



5 Best Practices to Keep Your Assets Ready, and Your Team Safe

Reduce Risk, Prevent Waste,
and Improve Equipment Uptime and Longevity





For fire and EMS departments, preparation is everything. According to the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), an estimated 60,825 U.S. firefighters were injured in the line of duty in 2019¹ and according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), EMS personnel suffered an estimated 21,200 injuries in 2017². In an industry where a call can come in at any time and every incident carries inherent risk, every person and piece of equipment must be ready when the alarm goes off.

In the past, many fire and EMS departments relied on paper forms or Excel spreadsheets for equipment checks and to keep track of inventory. Today, there's a better way.

Vector Check It, a centralized operations management software, will help your organization manage assets and other critical items. By utilizing the web-based version or its mobile app, organizations can easily perform and track inspections, ensure assets are functioning correctly, and identify equipment that requires maintenance.

Whether it's conducting an apparatus check, tracking inventory of controlled substances, or inspecting equipment, Vector Check It enables agencies to track and report it all.

At an incident, equipment failures or missing inventory can be the difference between life and death, for first responders and civilians. By empowering your department with Vector Solutions' easy-to-use app, your team can respond to emergencies knowing that every piece of equipment and inventory has been thoroughly inspected and accounted for.

Key features of Check It include:

- 24/7 real-time views of inventory status, quantities, and location
- In-app maintenance ticketing and vendor communication
- Comprehensive documentation to ensure accountability and maintain compliance with state and federal regulations for controlled substances
- Notifications for critical concerns, such inventory expiration dates or low quantities of integral assets
- Extensive reporting functionality to view trends and performance over time, helping adapt to trends like population growth, and justify budget requests for new assets and equipment

Asset Management Best Practices

1. Moving from paper to mobile devices

In the past, when fire and EMS departments relied on paper forms for equipment checks, forms would need to be turned in once completed and new copies would need to be distributed as time went on.

With Check It, all you need is a mobile device. Thanks to the always available nature of the solution, data can be entered in and immediately seen by other relevant parties, removing the inherent delay of physical forms and improving communication throughout the department.

By providing tablets or other mobile devices in key areas, such as in the garage or near PPE cleaning stations, personnel can quickly perform needed actions and easily record them in the app.

When it comes to daily or weekly inspections, your digital checks can be set up to be most effective for each scenario, such as building the digital form checks in the order that your drivers inspect their rigs.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that, when using Check It, you aren't bound by the limitations of physical checks, so think outside the box and make use of the digital advantages the solution offers.

2. Customize the platform to suit your agency's needs

Another key benefit of the Check It system is its customization options. Each fire and EMS department is unique and needs will differ based on size, location, service area, and more. With Check It, inventory and inspection templates are fully customizable and can be used to the level of detail your organization needs.

Some organizations may want to track each and every alcohol swab, whereas others may prefer to track at the package level. Some departments may handle controlled substances and others may not. Check It can be adapted and customized to suit the needs of each fire and EMS department.

By tracking at the level of detail that makes the most sense for your agency, Check It will help you reduce the amount of equipment and inventory that's unaccounted for and keep thorough records of incoming and outgoing assets.

Check It also allows departments to customize workflows, equipment pools, and user access based on jobs and responsibilities.

For example, if a particular user needs access to EMS inventory information, but not firefighter PPE data, that user's access and notifications can be customized to reflect their needs.

3. Streamline processes through the digital platform

Beyond equipment inspections and inventory management, fire and EMS departments can also take advantage of Check It's built-in functionality for managing and automating maintenance tickets.

Through the app, inspectors can submit tickets to maintenance personnel and include photos or other relevant information. By doing so, the downtime time for equipment or vehicle fixes can be drastically reduced.

When it comes to inventory management, notifications can be set up to automate reorders of inventory and equipment, reducing manual work and eliminating unexpected outages. For inventory with a shelf life, expiration dates can be entered into the system and users will be notified when it's time to properly dispose of these items and order a new batch.

4. Put the data you get from Check It to work

In addition to the benefits of Check It for asset management and maintenance, the program's built-in reporting functionality also offers strategic benefits.

Using the built-in dashboards, such as the Out-of-Service dashboard and the Equipment Overview dashboard, fire and EMS departments can:

- Justify budget, inventory, or equipment needs
- Better understand the lifespan of equipment
- Reduce excess inventory and waste
- Plan for equipment, vehicles, or other assets to be out of service and adjust accordingly
- Communicate the combined value of inventory and assets to governing officials and committees as needed

Check It also makes it easy to pull and track this data over time, reducing the burden of annual or bi-annual audits.



5. Be consistent and realistic during implementation or expansion of the program

While Check It does offer an easy-to-use interface and implementation system, there are always going to be growing pains when adopting any new software or tool.

Before implementing the program, it's essential to have one Check It expert at the department to handle onboarding and to answer user questions. As you expand the program, include additional members of the department and provide training as needed. Departments completely new to the Check It program can also run smaller, pilot test versions of the program to determine the best ways to integrate it with their agency and existing workflows.

Another key factor in ensuring success is providing the proper equipment and technology, such as tablets and other mobile devices, and stationing them in convenient locations.

Finally, it's important to acknowledge that there will be hiccups during rollout. Some personnel may take longer to adjust to a digital system or be unfamiliar with the technology required for its use.

However, with the proper training and assistance, combined with offering technology and other tools as needed, your department will be well on its way to taking full advantage of better asset and inventory management with the Check It system.

To learn more Vector Check It best practices, please [click here](#) for an on-demand webinar.

References

¹ "Firefighter Injuries in the United States." NFPA Report - Firefighter Injuries in the United States, <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Emergency-Responders/Firefighter-injuries-in-the-United-States>

² "EMS Workers - Injury and Illness Data." NIOSH, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/ems/data.html>