

From the Puget Sound Business Journal:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/blog/techflash/2016/08/this-seattle-tech-was-used-on-the-bertha-project.html>

This Seattle tech was used on the Bertha project. Now it's helping Syrian refugees

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Aug 19, 2016, 2:33pm PDT

The technology Washington state transportation workers use to log potholes and flag road repairs is helping researchers in Jordan treat wastewater and produce drinking water for thousands of Syrian refugees.

Seattle-based Pavia Systems – the first commercial spinout of the [University of Washington's civil engineering department](#) – sent equipment and software to Jordan along with a UW research team to observe experimental wastewater treatment plants in two camps for refugees of Syria's civil war.

The Azraq and Zaatari refugee camps in eastern and northern Jordan, respectively, are extremely hot with low water availability and a growing population. The camps are expected to house 100,000 refugees within the next year – 10 times as many as in fall 2014.

Pavia's flagship product, the HeadLight, was used to help wastewater researchers share data, take inventory and document water quality testing throughout the camps.



BUSINESS JOURNAL PHOTO | ANTHONY BOLANTE

Pavia Systems co-founders George White (left), CEO, and Si Katara, president, developed technology that helps document the finer details of big projects, from the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program to wastewater treatment in Syrian refugee camps.

In the U.S., nearly 100 Washington state Department of Transportation employees use the same technology to keep track of problems on roadways. The technology has been used on some of the region's most high-profile projects, including the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement.

"You judge what you do day to day by how your work impacts people around you," Pavia co-founder [Si Katara](#) said. "It's eye opening to see our technology work in both environments and really comforting for us as a business."

Pavia started in 2005, but the bulk of the company's growth has happened in the past year. Pavia's staff has grown to 22 employees from five last July and the company has five times more customers now than it had back then.

The company – which recently relocated downtown from South Lake Union because of rising rent prices and long commute times – [raised \\$3 million last August](#).

Now, Pavia is searching for other ways to use the technology in emergency situations. The state of Louisiana uses Pavia's products and is starting to explore the technology as a way to improve response recovery in Baton Rouge's environmental crises.

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