

FINDING TRUSTWORTHY VENDORS THAT SPECIALIZE IN PUBLIC POWER CAN BE A DIFFICULT TASK, BUT AMP MEMBERS HAVE A DISTINCT ADVANTAGE – THEY CAN USE HOMETOWN CONNECTIONS TO FIND THE INFORMATION AND SOLUTIONS THEY NEED.

# THE HOMETOWN ADVANTAGE



The utility services subsidiary of the American Public Power Association (APPA), Hometown Connections offers public power utilities guidance and access to quality products/services. It provides a comprehensive list of partners for any utility need. The products

and services include the full range of advanced grid solutions, as well as financial and organizational management tools and consulting. With more than 850 public power clients, the work of Hometown Connections has provided \$17 million in savings to public power.

“When Hometown Connections was formed in 1998, it was created with the sole purpose of making public power more successful,” said Steven VanderMeer, Hometown Connections senior vice president of planning and marketing. “For most of its 17 (plus) years of existence, Hometown Connections has worked side-by-side with AMP to add value to the AMP membership. Whether this was providing discounted products and services from a variety of public power-focused vendors, or working directly with AMP members on organizational operations, strategic planning and facilitation, Hometown has been pleased and honored to work with AMP and its members on ensuring public power continues to thrive in the years and decades ahead.”

For the City of Napoleon, the hosted interactive voice response (IVR) provided by a Hometown Connections partner has proven to be a very effective customer service tool.

“The Hometown Connections partners are established vendors and the solutions provided have benefitted our community,” said Monica Irelan, Napoleon city manager. “Napoleon is pleased with the results and will definitely consider using Hometown partners in the future.”

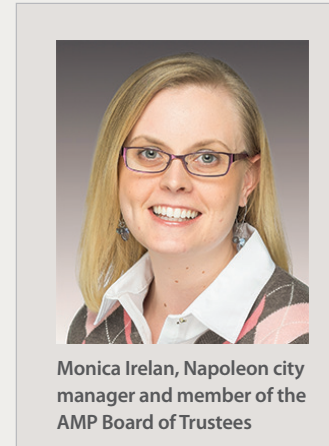
Hometown Connections is one of the many services AMP members can take advantage of through APPA membership. AMP pays the APPA dues for all of its members so they can benefit from the programming and assistance the national service organization provides, including Hometown Connections.

“Every AMP member has access to Hometown Connections through their APPA membership,” explained Alice Wolfe, director of project management. “There is no sign-up or agreement required to participate – members can take advantage of it at any time.”

Hometown Connections builds relationships with reputable vendors who want to have a connection with public power long term. The organization vets the businesses to make sure they are affordable and a good fit for public power. Vendors pay a fee to become a Hometown Connections partner and the organization will turn down companies or let them go if they don’t meet public power’s expectations for quality. “Becoming a Hometown Connections partner means vendors are

making a commitment to public power,” said Wolfe. “Partners offer a discount to all APPA members. It’s a guaranteed reduction that the municipality doesn’t have to negotiate for – it’s already in the terms of the deal.”

Discounted pricing is a key member benefit, but the program also serves as an excellent research resource.



Monica Irelan, Napoleon city manager and member of the AMP Board of Trustees

“If municipalities just want to talk to someone about products, Hometown is a great place to start,” said Harry Phillips, director of marketing/member relations. “They are happy to help explain products as part of their service.”

Hometown Connections personnel provide consulting support in the areas of organization assessment, strategic planning, governance development and staffing.

AMP is a sales affiliate of Hometown Connections and helps promote products and services from trusted entities with public power’s best interests in mind.

AMP’s role with Hometown Connections also helps protect members in the event something goes wrong between a municipality and a partner vendor. AMP can get involved through Hometown Connections as an advocate for the utility.

“Hometown Connections has been delivering value to public power for a long time,” said Phillips. “The staff at Hometown is a good team – they are dedicated and have built-in credibility.”



From left are: Harry Phillips, AMP’s director of marketing/member relations; Alice Wolfe, AMP’s director of project management; and Steven VanderMeer, Hometown Connections senior vice president of planning and marketing.