CASE STUDY: LOVELAND FIRE RESCUE AUTHORITY

About Loveland Fire Rescue Authority

Jurisdiction: 248 square miles, ranging from urban corridors to rugged backcountry.

Poplulation Served: ~110,000 residents.

Operational Focus: Structural fire, wildland fire, technical rescue, and backcountry search and rescue.

The Challenge

Loveland Fire's workflow relied on paper maps and obsolete GPS units that lacked critical updates. Facing complex terrain and cellular dead zones, they needed a modern, intuitive solution that functioned offline while providing rich data for both active emergency response and long-term mitigation planning.

The Solution

Adopting onX unified operations, transforming smartphones into powerful offline tools. Crews now use pre-synced maps in dead zones, 3D terrain to virtually scout fire lines, and custom waypoints for assets. Instant property data further streamlines evacuations and logistics during critical incidents.

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Modernizing Wildfire & Emergency Response

Loveland Fire Rescue Authority protects 248 square miles of diverse terrain, ranging from busy urban corridors to the rugged backcountry near Estes Park. For years, their operations were hampered by a fragmented system of paper maps and obsolete GPS units that lacked necessary IT support and updates. Facing complex topography and frequent cellular dead zones, the department urgently needed a modern, intuitive solution. They required a tool that could function entirely offline while providing the rich data necessary for both active emergency response and long-term wildfire mitigation planning.

To meet this challenge, Loveland Fire adopted onX to unify their mapping operations, transforming standard smartphones and apparatus tablets into powerful navigational assets. The platform's robust offline maps ensure reliable navigation even in remote "dead zones," while advanced features like 3D Terrain and Route Builder allow crews to virtually scout fire lines and plan approach routes without walking the ground. Furthermore, the ability to instantly access property data and mark custom waypoints for critical assets, such as helicopter landing zones and water sources, has significantly streamlined logistics.

The real-world impact of onX has been transformative across multiple mission types. During the Alexander Mountain Fire, crews utilized the app to quickly identify property owners, enabling faster evacuation notifications and accurate documentation of structure status. In a response to a deep forest plane crash, the 3D Terrain View proved critical for analyzing the crash site, selecting a helicopter landing zone, and determining the precise equipment needed for the hike in. Additionally, the department successfully used the Route Builder tool to map fuel treatment areas virtually, securing a FEMA grant without the time-consuming process of manual scouting.

Ultimately, onX has enhanced firefighter safety through better awareness of escape routes and improved interagency interoperability via instant location sharing. Operational efficiency has increased with digital road ratings that inform vehicle deployment decisions. As summarized by Lieutenant Matt DeDecker, "onX has become a critical piece of data for mission success that facilitates pre-planning and quick decision-making, proving itself as mandatory equipment for modern fire operations."