

Solar Beacons Help Altus, Oklahoma Solve Complex Challenges in a Rural Location

An installation of Carmanah R247E warning beacons helps Altus, OK city officials overcome power supply and cost challenges to enhance the safety of a rural four-way stop intersection.



Bill Heim and the City of Altus crew install Carmanah R247Es at the four-way stop.
(photo courtesy of The Altus Times)

The City of Altus, Oklahoma had a problem. A problem that looked like a four-way stop in a rural location that drivers just weren't stopping for. Night time was a particularly scary time at the intersection as drivers often simply didn't see the sign due to the lack of illumination on the roadway. But surprisingly, the recorded accidents at the intersection had all happened during the day, indicating the problem wasn't just night time visibility.

To complicate the challenge, getting the appropriate amount of power to the site was going to be expensive. One side of the intersection had only high voltage power while the other side had no power at all. In addition, the location didn't warrant a full traffic signal. What to do?

Mike Villareal, Operations Foreman for Altus Tower, City of Altus picked up the phone and called Bill Heim with Gades Sales, Carmanah's authorized distributor in Oklahoma. Bill suggested that Mike consider the Carmanah R247E and explained that because the R247E warning beacons were solar-powered they wouldn't require any wiring, solving the power problem at the site. Additionally, because the beacons were designed to flash 24-hours a day, they would enhance visibility of the signs for drivers both day and night.

"Installing power at the site would have been a very costly procedure," says Villareal. "The cost savings offered by the Carmanah solar beacons were a no-brainer."

The installation process also proved to simplify things for the City. The lights fit directly onto the existing standard sign posts. "It was the easiest installation," says Villareal. "We had to get a bucket truck simply because the stop signs were on a bit of a slope. Without the slope, we wouldn't have needed any special equipment at all."

After some time to put the new beacons to the test the City is just as happy now as they were when they first installed them. "Since we installed the beacons we've had 60 mile-per-hour winds here," says Villareal. "No problem."



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But do the beacons solve the visibility problem the City really wanted to address?

“You can see those beacons blinkin’ a solid mile away,” Villareal notes. “We liked them so well we’ve already purchased more Carmanah solar beacons for our school zone signs.”



(photo courtesy of The Altus Times)

Not only was the City of Altus able to solve a unique challenge with the use of Carmanah solar technology, they were also introduced to a solution that was easy to deploy in other locations. By enabling city officials to improve drive awareness of important signage in all areas of town, Carmanah solar technology is playing an integral role in protecting and enhancing the safety of the citizens of Altus, Oklahoma. And that’s a job to be proud of.



Distributor Profile

Gades Sales

Gades Sales Co. is Carmanah’s authorized distributor in Oklahoma.

It isn’t every day you can call your traffic control specialist and have them meet you on-site for an installation, but for Bill Heim of Gades Sales it’s all part of taking care of his customers. One call from the City of Altus, Oklahoma had Bill making a two-and-a-half hour journey just to ensure the installation of Carmanah R247E warning beacons went smoothly.

Naturally the installation was a cinch, but having Bill’s presence there assured the customer of Gades’ commitment to service. And while Bill was on-hand, he suggested calling the newspaper to cover the installation of the new beacons. It wasn’t long before newspaper reporters, photographers, and the town’s police chief arrived.

The result? The story made front page news in the city’s newspaper. Phenomenal customer service with a little PR on the side: is it any wonder Gades continues to be a trusted part of the Carmanah Traffic team?