



Spread Eagle Barrens, photo courtesy of Florence Co. EDC

Florence County (WI) Sheriff's Dept.

Located about 110 miles north of Green Bay, Florence is among Wisconsin's most rural counties. Its only town, Florence, is situated on U.S. Hwy. 2, about two miles southwest of the border with Upper Michigan. County deputies patrol the town as well as 10 unincorporated towns spread over eight townships.

Sheriff Jeff Rickaby, also a rescue squad member, spotted an advertisement for Aladtec in Wisconsin EMS magazine in 2013 and called to inquire whether the platform would work for law enforcement too.

"We scheduled our staff on paper, and it was difficult and time-consuming. We needed a better method. Our work schedule is complicated from the standpoint that we have a standard four-day on, four-day off schedule. What makes it different is our staff rotates within that schedule to maintain constant relay of day-to-day information.

"Someone is always working today that worked yesterday; this eliminates information loss on routine day-to-day things. Instead of having two different work groups opposite of each other we have six work groups," Rickaby explained.

Moving that complex employee shift rotation online to save time while remaining in compliance were challenges.

"We are unionized here, and I thought it would be an issue for calling people in on overtime according to the union contract. The union worked with us so we could do the coverage requests using the Aladtec system. Because the Aladtec software time and date stamps, we can take the overtime sign-ups to meet the contract requirements," Rickaby explained.

"I contacted Aladtec, and within a very short period, they were able to (configure) the software to suit our particular scheduling needs. The free training on the software was well done and easy to understand."

"What would literally take an hour to do before takes only a few minutes, such as call-ins and leave approvals," said Rickaby. "Nearly all our employees and managers have Aladtec on their



Department Info:

Roster: 13 sworn- and 11 civilian employees.

Calls: About 900 involving criminal matters in 2017.

Service area: Pop: About 4,500, 498 sq. miles.

Apparatus: 9 squads, snowmobiles, ATVs & watercraft for patrol and rescue, all based at Justice Center in Florence.

Unique challenges: About half the county's acreage is publicly owned, peppered with 265 lakes and 165 miles of navigable rivers. Eighty-percent forested, Florence County has miles of trails for hikers, four-wheelers, and snowmobilers. Border county with Michigan.

Aladtec users since 2014

Neighboring agencies also using Aladtec:

Vilas County Sheriff's Dept., Eagle River; Crivitz Rescue Squad, Crivitz; Oneida County Sheriff's Dept., Rhinelander; Gillett Area Ambulance Service, Inc., Gillette; Tigerton Area Ambulance Assoc., Tigerton; Emergency Services of Door County, Sturgeon Bay; Clintonville Area Ambulance, Clintonville.





smartphones, making (it simple) to apply for and approve leave from nearly anywhere.”

Connectivity across Florence County has dramatically improved during Rickaby’s 29-year tenure, thanks to his advocacy and cooperation with area provider -- Cellcom (Nsight, Green Bay).

“They’ve been fantastic to work with. They’ve put up a bunch of new towers in our county, so we have pretty darned decent cell coverage, considering the rural nature of our county. Our dispatchers, several times a year, walk lost people out of the woods.”

(Operators) “can look at them on the GPS 911 system. They call in and say ‘I’m lost,’ and (dispatchers) can say ‘Ok. You’re a half-mile from this road, so start walking.’ They start walking, and they can track them, and they say, ‘You need to turn to the right, walk 400 yards and you’ll come to a logging road,’ and they walk, walk, walk. They stay on the phone with them for 15 to 20 minutes, and they walk them right out to a road.”

Some 60 miles of the curving Brule- and Menomonee rivers serve as Florence County’s natural boundary with the State of Michigan. The region’s sparse population and vast tracts of public land create some unique law enforcement challenges.

Rickaby cited a recent incident where an individual where a man involved in a domestic situation in Michigan, found a ride into Florence County. A tipster suggested the man possessed stolen property and may have been armed. Florence’ on-duty deputies were a distance from the scene, so Michigan authorities came over and arrested him under an interstate mutual aid agreement the states share.

“Routinely, 70 percent of the people we arrest are not from our county. Part of it is our close relationship with Michigan-- many of them are Michigan residents, and yet because of the seasonal- and remote nature (of Florence County), we do draw people from all (Wisconsin) and other states into our county, and they manage to get themselves into trouble.”

“Aladtec saves us several hours each week. Often that time was spent calling staff notifying them of schedule changes. Since we don’t have to do that anymore, I think we are saving over \$6,500 per year due to the tremendous savings in time. The software has also eliminated scheduling errors,” Rickaby said.

“Our agency had some hesitation changing to an online schedule program. One of my older supervisors was very apprehensive about the change,” but after a short learning curve, Rickaby said that officer “wouldn’t be without it and neither would the rest of the agency.”

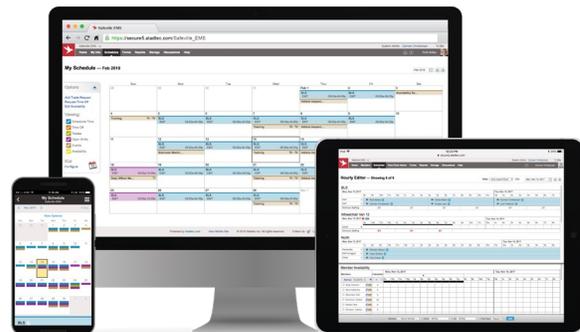
“We had a sick call just this morning. I needed a replacement. I used (Aladtec) to quickly and simultaneously notify the 13 available employees. The shift was filled in a few minutes,” Rickaby said in an e-mail exchange. “Smart, yet easy to work with. It’s a great product. That’s all I can say.”



Sheriff Jeff Rickaby

A native of Ashwaubenon, near Green Bay, Rickaby’s first job was selling popcorn at Lambeau Field. He developed a love for the outdoors as a young man, enhanced by scouting and a dad who loved to fish. Tenure as a public safety officer in Ashwaubenon honed his skills as a police officer, firefighter, and paramedic. He was appointed sheriff by then-Gov. Tommy

Thompson in 1989. He numbers among his accomplishments: establishment of 24-hour police, fire and dispatch center, countywide 911 services, countywide GPS based wireless 911 with integral air-photo mapping; and overseeing design and construction of a new public safety building. Upon retirement in late 2018, he hopes to be elected County Coroner, allowing him to continue serving the people of Florence County.



Aladtec provides online employee scheduling and workforce management software to 2,000-plus organizations, primarily within the Public Safety Sector. Customers count on Aladtec constantly to help save time, improve efficiency and enhance communications. The company is headquartered in River Falls, WI. For information about our affordable platform or to try a free demo, please visit: www.aladtec.com