Training for the water industry

Challenge

The operational and financial performance of a water company is closely linked to weather and climate – from extreme rain to freezing temperatures and snow. With this in mind, it is vital for water company personnel to better understand forecasts and weather information, including the Met Office’s Hazard Manager tool, to make business decisions.

Wessex Water supply an area of 10,000 square kilometres including Dorset, Somerset, Bristol, most of Wiltshire and parts of Gloucestershire and Hampshire. Wessex Water is recognised by the water industry regulator, Ofwat, as one of the most efficient water and sewerage companies in England and Wales.

Wessex Water wanted to improve its understanding of weather forecasts to help make operating decisions to improve business and efficiency and decision making.

Solution

Wessex Water turned to the Met Office College to help. Working together, a bespoke training session to help staff from all areas of their business was developed. The objective was to gain a better understanding of weather forecasts, including the Met Office’s weather radar and Hazard Manager website, to enable the best use of available information and assess the impact of the weather on operations.

The course was held at Wessex Water head office but courses can be delivered at other locations, including the Met Office College or neutral venues.

Benefits

The training course has given Wessex Water confidence to interpret weather forecasts and make operating decisions. Wessex Water now has a better understanding of the weather in the UK and is able to interpret weather forecasts more accurately.

Spending time learning about the weather enabled Wessex Water to develop its understanding of the varied range of potential impacts of the weather beyond the more obvious. For example, through training sessions, Wessex Water developed a detailed understanding of the impact of heavy wind on road signage and the impact of heavy rainfall on certain water treatment works.

The course enabled Wessex Water to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of actual and forecast radar imagery and interpret the Met Office’s weather radar and Hazard Manager displays. This meant that Wessex Water was able to relate the capabilities of Weather Radar and Hazard Manager to its operations. Ultimately this helped Wessex Water to make more informed decisions based on the information available.

Case study:
Wessex Water

“Having this knowledge within our business has been very useful. Our increased understanding of the trigger levels within different weather patterns means that our control room can initiate mitigating action and be better prepared. For example, an awareness of the location of lightning strikes has already been used to inform decisions and helped us to reduce the need to call on staff out of hours.”

Michaela Wilson
Management Systems Manager
Wessex Water