

# Eagles Manage Snow Removal Via RFID

At Lincoln Financial Field, the Philadelphia Eagles' management is using radio frequency identification to track workers clearing snow from the playing field and seats.

By Claire Swedberg

March 7, 2006—The Philadelphia Eagles are using radio frequency identification to streamline snow-removal operations at the football team's home stadium, Lincoln Financial Field. Thanks to a system using RFID-enabled wristbands, the team can not only manage snow-removal workers and process their payment more quickly, but also reduce the likelihood of fraud.

To clear snow-covered seats, the Eagles' management hires temporary workers that sometimes number up to 1,500 during a period lasting as long as 36 hours. A major snowfall in January 2005 and the resulting cleanup convinced the Eagles' director of facility operations, Dave Duernberger, to seek an RFID solution to track the cleanup staff. Striking one day before the NFC championship game, that snowstorm left behind 12 inches of snow, which had to be cleared from the field and the 70,000 stadium seats.

"There are so many variables to a snow-removal event," Duernberger says. "Every time we've done it in the past three years, it has been different." With the storm preceding the championship game, Duernberger remembers, the stadium was besieged with the comings and goings of more than a thousand workers, whose hours were difficult to prove and who generated mountains of paperwork that needed processing. There was no way, for instance, to prove people were not leaving the stadium after they clocked in, then returning at the end of the day to clock out.

To prevent this from happening in the future, the Eagles deployed the Labor Track system from Precision Dynamics Corp. (PDC) of San Fernando, Calif. Labor Track uses the company's Smart Band RFID wristband in conjunction with worker-tracking software from iTelligent Solutions.

With this system, a snow-removal worker arriving for clean-up duty is given a clipboard and a paper form on which to record one's name, temporary agency and other employment details. After turning in the paperwork, that worker is handed an RFID wristband with a Texas Instruments passive 13.56 MHz RFID tag compliant with the ISO 15693 standard. The ID number related to that tag is handwritten on the paperwork the worker turns in. The worker then scans the wristband by means of an iTelligent-designed RFID interrogator (reader) connected to a laptop computer. The read range is about 2 to 3 inches, according to Tom Foster, a regional sales manager for PDC's RFID/Ag Band systems.

With the iTelligent Solutions software, managers can now access information in real time to determine when workers had arrived and to which of the numerous snow clean-up crews were assigned. Crew members ready to take a break line up, and Eagles employees with handheld readers scan the wristbands again. This helps confirm that everyone has been given an opportunity for a break and a meal.

At the end of a shift, workers must scan out to be paid. That scan-out information is then made available to Eagles management. "As soon as they've all scanned out, I know how much the snow removal has cost,"

Duernberger says. The system costs between \$20,000 and \$25,000. The Eagles plan to conduct a study during the 2006-07 winter season to gather data to substantiate cost savings, he says.

PDC and iTelligent developed Labor Track specifically for the Lincoln Financial Field deployment, Foster says, although he adds that two cities in New England are considering using it for their staff. "This system is great for convention centers, where you have a hundred or five hundred employees in a particular area," he says.

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