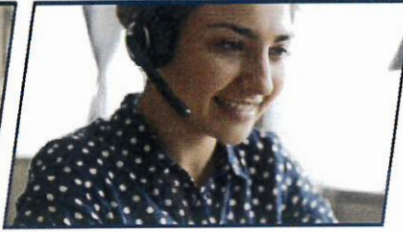
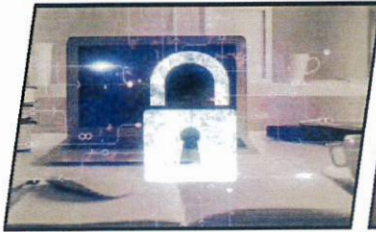
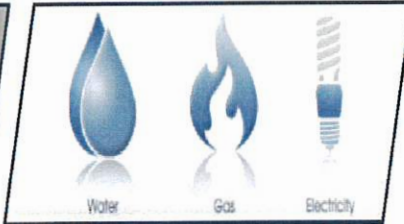


ORIGINAL

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR THE
NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE (AMI) SOLUTIONS
SERVICE CATEGORY #2: INSTALLATION AND REPAIR SERVICES
PROJECT #2025-002**



PREPARED 01/10/2025, BY

**VANGUARD UTILITY SERVICE, INC.
DBA VUSINC**

STATE CERTIFICATE OF FACT #801438736

Designated Contact:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert A. Bates'.

Robert A. Bates
President/Owner
Vanguard Utility Service, Inc.
1421 W. 9th St.
Owensboro, KY 42301
Telephone: 270-926-4646
Email: Sales@vusinc.com



Arlington, TX

January 10, 2025

North Central Texas Council of Governments
616 Six Flags Dr.
Arlington, TX 76011

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Vanguard team, I want to thank you for this opportunity to participate in the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Solutions Service Category #2: Installation and Repair Services Project for the North Central Texas Council of Government. This submittal focuses on Vanguard's experience, personnel and services, while providing a thoughtful scope of work to meet or exceed the Customer's project goals.

The North Central Texas Council of Government offers a vision of improved infrastructure, a future in which water use is accurately accounted for, with the foundation for enhanced operational efficiencies, enhanced customer engagement, and revenue protection. Moreover, this vision also embraces the use of experienced management in its execution. A vision that deserves a partner wholly invested in delivering on its promise, and The Vanguard team is that partner. If selected, we will work collaboratively with the Customer's staff to develop and construct your upgraded water meter infrastructure program.

We are technology and meter neutral, and as a result, we can offer a broad product portfolio and options that help utilities take responsibility and efficiently manage resources. Vanguard supplies, integrates, installs, and maintains proven meter networks with the latest state-of-the-art smart metering technologies. We also offer field maintenance and operations, technical support and consulting services for your meter assets.

We have carefully reviewed your RFP and understand the Scope of Work and the project timeline. With years of experience working with all major AMI providers, we bring our experiences and recommendations on how to maximize value using the planned work processes and tools that will be used in the project.

On behalf of Vanguard, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this process and the opportunity to grow a strong partnership with the North Central Texas Council of Government. I trust you will find that Vanguard has offered a detailed and compliant response, which demonstrates Vanguard's ability to be a consultative partner with the stability and resolution required to implement and warrant the best value project for the North Central Texas Council of Government.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Robert A. Bates.

Robert A. Bates
President/Owner
Vanguard Utility Service, Inc.
1421 West 9th Street, Owensboro, KY 42301
Telephone: 270-926-4646
sales@vusinc.com
www.vusinc.com



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Vanguard's Principal Personnel for the North Central Texas Council of Government :

Robert A. Bates, President/Owner – Project Sponsor, 5-10% On site – 31 years of experience in operations management, business development, supply chain management, process engineering, logistics, strategic planning, budget development, personnel training and management, utility control, performance, and quality standards, with focus on customer satisfaction, Tony will oversee total operations of the company, sales, finance, operations, negotiation, and project coordination to ensure that a successful project is delivered.

Byron Weaver, Operations Manager- Project Plan Implementation Administration - 20% On-site – 22 years of hands-on technical skills in all areas. Functional experience includes field operations management, quality assurance, budgetary tracking, logistical management, and technical installations, setting company standards for hiring project management, quality, and field employees. Byron has been in the meter installation industry with Vanguard for 14 years and involved with large projects for over 22 years. He will be overseeing the installation processes and management personnel for this project, onsite until the project is in production, and monthly after that.

Bret Bates, Commercial Meter Manager/OSHA Safety Manager – 30 years of field experience in commercial testing, repairing, and replacing of commercial and industrial water meters. Bret has been instrumental in the start-up, training, and management of many residential replacement programs. In his administrative roles he is responsible for work force management and training, as they relate to water meter technicians and engineers.



Project Manager, TBD, 100% On-site – The project manager ensures site consistency exceeds expectations while maintaining inventory and productivity. Responsibilities also include coordination between the customer, vendors, residents, and the corporate office to ensure quality installation of the AMI/AMR system.

Brooke Bates, Director of Internal Operations, Safety Management & Trainer, 10% On-site – Over 3 years of safety management experience in the utility industry. Certifications include OSHA General Industry Trainer. Brooke is our current Safety Trainer.

Human Resources, 5% Remote—Assists in Recruiting (full-time and temp associates), new hire orientation, performance evaluations, open enrollment, compliance maintenance, editing and enforcement of policies and procedures, OSHA records, FMLA approvals/tracking, scheduling, managing company functions and authoring company newsletters. Acts as a liaison between the staff in the field, which are located throughout the U.S., and the corporate office located in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Shannon Shoulder, Manager Call Center, Data Integrity, QC, 20% Remote— Over 5 years of Information Technology experience. She has experience with managing over 150 employee's IT staff at a time while implementing new inventory tracking software. Shannon holds an associate degree in information technology.





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Team Resumes

Position	Robert Anthony "Tony" Bates - President
Position Description	<p>2002 – Present Vanguard Utility Service, Inc.</p> <p>President and Co-Founder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Responsible for building accounts, organizing operations, developing, and implementing programs to service utilities needs across the US.
Industry Experience	31 years working in Administrative, Sales, Marketing, Management, and Service in the Water Meter Industry
Work History	<p>1992 – 2002 Metro Meter Service, Inc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Operations - Responsible for the coordination, scheduling, hiring, and training, organization of materials and supplies, purchasing of equipment for the test and repair crews with customers across the country. •Information Verification Specialist - Set up individual meter tracking program for accounts across the country. Including verifying information with customer billing databases. •Special Projects Coordinator - Responsible for development of specialized techniques and organization to accommodate designated unusual needs of customers. •Quality Control - Responsible for inspection procedure on projects such as installation inspection procedure on multiple past residential replacement projects. •Project Supervisor - Operational control, for the following small meter replacement projects: Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Wilmington, DE., (Past residential replacement project) Virginia Beach, VA., Arlington, TX., Stanton, VA., Sarasota County, FL., Coral Springs, FL., Tarry town, NY. •On-Site Project Management - Complete project management from Start-up to Finish on the following projects: Arlington, TX., Stanton, VA., Sarasota County, FL., Coral Springs, FL •Replacement Manager returning after start-up on the following: Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Wilmington, DE., (Past residential replacement project) Virginia Beach, VA., Tarry town, NY. •Master Residential Installer - Trained personnel and installed residential meters with remotes on the following projects: Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Wilmington, DE., (Past residential replacement project), Tarry town, NY. •In-Field Test & Repair of Commercial Meters - Managed large water meter test and repair crew. •Data Industrial Specialist - Installation and monitoring of large water line (up to 99") for accounts from across the country.
Education	<p>University of Kentucky- 1991-1993, Owensboro, KY. – Majoring in Business Administration and Marketing</p> <p>Mira Costa College - 1990-1991 Oceanside California</p> <p>Army Navy Academy - Class of 1991 Carlsbad, CA.</p>



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Position	Byron Weaver Regional Manager- On-Site 20%	
Position Description	Functional experience includes field operations management, quality assurance, budgetary tracking, logistical management, and technical installations. Sets company standards for hiring project management, quality, and field employees. Byron has been in the meter installation industry with Vanguard for 14 years and has been involved with large projects for over 22 years and will be overseeing the installation processes and management personnel for this project; he will be onsite until the project is in production and monthly after that. 22 years of hands-on field experience, and managing operations teams	
Industry Experience	Taylor, MI Waterford, MI Durham, NC Kinston, NC Newton, MA Kingsport, TN New Braunfels, TX Cary, NC Charlotte, NC	Bismarck, ND Mena, AR Colonial Beach, VA Smyrna, GA Marshall, MN Thief River Falls, MN Colorado Springs, CO Charleston, SC Jacksonville, NC Westland, MI
Project Experience	Experienced in supporting and installing meters and AMI/AMR solutions from; Xylem (Sensus), Badger, Neptune, Kamstrup, KP Solutions, Elster/Amco, Metron, Itron, Mueller, Aclara and Zenner.	
Education	University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY Itron and Aclara Certification OHSa Certification & Training, blood-borne pathogens, radiation safety, biohazardous waste disposal, and confined space Certified train-the-trainer in WOMS WO Management tool and AWWA best meter practices	



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Position	Shannon Shoulder IT Manager		
Position Description	Responsibilities include managing all aspects of the installation data collected and its integration with the customer's billing software. Executes processes and procedures to ensure data quality. Works with the customer and project manager to provide customized reporting and data analysis when needed.		
Industry Experience	Aqua, OH Ceylon, MN Colton, CA Gilbert, MN Henderson, KY Henrico County, VA Hodgenville, KY	Jacksonville Beach, FL Knightstown, IN Maroa, IL McCormick, SC Oak Park Heights, MN Oklahoma City, OK Opelousas, LA	Port O'Connor, TX San Antonio, TX Shorewood, WI Spaulding, MI Surf City, NC Tuscaloosa, AL Valdosta, GA
Project Experience	Experience with meter and AMR/AMI systems such as Sensus, Aclara, Itron, Kamstrup, Badger, Mueller, Zenner, Neptune, and Master Meter.		
Employment History	September 2018 – Present Vanguard Utility Service, Inc (Owensboro, KY) IT Manager July 2017 – February 2019 Wendell Foster (Owensboro, KY) Support Professional October 2016 – July 2017 CVS Pharmacy (Owensboro, KY) Technician		
Education	August 2017 to May 2018 Owensboro Community & Technical College A.S. in Computer Information Technology - Programming September 2011 to December 2012 Kaplan University A.S. in Criminal Justice		



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References

North Richland Hills, TX

Address: 4301 City Point Dr., North Richland Hills, TX 76182

Contact: Kenneth Garvin, Utilities Superintendent **Ph:** 817-427-6440

Email: kgarvin@nrhtx.com

Contact: Boe Blankenship, Public Works Director **Ph:** 817-427-6460

Email: bblankenship@nrhtx.com

Project Name: Water Meter Installation Services

Contract Term: 1 year (450 calendar days) with option 4 one-year renewals

Substantial Completion: 04/01/2025

Number of Meters: 24,599

System: Badger Beacon Cellular

Billing System: Combination of HTE, Tyler Munis, and Beacon (Reading software).

Detail of Work Performed: Project Management and Installation of ¾" – 2" Badger meters, 1.5" & 1" retrofits and service line identification.

Austin Water

Address: 625 E 10th St, Austin, TX 78701

Contact: Dan Strub Ph. # (512)-297-3708 Email: dan.strub@austintexas.gov

Project Name: Large Diameter Water Meter Exchange Services and Accuracy Testing of 3" and Larger Water Meters

Contract Term: January 2021- October 2024

Number of Meters: 432

System: Badger Recordall, Sensus OMNI, ABB Mag Meter with Aclara

Detail of Work Performed: Exchange 220 (3"-6") Water Meters with Recordall, Omni or ABB mag meter, test port, and downstream shutoff valve during normal business hours; Exchange 212 (3"-6") Water Meters during non-business hours; Installation of spool piece for test port on mag meter installations. Accuracy Testing for approx. 2,500 large meters (3", 4" & 6")

St John the Baptist, LA

Address: 1811 W. Airline Hwy., LaPlace, LA 70068

Contact: Peter Montz, Director of Purchasing and Procurement

Email: p.montz@stjohn-la.gov **Ph:** 985.652.9569

Project Name: Installation of Water Meters and Meter Interface Units (MTUs)

Contract Term: 01/02/2024 – 06/30/2024

Number of Meters: 3,886

System: Badger

Billing System: Munis

Detail of Work Performed: Project management and Installation services for the replacement of 3,886 meters from 5/8"x3/4" to 6" water meters, replaced curb stops from ¾" to 2", gate valves, meter couplings and mechanical joint fittings with meter exchange.

Howard County, MD

Address: Office of Procurement and Contract Administration, 6751 Columbia, MD 21046

Contact: Ana Cronk, Contract Analyst **Phone:** 410-313-6384

Email: acronk@howardcountymd.gov

Project Name: Water Meter Replacement and Installation Services – Agreement PA-075-2023

Contract Term: 02/22/2023 – 02/28/2024 with two 1-year renewal options

Number of Meters: 10,000/ year

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References Continued

System: Sensus

Billing System: SAP System

Detail of Work Performed: 10,000 inside meters replaced each fiscal year. The total meters to be replaced during the life of the contract include approximately 20,000 indoor and 3,300 outside (pit) meters.

St John the Baptist, LA

Address: 1811 W. Airline Hwy., LaPlace, LA 70068

Contact: Peter Montz, Director of Purchasing and Procurement

Email: p.montz@stjohn-la.gov **Ph:** 985.652.9569

Project Name: Installation of Water Meters and Meter Interface Units (MTUs)

Contract Term: 01/02/2024 – 06/30/2024

Number of Meters: 3,886

System: Badger

Billing System: Munis

Detail of Work Performed: Project management and Installation services for the replacement of 3,886 meters from 5/8"x3/4" to 6" water meters, replaced curb stops from 3/4" to 2", gate valves, meter couplings and mechanical joint fittings with meter exchange.

Salisbury, NC

Address: Salisbury-Rowan Utilities, 1 Water Street, Salisbury, NC 28144

Contact: Jason Wilson, Asst. Utilities Director – Salisbury-Rowan Utilities

Project Name: CDMA Cellular Endpoint Exchange **Contract Term:** 50 business days

Estimated Start Date: 10/17/2022

Number of Meters: 7,500/14,500

System: CDMA Orion Cellular

Billing System: Great Plains

Detail of Work Performed: Retrofit 7,500 Badger Endpoints; Alternate- Retrofit 14,500 Badger Endpoints



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Vanguard Experience in Similar Projects

Vanguard has managed, installed, and maintained AMI solutions and meters with great success using our Vanguard Project Management Methodology and Vanguard Work Order Management System (WOMS) tools delivering advanced metering systems to hundreds of utilities and municipalities. Of our many customers, we can highlight several North American water utility deployments utilizing AMI/AMR systems:



Vanguard has completed more than 900 projects over the past 23 years across the United States. Each installation project has ranged from fewer than 100 to well over 100,000 water meters. Vanguard strives to ensure that all projects are completed efficiently and timely. With our experience, Vanguard has proven our installation services exceed our customers' expectations.

These projects include:

- Lee County FL – Installation of approximately 87,000 water meters
- Durham NC – Replacement of approximately 300 commercial water meters
- Durham NC – Replacement of approximately 80,000 residential meters
- Charlotte NC – Installation of 58,000 Endpoints
- Tallahassee FL – Installation of approximately 80,000 water meters and retrofit 6,600 registers
- Evansville IN – Replacement of approximately 60,000 water meters

Vanguard confirms we are absent from any litigation activities involving other municipal clients. Vanguard also certifies all key personnel have been actively involved in the management and implementation of at least three projects of more than 10,000 meters.



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Company Background

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc., located at 1421 West 9th Street, Owensboro, KY 42301, was incorporated on February 18, 2002. Our primary contact for the North Central Texas Council of Government project is Kathy Kolter, Regional Director of Sales, who can be contacted by email at sales@vusinc.com or by phone at 270-926-4646 ext. 270.

Vanguard is a privately held company dedicated to the resourceful use of water. For nearly 23 years, we have been delivering solutions to address the unique challenges facing the water industry including increasing demand and resource scarcity. With proven expertise in AMI/AMR systems, Vanguard has a broad knowledge and long history of managing successful AMI/AMR projects. We provide comprehensive solutions that measure, manage, and analyze water and energy usage data at the residence, Customer, and system levels. From day one, our goal has been to modernize the nation's infrastructure while improving revenues, reducing operating costs, and enhancing the customer experience for our clients. The service we provide delivers on the promise of a successful AMI/AMR solution by translating data into information that can be immediately utilized to aid the Customer. Our clients will have the flexible tools that meet their needs today and can evolve to meet the business needs of tomorrow.

Since Vanguard is product neutral, we can offer a broad product portfolio that helps utilities manage resources responsibly and efficiently. We supply, install, and maintain standard meter networks with the latest smart metering technologies and smart wellfield solutions for your water system. These include smart water analytics and customer engagement tools like software-as-a-service, managed services, e.g., field maintenance and operations, technical support services, and consulting services. We also hold contractor's license statuses in 19 states.

Vanguard has performed more than 900 projects in its 23 years across the United States. Each installation project has ranged from fewer than 100 to well over 100,000 water meters. Vanguard strives to ensure all projects are completed efficiently and timely. Some of these projects include Lee County FL, Durham NC, Charlotte NC, Tallahassee FL, Fort Worth TX, and Evansville IN. With our experience, Vanguard has proven our installation services exceed all expectations and more.

- Over 8+ Million Endpoints/Meters Deployed
- Successfully engaged in over 800 projects
- Single point of accountability
- Focused on delivering full end-to-end solutions that are business goal driven and independent technology-enabled
- Value added partnerships
- Experts in long-term management, maintenance & repair contracts

The Vanguard Difference

Our senior management includes team members from the water, gas, and electric industries with a combined 75 years of experience. It is a bank of knowledge that has allowed Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. to flourish and become a leader in the meter & AMI/AMR industry today.

With dedicated water, energy, and business professionals with years of experience and strong commitment to customer satisfaction and service, Vanguard offers you the resources needed to successfully plan, execute, and even finance the water program that will create real, sustained economic and operating benefits to fulfill your unique requirements.

For the North Central Texas Council of Government, we have assembled a team that is



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experienced in the procurement, design, and implementation of AMI Water Meter projects. All team members have supported all aspects of our Customer clients, from project inception through system integration to the actual operation of the AMI solutions and follow-on value creation. Our involvement with all phases of an AMI Project Lifecycle has given us an unparalleled understanding of the requirements, approaches, best practices, lessons learned, and delivery accelerators.

The team will leverage our collective resources to offer the Customer a solution that we feel no other can deliver. We will staff our project team with the right people, with the right knowledge and experience, at the right time to implement an efficient and successful solution. We have successfully performed with our team members, and we are confident our combined skill set will result in long-term, cost-effective success for the North Central Texas Council of Government.

Our leaders are dedicated to making Vanguard Utility Service, Inc., a thriving business. They are devoted to the success of our partners, our vision, and our mission. Together with over 75 years of combined experience, Vanguard's senior management have an exceptionally diverse array of talent and knowledge to bring to our organization.

- ✦ Robert Bates, President/Owner
- ✦ Byron Weaver, Operations Manager
- ✦ Bret Bates, Commercial Meter Manager
- ✦ Kathy Kolter, Regional Director of Sales

Vanguard provides exceptional services to offer the North Central Texas Council of Government:

- Installation of water and electric meters, all sizes and brands
- Installed AMR Systems, Automatic Meter Reading (Drive-by) and AMI System, Advanced Meter Infrastructure (Fixed Network)
- Retrofits gas and water meters of all sizes and brands
- Installation of large water meters including vault replacement or repair
- Providing On-site Testing, Repair and Recalibration of industrial and commercial water meters
- Fully equipped mobile testing units that can field test up to 36-inch source services
- Surveys of large meters
- Independent Auditing Services
- Project Managers have OSHA 10 Certification, and Large Meter Managers have the Confined Space Certification

Vanguard also provides additional services, such as:

- Work Order Management utilizing Vanguard's Electronic Work Order Management System (VUSS)
- Collection of GPS (standard to sub-meter)
- In-House test bench for all size meters
- Managing a Call Center



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Management Plan

Once identified as the successful contractor, Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. will assign a project manager who will be responsible for all aspects of the project. He will be the primary contact with decision-making ability in communication with the Customer during the duration of the project. He will have available to him any resources needed from his regional office as well as all corporate resources to ensure the smooth and efficient implementation of this project plan.

Responsibilities will include:

- Coordinate with the Product Manufacturer to schedule training
- Safety on project and OSHA requirements
- Production, scheduling, monitoring, and reporting
- Work Scheduling and identification of required training as needed
- Quality control of installations and tracking
- Electronic Inventory Control
- Customer Relations including contact with Customer's CIS department
- Customer Appointment scheduling capabilities via www.vusinc.com
- Material Supply/Inventory Control including warehouse and waste management
- Manpower Levels to maintain production schedule
- Prepare Coordination and follow-up and notification to the Customer's Project Manager
- Field personnel will report directly to the Field Project Manager. All field personnel will be responsible for maintaining production schedules in a professional and timely manner as issued by the Project Manager.

Execution Plan

Once identified as the successful Contractor, the overall project is reviewed at the Corporate Center to ensure that all facets of the project have been isolated and a management team member is assigned.

The normal order of schedule is Purchasing reviews the material requirement and issues the required purchase orders to ensure an orderly flow of product is in place at the time of the project ramp-up. Next, the Data Processing Division contacts the Utility to establish the requirements of the CIS and Billing Departments. This usually results in various customer and account data to be downloaded and tested for compatibility and electronic transfer compatibility. Once the data and electronic connections are secured, the customer and account information are downloaded to the project files. A Project planning meeting with the Customer and Manufacturer will then be scheduled to create an overview of the project. The purpose of this meeting is to identify all company, manufacturer, representative, and Customer personnel, making all introductions to ensure every party understands their role for running a successful project. The preconstruction meeting will also identify specific system integration plans for software installation, hardware installation, training schedules, material management, and warehousing plans. A timeline and project ramp-up schedule will then be established and approved by all parties involved.

The assigned project manager will move to the area and begin working up the operational schedules and meet with the Customer's personnel to begin the ramp-up phase. Typically, the project manager will meet with the Customer and Manufacturer personnel on some predetermined schedule of meetings to ensure that all facets of the ramp-up process move smoothly, and all problems are resolved as they are identified. The project manager will arrange for housing of the



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installation technicians and set up the warehouse, if needed, to receive the product to be installed. Upon arrival of technicians to the ramp-up area the project manager will issue specific product training if required and orient the technicians to the Project area. If pre-notifications to the Customer's customers were required, the project manager, working with the Corporate Data Processing Department, authorizes the sending of those notifications only after confirming that all parts of the project are in a go-position.

Vanguard's Work-Order Management System is put into place and work-routes are assigned to the technicians. Startup of the actual installation process begins. The project manager then establishes the Quality Control portion of the project, typically this requires 10% of all installations to be re-checked for adherence to the manufacturers' requirements and the standards established by Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. All Quality Checks are logged, and records are maintained to ensure that any issues are resolved. This process continues until the contract has been fulfilled. The project manager will continue working with the training team to ensure that all the Customer's affected personnel receive the training needed to respond to the new environment and systems.

The in-field data collected (see our hand-held system for specifics) is reformatted, and on a day-by-day basis electronically uploaded into the Customer's CIS system. Problems associated with a successful merger of the CIS system and the data collection system from the field are identified and assigned to the appropriate personnel, either Vanguard Utility Service, Inc., the software developer, or the Manufacturer of the product for resolution.

At the completion of the project, a post-construction meeting is scheduled with all parties to review the overall success of the project as designed, resolve any remaining issues, and sign-off on the completed project.

Project Planning

Vanguard has carefully reviewed North Central Texas Council of Government's program goals and objectives, and has assembled a team of experts to plan, prepare, design, and implement the AMI system successfully. We understand the AMI program requirements of the RFP and know that we will be able to leverage our experiences from similar projects around the country to assist North Central Texas Council of Government in meeting all the requirements. Vanguard will provide the following implementation functions related to the project:

- Program management for project and full responsibility
- Coordination of all aspects of project
- Contract adherence
- QC/QA
- All field installation of meters and endpoints
- Inventory control and management
- Project communications planning support



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Project Communication

Our Project Management is centered around communication. Organizing project meetings during all phases of the project to ensure there is proper and frequent communication with the North Central Texas Council of Government's staff. The goals and expectations are appropriately communicated and understood by all project team members. During the ramp-up phase, critical issues identified are addressed and adequately communicated to the staff. Proper reporting procedures ensure timely and appropriate generation, collection, dissemination, storage, and ultimate disposition of project information. It provides a critical link between people and ideas, acquiring the knowledge necessary for success by ensuring everyone involved is prepared to deal with and understand the communications.

Examples of such critical issues are:

- Work scheduling and quality monitoring
- Security or escort issues
- Disruptions to normal facility operations
- Shutdown or interruption of utility services
- Housekeeping issues throughout the deployment phase
- Safety issues relating to subcontractors, hazardous materials, traffic, construction areas
- Location of equipment, tools, offices, parking for the project team, etc.
- Permits, rules and regulations, and other requirements
- Deployment milestone reviews

Project Schedule Development - All tasks for the development and implementation phases will be developed by the project team in close coordination with the staff of the North Central Texas Council of Government. Cooperation will ensure a co-authored timeline that considers all unique variables, producing a timeframe for an implementation that is the most beneficial to the Customer and the project. After the calendar is approved and presented for the Customer's approval, it will then be used diligently by the field staff to track the project's development. The project schedule is a living document and is continuously updated during the project's life. Any changes to the project schedule are communicated immediately to the Customer's staff.

Customer and Internal Project Communication Planning

AMI programs are highly public and prone to customer scrutiny. By proactively educating customers about the benefits of AMI, including sharing case studies and customer testimonials. And communicating with customers both pre- and post-installation, utilities can gain support from their customers, community, and local elected officials. Water utilities begin seeing savings and operational improvements from AMI almost immediately.

Utilities with the highest level of customer engagement with AMI conduct extensive education and outreach to register customers on the portal (e.g., asking to help register customers on every call or incentivizing registration with a one-time bill credit). Customers with portal access will receive essentially real-time usage alerts and will be able to review their hourly water consumption, warnings, and conservation.

Vanguard will work with the North Central Texas Council of Government's team on their AMI outreach and customer communication strategy at no additional cost to the Utility. Included in



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our pricing is marketing and communications planning, call center services, and optional door hangers and postcards.

Items to consider during an AMI deployment:

- Provide information through standard channels like bill inserts and do not solely rely on electronic communications to educate and inform customers about upcoming changes.
- Develop an AMI fact sheet and frequently asked questions document; make this available on the website, in payment centers, and in community centers and all utility employees.
- Provide information in multiple languages to meet targeted customer needs.
- Update phone recordings to explain the purpose and benefits of AMI
- Educate local officials and community groups on the upcoming AMI program and benefits to the community.
- Send customers a pre- AMI letter/mailer 30-60 days before their installation, describing the work that will be performed and the benefits of AMI
- Develop a policy and process for customers to opt out of AMI, including how this will be identified in the customer information system and what meter reading fees will be assessed in the future.
- Post a door hanger notifying customers of successful or unsuccessful AMI installation.
- Send a welcome to AMI email (or postcard, if no email is available), linking the customer to the portal registration website.
- Note all outbound communications in the customer information system so this information is available to customer service representatives if a customer calls with questions in the Vanguard WOMS application.



Conclusion

Vanguard is a unique and extremely flexible AMI solution service provider that can implement the North Central Texas Council of Government' project by managing the program with a feature-rich WOMS system with effective dashboard KPI's and real-time views of the entire project on a daily basis.

Possible Outreach Campaign Program for North Central Texas Council of Government

On-going internal and external communications during a project is key. Below are examples to consider:

- Appointment portal (if required) Call center information (if required)
- Coordination with billing department in advance for notes to be added to water bill by route mail notification post card.
- Plan for special customer requirements



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Vanguard Work Order Management System (WOMS) Application and Asset Management Tracker

Vanguard has managed, installed, and maintained AMI solutions and meters with great success using our Vanguard Project Management Methodology and Vanguard WOMS work-order management tools delivering advanced metering projects to hundreds of utilities and municipalities.

WOMS gives your smart AMI programs the best of both worlds, with out-of-the-box, field-proven, AMI deployment features and a platform entirely customizable and configurable to your requirements. WOMS provides five modules that span the full system life cycle, seamlessly integrated to deliver everything your program needs. Efficiency and accuracy are paramount concerns when deploying smart metering systems. Vanguard Utility Software Suite (VUSS), our smart metering field management software, leverages decades of experience to deliver innovative management applications in support of smart metering installations and maintenance activities.

The WOMS application offers end-to-end visibility and control of metering and AMI initiatives. With powerful collaboration and real-time reporting, WOMS comprehensive software tools safely and efficiently execute smart AMI projects, on-time, and on-budget.

- Automatically collect and consolidate project data across all data modules to create a fully integrated, powerful application for meter deployments. All aspects of the installation process from inventory management and workforce assignments to real-time project tracking and safety management are available for all AMI project teams members.
- Manages the AMI deployment end-to-end and across the entire meter lifecycle with our suite of software tools designed specifically for utilities.
- Documents the entire AMI deployment workflow to increase productivity and quality processes. Workflows can be customized for a Customer's needs and eliminate common errors that can occur during AMI deployments.

Key Features

- Multi-stage, multi-tiered inventory management to quickly reconcile inventory and provide precise stage-tracking of all project assets. WOMS provides a comprehensive, real-time view of all project assets, custody, and locations.
- Customer service is significantly improved during the installation project by utilizing the appointment, customer contact and customer claims features. Through Customer Call Center, Customer Service, and field staff communications such as appointment setting, mailers, door hangers, and field-generated contact reports in real-time via the team's mobile devices, will instantly push this data to a central server to accurately track all customer interaction.
- Our customer dashboard allows for easy access to all of the project and customer services representative's data collection and processing system. This allows for an easy drill down by account number, address, or customer name for our all accounts. Customer clients can run and export standardized reports, at their discretion, appointments, account status, and reading route all by any date-range.
- WOMS tracks each individual's account data from the Customer's CIS system with new and old meter and endpoint numbers, readings, size type, manufacture, model. All new meter/endpoint information is collected with a bar code scanner. WOMS also tracks



Arlington, TX

inventory, customer appointments, door hangers, and letters mailed, all with time, date and GPS imbedded in the record. Service information, work performed, as well as a historical recording of every time the account information was modified and by who. Overall, there are over 140 fields of data that can be captured for each account. Our field handheld device has the built-in capability to take multiple imbedded digital color pictures.

- Digital color photo records before and after installation, date and time stamp, GIS, imbedded GPS location, bar-code scanning of newly installed meters and endpoints.
- All completed field data is sent to a WOMS interface which is processed by our Quality Control Department that provides for a final quality audit prior to data being sent back to the Customer.
- WOMS is designed to help meet contractual requirements for smart metering installation acceptance. It tracks the project's progress across all routes as installation work orders are completed and the installations are validated through successful reads of the new meters, from the AMI collection systems.
- Work orders can be filtered with user- defined criteria and user defined elements are displayed, including unique Customer data elements. The data is exported as a .csv file for ad-hoc reporting or for use in external applications.
- Work order dispatching activities are optimized by utilizing WOMS's comprehensive dispatch which is based on work orders, utility's input, routing and mapping or Project Manager, Support crew dispatch features. Project defined exceptions such as installer permissions ensures work is dispatched to the right person at the right time.
- WOMS's management dashboards allow to communicate project information to all project stakeholders, view project status to date, and route saturation as well as view quality audit statistics, customer claims and open exceptions requiring closure.
- Project progress, installation quality and work force productivity can be effectively managed by using WOMS's project dashboards, standard and custom power filters, standard and custom reporting.



WOMS provides users with immediate access to up-to-the-minute data from the field. Supervisors can manage crew progress and challenges immediately, which means they can solve problems when they occur. Dashboard and reports provide the ability to measure monthly, weekly, or daily performance, but it also enables users to tap into current field activities and state of operations. With on-demand ability to filter, sort, query and visualize cross-platform data. WOMS helps identify patterns and predict deployment and maintenance issues that can be eliminated with process improvements and quality controls.



Inventory Control and Management

WOMS offers a fully integrated inventory monitoring and tracking. The inventory tracker allows users to easily import, track, and manage smart meters, endpoints, and other project materials. The inventory system is comprised of a web-based server for advanced inventory management and data syncing, as well as a native mobile app for scanning and managing inventory on the go.

WOMS leverages the inherent value of an asset inventory by managing the assets and their associated attributes (type, condition, installation date, and so forth), and by managing the work done to care for assets. The link between assets and work orders is maintained in such a way that the history of completed work orders against a specific asset is viewable and is easily retrieved. If an asset has not yet been identified in the geodatabase, WOMS can manage work performed by associating it to a valid address, and it can later seamlessly update the history once the asset is reflected in the geodatabase.

Inventory Insights

The inventory tracker makes smart meter inventory management easy for projects and maintenance. The native app user experience makes it simple for workers to instantly scan pallets or meters and endpoints, in the warehouse or in the field. The application is fully integrated, meaning inventory data can be seamlessly imported into manufacturing and shipping systems for inventory management from vendor systems.

Custom Inventory Workflows

The inventory tracker provides a configurable workflow system that can be tailored to an organization's logistics and procedural requirements, tracking each asset from manufacture to receipt, loading, internal transfers, assignment, installation, disposition, return to stock, RMA and more. Every asset's GPS location is captured throughout the lifecycle and each inventory record includes a full revision history of users, date, and time stamps. The result is a clear and transparent picture of inventory flows enabling organizations to avoid delays, minimize disruption, and prioritize resources efficiently.

- Configurable inventory and logistics workflows including receiving, loading, transferring, assigning, disposing, returning to stock, RMA and more
- Provides a full, chain of custody management solution of all critical assets
- Integrate with manufacturer and shipping systems
- Scan pallets, boxed or individual endpoint and meters for real-time tracking and data verification

Right Location at The Right Time

Smart device tracking could not be easier. At each inventory step, a quick barcode or QR code scan makes boxes or individual nodes available for the next step in the workflow. The powerful conditional logic that is built into the workflows prevents errors and enforces procedures, with record validation of the node as it is processed in real time. During the inventory management process, the app provides several data verification features including data validation, location verification, duplicate record detection, and more. These features reduce errors while inventory flows through the system. To assist in transparency and accountability, record revision history ensures that every change that is made to a record is tracked to a user and timestamp.



Benefits

Because the app allows supervisors to view the location of devices and workers in real-time, they can optimize operations and even assign tasks based on proximity.

- Streamline operations with a single pane view of inventory supply and demand levels
- Identify supply chain issues before they impact operations
- View location of meters/endpoints & workers in real-time, assign tasks based on proximity
- Full record revision history tracks every change with user, date, and time stamps

Quality Control and Assurance

Vanguard's 23-year track record deploying, operating, and maintaining varied water projects attests to the integrity of our Quality Control and Quality Assurance Program (QCQAP). The purpose of QCQAP is three-fold:

1. Assure that the project meets all the customer-specific requirements defined in the Statement of Work and other contract documents.
2. Assure that we comply with all federal, state, interstate, local, and facility-specific laws, codes, and regulations for the design, construction, and operation and maintenance of the proposed system. This project will also be coordinated for compliance with the Customer requirements.
3. Ensure that the project reliably delivers the projected output in a consistently safe and reliable manner and accordance with all environmental and other permitting requirements

Through Vanguard's extensive experience delivering complex projects to Municipal & Public sectors, we have become well-versed in adapting our QCQAP program to AMI projects. We have also developed systems to assure that our subcontractors and suppliers comply with these requirements through proper training and education, and flow-down provisions in our subcontracts.

Quality Control Procedures

Vanguard's Quality Control procedure works on three different levels after the installation has been performed prior to being integrated with the Customer's database. Our electronic work order system collects data regarding all types of installation complaints and responses. There are a host of reports that can be generated for the Customer to track improper installations, leaks etc.

Further, our VUS electronic work order system collects in real time all installation information including out-readings, digital pictures, and UPC scan of serial numbers. That information is transmitted for audit to corporate headquarters and then is made available to the Customer by the next day. All Complaints are responded to within 1 hour. Improper installation will be corrected at the time of discovery. Leaks will be responded to within 30 minutes and be on site within 2-4 hours from call.

Any issues that may arise will be reported to the Customer. Vanguard has a process that performs three verifications of 100% of all meter installations within 48 hours of the installation. Included is removed meter out read is accurate, meter installed correctly, meter number is correct, clean work area, and meter is functioning.



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Vanguard audits 100% of all data internally at the corporate office. Vanguard validates all data prior to the transmission of data to the Customer. Vanguard will use our standard operating procedure as we have on hundreds of projects across the country. In short, it is a dual electronic and paper system that has a second verification on every step of the process from the preconstruction to post installation procedures.

We obtain a list of the serial number ranges on the new meters to be replaced as well as the endpoints. Once the installation route schedule has been identified, individual routes will be scheduled and assigned for installation. Each route will be divided into daily work per installer and will be assigned to the individual installer's handheld. A paper daily work log will be printed for secondary tracking with the specific accounts and information listed. Vanguard's full-time onsite project manager or field supervisor will distribute the work, meters, and materials at the beginning of each day. Inventory will be scanned out by each technician.

The installers will begin the installation process in order of their assigned work. The first step, in the installation procedure, is to ensure that the meter serial number and address corresponds with the information that was provided by the Customer's billing system prior to any work being started. Once that is verified, the installation procedures begin.

During the installation process, account information is verified, and the new meter information is scanned into the electronic work order system for the bar code on the meter and endpoint. The installation tag is removed and attached to the paperwork log for that account. The old meter reading is entered into the electronic work order system, written down on the installation log, and a digital picture is taken of the registers reading upon removal. All the data for that account is sent in real time to our server that identifies every step of the process with a time and date stamp for that account.

At the end of the day, the project manager verifies each installer's installation log sheet with the handheld and the old meter registers reading. The information is sent to our corporate office where the data is reviewed by one of our project coordinators to ensure the log sheet, electronic information and photo of the old meter reading correspond on every account. Data is automatically compared to the original meter numbers that were issued for the project and locked out to ensure that there is no duplication. Provided old meter readings are compared to make sure they are in line with what was provided.

The following day, the field supervisor goes out and Field QC's the installations in a second WOMS project. They compare address and meter number, take pictures of the setting meters numbers and the conditions as found. They inspect the work site to ensure that everything meets standards. If issues are discovered, the supervisor may correct the deficiencies or call the installer to return while he is there and correct. Deficiencies are tracked and can be reported weekly or monthly as desired.

Errors discovered in the office are sent to the project manager and they investigate that day. Data is then reviewed by our IT department and then sent to the Customer billing system to be updated.

Vanguard has a secondary verification in every step of the installation process to ensure that the Customer's data is accurate and correct prior to integration into the CIS system.

Our Project Support Team will access the installation data within three days of the installation and verify the account is transmitting and all meter and endpoint numbers correspond. This insures that the accounts are up and functional in the Billing system and that the integration process was successful.



Standard Operating Procedures for Outdoor Meters Installations Similar to the North Central Texas Council of Government Project

Step 1- Confirm Service Location

- Using work order data, confirm service address. Verify the pit located, is for the service address the work order refers to.
- Notify the customer that their water will be shut off for meter replacement and restored after the meter replacement has been completed.
- Please ask the customer not to open any water valves or flush any toilets until their water has been restored.

Step 2- Inspect Meter Pit

- Determine the area is safe to work in.
- Knock on the door and inform the homeowner of your arrival/ about the replacement. Let them know the water will be off for a few minutes.
- Select the address in the handheld and click Install, Exchange
- Take picture of meter and meter setting
- Record old meter usage reading in handheld data collector.
- Record old meter, register or transmitter serial number.
- Does the pit have the correct pit lid in place to mount transmitter? If yes, proceed with installation. If no, note in handheld data collector. If the pit requires a lid, stop installation, and note in handheld data collector; note type of lid required.
- If flooded pump out water to a level below meter.
- If buried remove soil to a depth at least 2 inches below meter base and couplings.
- Inspect valve. Does the valve appear faulty? – If yes, record in handheld data collector and stop installation. If applicable call appropriate Customer contact to gain approval for work.
- Is valve operational? If no, record in handheld data collector and stop installation.
- If the meter is inaccessible, unsafe, leaking or otherwise not able to be installed record category of reason (inaccessible, unsafe, bad plumbing) along with description in note section.
- If the valve breaks during installation or does not turn back on, record in handheld data collector and notify Supervisor.

Step 3- Install New Meter or Meter Retrofit

- Look to see if water is flowing, wait until the water stops. If water does not stop, verify valve is closed and customer is not using water.
- Loosen meter couplings and remove old meter.
- Install new meter using contractor supplied connector sets, nuts, studs, and rubber gaskets.
- Turn on the water. Flush line using outside spigot if available.
 - NOTE: If water flow does not stop or slow down and the customer is not home, shut water off and leave WATER OFF notice. Inform Supervisor that water was left off and give property address. Supervisor will inform Customer.
- Mount transmitter through hole in pit lid or under lid with proper mounting hardware.
- Program and test transmitter (if applicable).
- Secure pit lid and cleanup around meter pit.
- Visually inspect installation.
- Confirm water is on



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- Look for leaks
- Verify flow direction is correct
- Verify meter is plumb
- Verify register is secure w/tamper proof torx
- Seal the meter with seal wire & seal (if applicable)

Step 4 – Data Collection - Old Meter

- Verify serial number matches the one in Customer database. If not, note in the data collector.
- Write Contractor's work order ID on meter tag and attach it to the meter or register.
- Collect old meter, old register, and old transmitter for storage.

Step 5 – Data Collection - New Meter

- Enter new meter size and type into data collector using checkboxes.
- Enter new meter (register) and transmitter IDs into data collector using barcode scanning.
- Collect GPS coordinate using handheld data collector and save readings.
- Note pit condition using check boxes.
- Use pull-down menu or check boxes with custom description.
- Type in description of any unusual issue associated with the installation.
- Perform QC check by answering questions in data collector and visually inspecting installation.
- Place end caps on old meter.

Step 6 – Post Installation

- Use wand, IR port, or RF to turn on transmitter prior to leaving. (If applicable)
- Notify the customer that the water service has been restored.
- Leave door hanger or business card with Contact information, installer name, time of install and service performed.
- Upon old meter return to Contractor warehouse a picture must be taken of all meter / register serial number and final read. Picture(s) must then be associated with the specific installation record.
- Sync handheld data collector with work order system nightly.
- Correct data errors daily.
- Submit scrubbed install data on weekly basis to Customer
- Take picture of old meter and / or register and include serial number and final read. Associate the picture with the respective account.

Emergency Procedures

- In the event of a plumbing problem resulting in a leak (major), attempt to stop the leak by use of a B-box, freeze it, or other means to minimize damage.
- If unable to stop leak or contain drainage, contact the Field Supervisor
- If damage occurs, notify Field Supervisor, and document all issues regarding the incident (photographs should be taken).
- If complaint or claim for damages occurs, Customer will be notified.

Notes

- The installer performs the initial quality check prior to any work being performed for all installations.
- All installations are checked again after the completion of all the work.

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Meter Installation Warranty

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. warrants all water meter work for a period of thirty (30) Days from the date of installation against any defects in company supplied materials and faulty workmanship resulting from water meter installations. Any problems related to the installation are typically seen within the first month after installation. This warranty covers replacement of any property or material damaged by Vanguard Utility Service, Inc.'s employees during the course of installation.

Subcontracting

Vanguard will not be using subcontractors on this Project. The work to be performed will be completed entirely by our employees. We require our employees to undergo testing and education programs specific to the electronic solution to be installed. All of our employees hold OSHA 10 and Confined Space Certification and some require a State certification by Weights and Measures. The work to be done requires learned technical skills to install, which we provide each employee.

There is no subcontractor's work to be let or done on this contract.



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PROPOSAL AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF Kentucky

COUNTY OF Daviess

Kathy Kolter, being duly sworn, deposes and says that she is
(Name of Secretary)

Secretary of Vanguard Utility Service, Inc., a corporation organized and existing
(Name of Corporation)

under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Kentucky, and having its
principal office at: (address)

1421 W. 9th Street

Owensboro, KY 42301

Affiant further says that it is familiar with the records, minutes, books, and by-laws of

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc.
(Name of Corporation)

Affiant further says that Robert A. Bates President/Owner
(Name of Officer) (Title)

of the corporation is duly authorized to sign the Proposal for

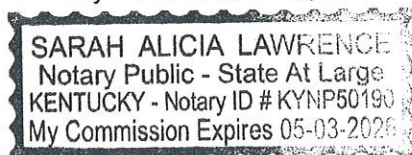
Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Solutions

Kathy Kolter
Kathy Kolter Affiant



Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence this 10th day of January 2025.

My Commission Expires:



Sarah Alicia Lawrence
Notary Public

Date

Daviess Kentucky
County State

TXShare

Your Public Sector Solutions Center

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Solutions RFP # 2025-002

Sealed proposals will be accepted until 2:00 PM CT, **January 10, 2025**, and then publicly opened and read aloud thereafter.

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Legal Name of Proposing Firm

Kathy Kolter

Contact Person for This Proposal

Director of Sales

Title

270-926-4646

Contact Person Telephone Number

sales@vusinc.com

Contact Person E-Mail Address

1421 W. 9th St.

Street Address of Principal Place of Business

Owensboro, KY

City/State

42301

Zip

1421 W. 9th St.

Mailing Address of Principal Place of Business

Owensboro, KY

City/State

42301

Zip

Kathy Kolter

Point of Contact for Contract Negotiations

Corporate Secretary

Title

270-926-4646

Point of Contact Telephone Number

sales@vusinc.com

Point of Contact Person E-Mail Address

Acknowledgment of Addenda (initial): #1  #2 _____ #3 _____ #4 _____ #5 _____

NOTE: Any confidential/proprietary information must be clearly labeled as "confidential/proprietary". All proposals are subject to the Texas Public Information Act.

COVER SHEET

**ATTACHMENT I: INSTRUCTIONS
FOR PROPOSALS COMPLIANCE AND SUBMITTAL**

Compliance with the Solicitation

Submissions must be in strict compliance with this solicitation. Failure to comply with all provisions of the solicitation may result in disqualification.

Compliance with the NCTCOG Standard Terms and Conditions

By signing its submission, Offeror acknowledges that it has read, understands and agrees to comply with the NCTCOG standard terms and conditions.

Acknowledgment of Insurance Requirements

By signing its submission, Offeror acknowledges that it has read and understands the insurance requirements for the submission. Offeror also understands that the evidence of required insurance must be submitted within ten (10) working days following notification of its offer being accepted; otherwise, NCTCOG may rescind its acceptance of the Offeror's proposals. The insurance requirements are outlined in the [NCTCOG Procurement Standard Terms and Conditions](#).

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 1/10/2025

ATTACHMENT II: CERTIFICATIONS OF OFFEROR

I hereby certify that the information contained in this proposal and any attachments is true and correct and may be viewed as an accurate representation of proposed services to be provided by this organization. I certify that no employee, board member, or agent of the North Central Texas Council of Governments has assisted in the preparation of this proposal. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements and provisions of the solicitation and that the organization will comply with the regulations and other applicable local, state, and federal regulations and directives in the implementation of this contract.

I also certify that I have read and understood all sections of this solicitation and will comply with all the terms and conditions as stated; and furthermore that I, Robert A. Bates (typed or printed name) certify that I am the President (title) of the corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship, or other eligible entity named as offeror and respondent herein and that I am legally authorized to sign this offer and to submit it to the North Central Texas Council of Governments, on behalf of said offeror by authority of its governing body.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 1/10/2025

**ATTACHMENT III: CERTIFICATION
REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS**

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations Implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 45 CFR Part 93, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85, 668, 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that both it and its principals:

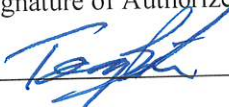
1. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency;
2. Have not within a three-year period preceding this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction, violation of federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification, or destruction of records, making false Proposals, or receiving stolen property;
3. Are not presently indicated for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a government entity with commission of any of the offense enumerated in Paragraph (2) of this certification; and,
4. Have not within a three-year period preceding this contract had one or more public transactions terminated for cause or default.

Where the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is unable to certify to any of the qualifications in this certification, such prospective recipient shall attach an explanation to this certification form.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: **1/10/2025**

ATTACHMENT IV: RESTRICTIONS ON LOBBYING

Section 319 of Public Law 101-121 prohibits recipients of federal contracts, grants, and loans exceeding \$100,000 at any tier under a federal contract from using appropriated funds for lobbying the Executive or Legislative Branches of the federal government in connection with a specific contract, grant, or loan. Section 319 also requires each person who requests or receives a federal contract or grant in excess of \$100,000 to disclose lobbying.

No appropriated funds may be expended by the recipient of a federal contract, loan, or cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any federal executive department or agency as well as any independent regulatory commission or government corporation, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with any of the following covered federal actions: the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan the entering into of any cooperative agreement and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

As a recipient of a federal grant exceeding \$100,000, NCTCOG requires its subcontractors of that grant to file a certification, set forth in Appendix B.1, that neither the agency nor its employees have made, or will make, any payment prohibited by the preceding paragraph.

Subcontractors are also required to file with NCTCOG a disclosure form, set forth in Appendix B.2, if the subcontractor or its employees have made or have agreed to make any payment using nonappropriated funds (to include profits from any federal action), which would be prohibited if paid for with appropriated funds.

ATTACHMENT V: DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE CERTIFICATION

The Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC (company name) will provide a Drug Free Work Place in compliance with the Drug Free Work Place Act of 1988. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited on the premises of the Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC (company name) or any of its facilities. Any employee who violates this prohibition will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. All employees, as a condition of employment, will comply with this policy.

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

This certification is required by the Federal Regulations Implementing Sections 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. 701, for the Department of Agriculture (7 CFR Part 3017), Department of Labor (29 CFR Part 98), Department of Education (34 CFR Parts 85, 668 and 682), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 76).

The undersigned subcontractor certifies it will provide a drug-free workplace by:

Publishing a policy Proposal notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace and specifying the consequences of any such action by an employee;

Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace, the subcontractor's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace, the availability of counseling, rehabilitation and employee assistance programs, and the penalties that may be imposed on employees for drug violations in the workplace;

Providing each employee with a copy of the subcontractor's policy Proposal;

Notifying the employees in the subcontractor's policy Proposal that as a condition of employment under this subcontract, employees shall abide by the terms of the policy Proposal and notifying the subcontractor in writing within five days after any conviction for a violation by the employee of a criminal drug abuse statute in the workplace;

Notifying the Board within ten (10) days of the subcontractor's receipt of a notice of a conviction of any employee; and,

Taking appropriate personnel action against an employee convicted of violating a criminal drug statute or requires such employee to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: 1/10/2025

**ATTACHMENT VI: DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
CERTIFICATION REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The undersigned certifies that, to the best of his or her knowledge or belief, that:

“No employee of the contractor, no member of the contractor’s governing board or body, and no person who exercises any functions or responsibilities in the review or approval of the undertaking or carrying out of this contract shall participate in any decision relating to this contract which affects his/her personal pecuniary interest.

Executives and employees of contractor shall be particularly aware of the varying degrees of influence that can be exerted by personal friends and associates and, in administering the contract, shall exercise due diligence to avoid situations which give rise to an assertion that favorable treatment is being granted to friends and associates. When it is in the public interest for the contractor to conduct business with a friend or associate of an executive or employee of the contractor, an elected official in the area or a member of the North Central Texas Council of Governments, a permanent record of the transaction shall be retained.

Any executive or employee of the contractor, an elected official in the area or a member of the NCTCOG, shall not solicit or accept money or any other consideration from a third person, for the performance of an act reimbursed in whole or part by contractor or Department. Supplies, tools, materials, equipment or services purchased with contract funds shall be used solely for purposes allowed under this contract. No member of the NCTCOG shall cast a vote on the provision of services by that member (or any organization which that member represents) or vote on any matter which would provide a direct or indirect financial benefit to the member or any business or organization which the member directly represents”.

No officer, employee or paid consultant of the contractor is a member of the NCTCOG.

No officer, manager or paid consultant of the contractor is married to a member of the NCTCOG.

No member of NCTCOG directly owns, controls or has interest in the contractor.

The contractor has disclosed any interest, fact, or circumstance that does or may present a potential conflict of interest.

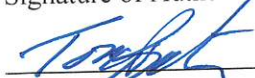
No member of the NCTCOG receives compensation from the contractor for lobbying activities as defined in Chapter 305 of the Texas Government Code.

Should the contractor fail to abide by the foregoing covenants and affirmations regarding conflict of interest, the contractor shall not be entitled to the recovery of any costs or expenses incurred in relation to the contract and shall immediately refund to the North Central Texas Council of Governments any fees or expenses that may have been paid under this contract and shall further be liable for any other costs incurred or damages sustained by the NCTCOG as it relates to this contract.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: **1/10/2025**

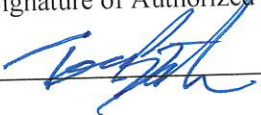
ATTACHMENT VII: CERTIFICATION OF FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

That the submitter has not been found guilty of unfair business practices in a judicial or state agency administrative proceeding during the preceding year. The submitter further affirms that no officer of the submitter has served as an officer of any company found guilty of unfair business practices in a judicial or state agency administrative during the preceding year.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

Signature of Authorized Representative:



Date: **1/10/2025**

ATTACHMENT VIII: CERTIFICATION OF GOOD STANDING
TEXAS CORPORATE FRANCHISE TAX CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to Article 2.45, Texas Business Corporation Act, state agencies may not contract with for profit corporations that are delinquent in making state franchise tax payments. The following certification that the corporation entering into this offer is current in its franchise taxes must be signed by the individual authorized on Form 2031, Corporate Board of Directors Resolution, to sign the contract for the corporation.

The undersigned authorized representative of the corporation making the offer herein certified that the following indicated Proposal is true and correct and that the undersigned understands that making a false Proposal is a material breach of contract and is grounds for contract cancellation.

Indicate the certification that applies to your corporation:

☒

The Corporation is a for-profit corporation and certifies that it is not delinquent in its franchise tax payments to the State of Texas.

☐

The Corporation is a non-profit corporation or is otherwise not subject to payment of franchise taxes to the State of Texas.

Type of Business (if not corporation):

☐

Sole Proprietor

☐

Partnership

☐

Other

Pursuant to Article 2.45, Texas Business Corporation Act, the North Central Texas Council of Governments reserves the right to request information regarding state franchise tax payments.

Robert A. Bates President

(Printed/Typed Name and Title of Authorized Representative)

Signature

Date: 1/10/25

**ATTACHMENT IX: HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES,
MINORITY OR WOMEN-OWNED OR DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES**

Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs), minority or women-owned or disadvantaged businesses enterprises (M/W/DBE) are encouraged to participate in the solicitation process.

NCTCOG recognizes the certifications of most agencies. HUB vendors must submit a copy of their certification for consideration during the evaluation of their proposal. Please attach the copy to this form. This applies only to the Offeror and not a subcontractor.

Texas vendors who are not currently certified are encouraged to contact either the Texas United Certification Program, State of Texas HUB Program, or the North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency, among others. Contact:

State of Texas HUB Program
Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
Lyndon B. Johnson State Office Building
111 East 17th Street
Austin, Texas 78774
(512) 463-6958
<http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/>

North Central Texas Regional Certification Agency
624 Six Flags Drive, Suite 100
Arlington, TX 76011
(817) 640-0606
<http://www.nctrca.org/certification.html>

Texas United Certification Program
USDOT website at
<https://www.transportation.gov/DBE>

You must include a copy of your certification document as part of this solicitation to receive points in the evaluation.

Vendor to Sign Below to Attest to Validity of Certification:

Vendor Name

Authorized Signature

Typed Name

Date

☒ Not applicable.

**ATTACHMENT X: NCTCOG FEDERAL AND STATE OF TEXAS
REQUIRED PROCUREMENT PROVISIONS**

The following provisions are mandated by Federal and/or State of Texas law. Failure to certify to the following will result in disqualification of consideration for contract. Entities or agencies that are not able to comply with the following will be ineligible for consideration of contract award.

**PROHIBITED TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT
CERTIFICATION**

This Contract is subject to the Public Law 115-232, Section 889, and 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, including §200.216 and §200.471, for prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance or equipment. Public Law 115-232, Section 889, identifies that restricted telecommunications and video surveillance equipment or services (e.g., phones, internet, video surveillance, cloud servers) include the following:

- A) Telecommunications equipment that is produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliates of such entities).
- B) Video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporations, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliates of such entities).
- C) Telecommunications or video surveillance services used by such entities or using such equipment.
- D) Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, Director of the National Intelligence, or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by the government of a covered foreign country. The entity identified below, through its authorized representative, hereby certifies that no funds under this Contract will be obligated or expended to procure or obtain telecommunication or video surveillance services or equipment or systems that use covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as a critical technology as part of any system prohibited by 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable provisions in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.

☒ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it does comply with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable regulations in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE:

Robert A. Bates

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC

1/10/25

-OR-

☐ The Contractor or Subrecipient hereby certifies that it cannot comply with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.216 and §200.471, or applicable regulations in Public Law 115-232 Section 889.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSON:

NAME OF COMPANY:

DATE:

EXHIBIT 1: CATEGORIES OFFERED AND PRICING PROPOSAL

Place a checkmark next to each category you are offering in your proposal:

- ☐ Service Category #1: Water Utility Equipment, Products, and Supplies
- ☒ Service Category #2: Installation and Repair Services
- ☐ Service Category #3: Professional Services
- ☐ Service Category #4: Ancillary Goods and/or Services (List Below)

Pricing Proposal

Respondents are required to submit a comprehensive pricing proposal that outlines their approach to addressing the project goals, key challenges, and minimum solution requirements outlined below. The proposal should not only reflect the costs associated with the proposed water metering solutions but also demonstrate flexibility and innovation in addressing the diverse needs of TXShare's member entities.

Project Goals and Desired Outcomes:

The water meter replacement project is designed to achieve the following key goals shared by TXShare members. Vendors are encouraged to propose solutions that effectively tackle these goals:

1. Versatile Water Metering Solution:

Propose a customizable metering system compatible with various environments and infrastructure types across TXShare's member entities.

2. Advanced Data Management and Integration:

Provide a system that supports real-time data access and integrates seamlessly with various billing and customer service platforms, including AMR and AMI capabilities. Please include the names of the billing and customer service platforms your system is compatible with.

3. Cost-Effective and Scalable Implementation:

Present a pricing model that supports phased implementation, allowing flexibility for entities of different sizes and financial capacities.

Key Challenges to Address:

Respondents should directly address the following challenges in their proposals:

1. Multi-Environment Compatibility:

Detail how your proposed solution will function across diverse installation conditions, ensuring compliance with regional standards.

2. Standardized Yet Customizable Data Integration:

Describe how your data management system will provide standard functionalities while allowing for the unique integration needs of each member entity.

3. Phased Implementation for Cooperative Scalability:

Outline a flexible implementation plan that facilitates phased rollouts, minimizes disruption, and includes strategies for communication and onboarding.

EXHIBIT 2: SAMPLE MARKET BASKET FORM

This form will be utilized to assess each Respondent's 'best value' beyond simple percentage discounts and will play a key role in scoring your proposed pricing.

Please refer to Exhibit 2: Sample Market Basket Form Attachment for completion.

EXHIBIT 3: SERVICE DESIGNATION AREAS

Texas Service Area Designation or Identification			
Proposing Firm Name:	Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC		
Notes:	Indicate in the appropriate box whether you are proposing to service the entire state of Texas		
	Will service the entire state of Texas		Will not service the entire state of Texas
	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	If you are not proposing to service the entire state of Texas, designate on the form below the regions that you are proposing to provide goods and/or services to. By designating a region or regions, you are certifying that you are willing and able to provide the proposed goods and services.		
Item	Region	Metropolitan Statistical Areas	Designated Service Area
1.	North Central Texas	16 counties in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan area	
2.	High Plains	Amarillo Lubbock	
3.	Northwest	Abilene Wichita Falls	
4.	Upper East	Longview Texarkana, TX-AR Metro Area Tyler	
5.	Southeast	Beaumont-Port Arthur	
6.	Gulf Coast	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land	
7.	Central Texas	College Station-Bryan Killeen-Temple Waco	
8.	Capital Texas	Austin-Round Rock	
9.	Alamo	San Antonio-New Braunfels Victoria	
10.	South Texas	Brownsville-Harlingen Corpus Christi Laredo McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	
11.	West Texas	Midland Odessa San Angelo	
12.	Upper Rio Grande	El Paso	

(Exhibit 3 continued on next page)

Nationwide Service Area Designation or Identification Form							
Proposing Firm Name:		Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUSINC					
Notes:		<p>Indicate in the appropriate box whether you are proposing to provide service to all Fifty (50) States.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Will service all fifty (50) states</td> <td>Will not service fifty (50) states</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> <p>If you are not proposing to service to all fifty (50) states, then designate on the form below the states that you will provide service to. By designating a state or states, you are certifying that you are willing and able to provide the proposed goods and services in those states.</p> <p>If you are only proposing to service a specific region, metropolitan statistical area (MSA), or City in a State, then indicate as such in the appropriate column box.</p>		Will service all fifty (50) states	Will not service fifty (50) states	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will service all fifty (50) states	Will not service fifty (50) states						
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Item	State	Region/MSA/City (write "ALL" if proposing to service entire state)	Designated as a Service Area				
1.	Alabama	ALL					
2.	Alaska	NONE					
3.	Arizona	ALL					
4.	Arkansas	ALL					
5.	California	ALL					
6.	Colorado	ALL					
7.	Connecticut	ALL					
8.	Delaware	ALL					
9.	Florida	ALL					
10.	Georgia	ALL					
11.	Hawaii	NONE					
12.	Idaho	ALL					
13.	Illinois	ALL					
14.	Indiana	ALL					
15.	Iowa	ALL					
16.	Kansas	ALL					
17.	Kentucky	ALL					
18.	Louisiana	ALL					
19.	Maine	ALL					
20.	Maryland	ALL					

21.	Massachusetts	ALL	
22.	Michigan	ALL	
23.	Minnesota	ALL	
24.	Mississippi	ALL	
25.	Missouri	ALL	
26.	Montana	ALL	
27.	Nebraska	ALL	
28.	Nevada	ALL	
29.	New Hampshire	ALL	
30.	New Jersey	ALL	
31.	New Mexico	ALL	
32.	New York	ALL	
33.	North Carolina	ALL	
34.	North Dakota	ALL	
35.	Ohio	ALL	
36.	Oregon	ALL	
37.	Oklahoma	ALL	
38.	Pennsylvania	ALL	
39.	Rhode Island	ALL	
40.	South Carolina	ALL	
41.	South Dakota	ALL	
42.	Tennessee	ALL	
43.	Texas	ALL	
44.	Utah	ALL	
45.	Vermont	ALL	
46.	Virginia	ALL	
47.	Washington	ALL	
48.	West Virginia	ALL	
49.	Wisconsin	ALL	
50.	Wyoming	ALL	

End of Exhibit 3

**LOBBYING CERTIFICATION
FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS**

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge or belief, that:

1. No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an officer or employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative Contract, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative contract; and
2. If any funds other than federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, and or cooperative contract, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form – LLL, “Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying”, in accordance with the instructions.
3. The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers and that all sub-recipients shall certify accordingly.

Name of Organization/Contractor(s):

Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. DBA VUS Inc.

Signature of Authorized Representative:

_____

Date: 1/10/2025