

Case Study



Providing Training to Over 7,500 Severn Trent Employees

MRS Training & Rescue have been providing confined space training to Severn Trent Water for 5 years and train all the company's clean water and wastewater personnel. To date we have trained over 7,500 personnel and continue to run courses most weeks.



Background

The relationship began through a tender process, and we won a three-year contract in 2017. This contract was extended by one year during the Coronavirus pandemic and has been further extended since.

During the coronavirus pandemic we continued to deliver confined space training to all employees in this safety critical industry. We found a safe way to do this both at our sites and at Severn Trent Water's premises, ensuring Severn Trent Water's employees maintained their competencies during this time.

The need

On winning the tender back in 2017, and to ensure we fully understood the company's requirements, we initially held several information gathering / sharing meetings with key stakeholders. Severn Trent Water already had Low, Medium and High Risk Confined Space and Gas Detection courses developed by the previous supplier and asked us to review them and make recommendations.

Through our experience in confined spaces and the work done for many years with several other water companies, we redesigned the courses in partnership with Severn Trent Water and incorporated their policies and procedures, terminology used, as well as training on the equipment and compressors used at each site.

Severn Trent also needed the majority of the confined space training to take place at their sites and so by using our accredited confined space mobile training units we were able to offer local delivery of these courses - a significant enhancement for Severn Trent and something they had not managed to achieve with previous providers.

The approach we took and continue to take for any new courses we develop, is to gather information, then hold a meeting with experts from both MRS and Severn Trent Water, develop a course and run a pilot first. We then review this, make any necessary changes and then roll it out. In all training we deliver we use Severn Trent Water's company specific equipment including their gas monitors, escape sets, porta gantries, quatrosafe barriers and manhole covers. We take this equipment on site when training at a Severn Trent Water location or use it at our training centres if training there. This ensures all delegates are trained in the specific equipment they use on site.

Further developments

We work very closely with Severn Trent Water and have built a strong working relationship. We hold quarterly meetings to discuss performance and any future developments in terms of new courses or equipment. Severn Trent Water share with us their delegate feedback (we also conduct our own), and any new equipment they have procured so we can determine how it will fit into the training programmes.

Through these meetings we have developed several additional bespoke courses including a Confined Space Assessor Course that delivers a bespoke method of teaching Severn Trent Water's supervisors and management on how to assess their own confined spaces using the company's criteria for categorising risk. We are also currently developing an LBAC (Local Breathing Apparatus Controller) course to train these employees who oversee breathing apparatus and supervising the equipment used by local teams. The course is a combination of breathing apparatus maintenance and the over inspection of the equipment. A pilot is being planned to roll out further training in due course.



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Severn Trent Water have continued to show their support for MRS by extending the contract twice over the last 5 years and adding work at height training to the contract.

We look forward to continuing to offer confined space and work at height training and hope we can do this for many years to come.

John Mowbray, Operations Manager at MRS Training & Rescue

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In addition, during the Covid pandemic, Severn Trent Water wanted to help the younger generation get into work. They developed a Kick Starter programme, and we created a bespoke virtual gas detector training course to allow them to work safely at site.

Additional services and training

As well as confined space training, we have also recently begun to deliver all work at height training for Severn Trent Water employees. We have invested in new mobile training units that enable us to not only offer confined space training at a Severn Trent Water site, but now also work at height training. This training includes working around steps, ladders and manhole openings (not all work at height is above ground). We also provide specialist confined space rescue services to Severn Trent Water's assets. For example, we have worked at the Lady Bower Reservoir where Severn Trent Water were inspecting internal dam walls and we provided safety support for their inspectors and those doing the maintenance work.



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