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Subject: Broadband Internet Connections for the Black Creek Network

“I was wondering if you guys could dial in and take a look at our system” is a throw-back phrase from the dial-up modem days for our long time customers for Black Creek’s online service diagnostics and troubleshooting. As most of our Black Creek Service Plan customers have found, the Broadband Internet Connection for the Black Creek Network has proven to be an invaluable tool when dealing with system troubles and/or outages. The ability for Black Creek’s Technical Support Specialists to connect to your system for real time diagnostics can mean the difference between minutes of downtime or hours, and even days, depending on the problem at hand and the level of technical expertise of the Owner’s Staff when dealing with them.

As Information Systems landscapes are changing, there are times when the IT Department will, transparent to the facility, make changes to the IT structure of the County network that will have an adverse effect on this vital Black Creek Broadband Internet connection. Referring to the Black Creek Memorandum to Service Plan Customers dated May 10, 2010, “it will be a requirement for each of our Service Plan customers to provide an internet

connection at the remote access/utility computer location. This connection can be provided by any means that the county prefers, as long as the connection meets the requirements of being active 24/7 and having a real-world static IP address.”

“We have provided the required connection, why is this an issue?” We have experienced several instances where County IT Departments have changed this “real-world static IP address” without notification to the Facility or to Black Creek. The result is an inability not only to connect to your system to help the Owner’s Rep troubleshoot/correct an issue, but also an inability to connect to the installed SSL/VPN Security Appliance to make the changes necessary to accommodate the static IP address change. Should this situation occur at your facility, the installed SSL/VPN appliance will have to be removed, boxed up, and shipped to Black Creek for reconfiguration to the new IP addressing scheme, after the prerequisite ping tests are completed. This results in several days (at best) without this vital connection being in place, plus the additional charges incurred by the facility for the shipping and reconfiguration/testing of the unit by Black Creek.

The Takeaway

A little investigation now can save your facility dollars and frustration by eliminating an unexpected outage of your SSL/VPN Connection. Talk to your IT Department to ascertain if changes to this vital connection are planned in the near future, and if so, contact Black Creek to coordinate this change so that your connection will remain operational.