



## Customer Case Study: COMAH Plan Development, Training and Exercise

United Utilities is the UK's largest listed water company, providing water and wastewater services in the Northwest of England. The Bio-resource center, sits within a wider water treatment plant, known as Davey Hulme. The center was recently classified as a lower tier COMAH site, and as such, the team needed support in meeting the COMAH requirements and in reviewing their plans and processes to support the continued safety of staff, contractors and visitors on site, and the wider community. CHEMTREC's Crisis Solutions team first utilized CHEMTREC resilience assessment tool to assess current arrangements on site. This tool has been developed to assess sites against international standards, local legislative requirements and is based on the 50 years' experience of the CHEMTREC team, who understand what works in practice when an incident occurs. CHEMTREC consultants then worked with the team to enhance their current plans in line with the findings. This was followed by a series of training and exercise sessions to bring the plan to life and embed knowledge and understanding of the plan with the team.

### Clarity

CHEMTREC worked to simplify the Bio-Resource Center plan, creating clarity on who does what, when, where, why and how. This is the essence of any good plan. The current command and control arrangements within United Utilities were enhanced, applying the scalable and flexible principles offered by the Incident Command System (ICS). This gave confidence to responders, that they could enact their plan early, taking up key functions and scaling as the incident developed.

***"The plan has created clarity throughout our plan, clarity in how we activate, clarity in who we escalate to and how and clarity in our roles and responsibilities."*** - John Blackmore, Head of Bioresource Operations

### Understanding

CHEMTREC delivered four half day sessions to team members, working around the Bio-Resource center's shift pattern, to ensure all response personnel were given the knowledge of the plan they needed, to effectively undertake their role. Not only this, but the team also worked with CHEMTREC personnel to develop the non-technical skills required to implement a response, covering topics including situational awareness, decision making, leadership, teamwork, and communication. After observing the sessions, members of the



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team from United Utilities Corporate Headquarters have asked that these principles be delivered to the Corporate Incident Response function, so that this understanding of roles and responsibilities, and of how to respond in practice, is shared throughout the organization.

***“I now understand what to do, and crucially how to do it when an incident occurs.” - John Blackmore, Head of Bioresource Operations***

## **Experience and Confidence**

CHEMTREC worked with the site’s Health and Safety Lead and the Production Manager to develop credible exercise scenarios to test the site’s plan and provide personnel an opportunity to experience their response roles in a simulated scenario. The exercise offered a chance to examine various elements of the plans, and provide confidence that those elements which were tested, operated as expected. This is essential, testing out the plan prior to an incident, to identify areas for improvement. The exercise also gave the response team confidence that the new arrangements worked to support them.

## **Overall Results**

The United Utilities Bioresource Center team now has a plan that they understand, can implement, and have confidence in. United Utilities is now looking to roll this out to support the wider response to an incident, across the organization, promoting on-call teams’ understanding of their roles and how best to support members of the Bioresource Center when an incident occurs.



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