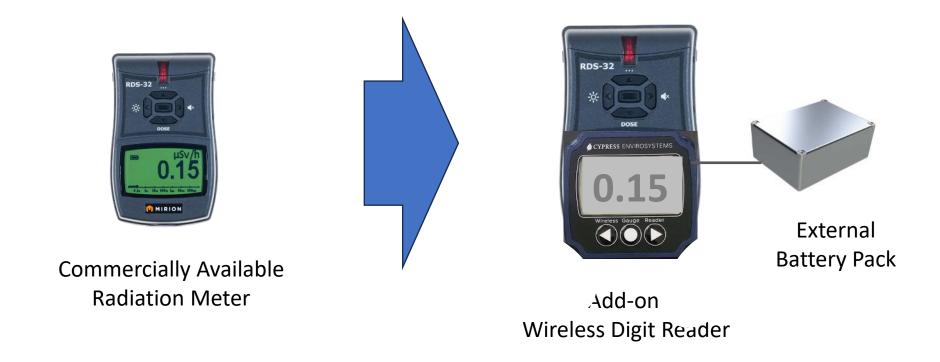
 Use magnetic mount temporary noninvasive Wireless Temperature and Humidity Monitors.

#### **Benefit:**

- Save 1.5 Man-hours/day, 45 Man-hours outage total
- Reduce 8 mrem/day, 240 mrem outage total radiation exposure
- Reduced Industrial Safety exposure



### Wireless Remote Radiation Monitor



- Real-time wireless mobile radiation dose rate monitor
- Battery operated: does not require power nor communications wires
- No need to install additional wireless network (uses Blue Box Gateway and GBC)
- Data via OPC or RESTful API available to PI Historian, 360 Plant Walkthru Software etc.



# Valve Cycle Isolation Monitoring

### Need:

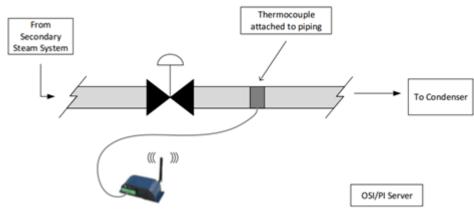
- Detect valve cycle isolation faults.
- Minimize cost and process disruption.

#### **Benefit:**

- Stop leaks, save MW's (est. up to 2MW per malfunctioning valve).
- Save operator time to monitor valves

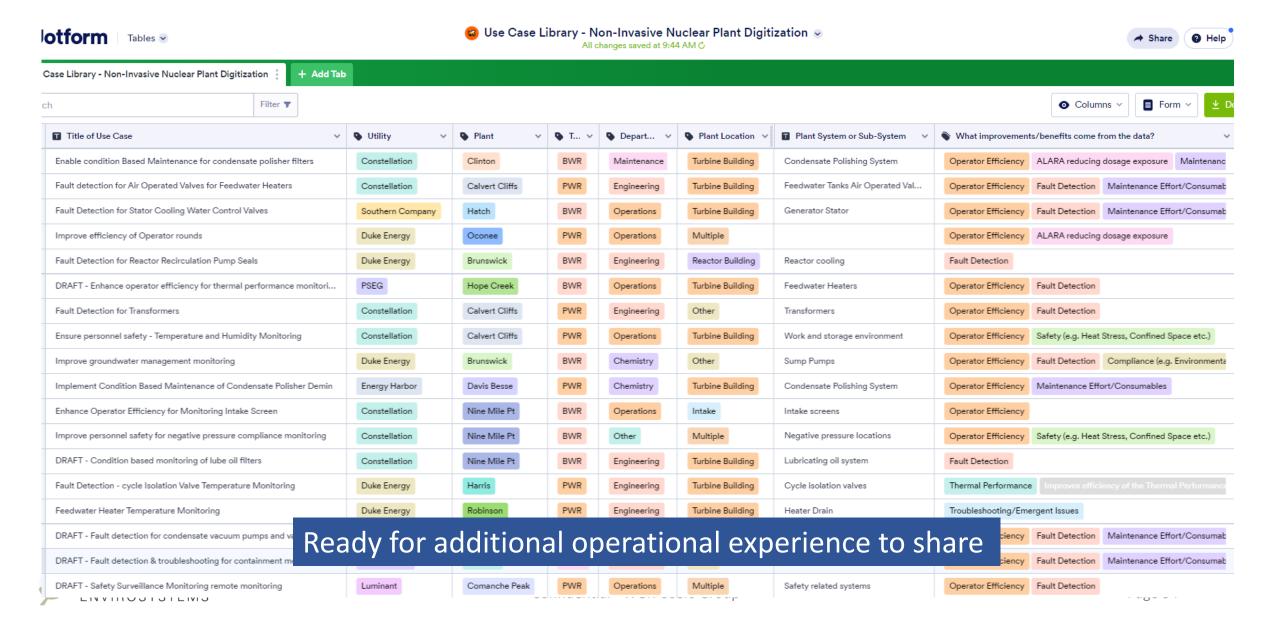
### **Detect Leaking Valves**







## **Nuclear Industry Use Case Library**



### International Atomic Energy Agency Innovation Award 2024





"The ISOP Innovation Awards aim to highlight and recognize innovative use cases within the nuclear power industry. This programme showcases practical applications of cutting-edge technologies and solutions that have been successfully implemented in operating nuclear power plants."





Paper will also be presented at 2025 ANS Annual Conference, Chicago



# Thank You

Q&A?

