



waterdirect

CASE STUDY

Multi-Billion £ Supermarket Chain Counts the Cost of Water Supply Incident

The Client

A multinational supermarket chain encountered a serious problem when one of its food warehouses found its water supply had unexpectedly stopped in the middle of the night.

The loss of supply caused an urgent potential for major disruption, largely centred on the supermarket's chilled food supplies. Chiller units, which are reliant on a steady supply of water, are essential for keeping large volumes of food fresh. Any interruptions to this water supply can lead to an immediate operational and financial loss to the supermarket chain, including perished food and delayed deliveries to stores in the nearby area.

Adding to the scale of the crisis, warehouse staff working the night shift were unable to use the toilets or wash their hands. An swift response was required to restore water supply as soon as possible to prevent large-scale disruption.

66% of businesses still don't have an adequate plan for loss of water supply



The water supply problem

Although the 5,000-store chain didn't have an assured response or site-specific plan in place, its business continuity plan did include guidance to call Water Direct's 24-hour support team in the event of loss of water supply.

Fortunately, a tanker and technician were available in the local area which enabled attendance in less than two hours. What the supermarket hadn't factored in, however, were the finer details of introducing a temporary water supply. Despite considering the issues of parking and access in its own planning, it had failed to factor in the distance between the parking spot and intended delivery location and, critically, had also overlooked the need for an appropriately accessible fill or network injection point.

This planning oversight meant that the Water Direct technician wasn't immediately able to deliver water into the system. An emergency plumber was called in to install a breach point, which caused a significant delay. Several hours later, the temporary supply was introduced and much of the warehouse stock saved. If a comprehensive water contingency plan had been put in place beforehand, however, the interruption time would have been significantly reduced and the impact - and financial burden - lessened.

Not only was the supermarket unaware of its water contingency planning oversight, but it also didn't have a sense for just how much water it needed each hour to continue operating, or the potential risks and consequences of a water supply interruption.



In the last year alone there were **53,397 burst water mains in the UK**

With 53,397 instances of burst water mains in the UK over the last year alone, this is just one example of many, which highlights why planning and risk analysis for water should be viewed with the same importance as that of electricity, gas, IT, and communications.

Water Direct is here to take care of the details. Our comprehensive WaterTight service includes a site visit to evaluate risk, map storage and connection points, and an assessment of access points and the on-site equipment required to ensure the Water Direct team can deliver a rapid response.

Businesses are responsible for their water supply – not the water utility company

Until a first-hand problem arises, an estimated two thirds of businesses don't realise that their water utility company is not responsible for providing an alternative water supply during an outage. Sole responsibility lies with the business itself. Of those businesses who are aware of their responsibility, as in this case, they often haven't created truly actionable plans for managing an incident, nor have they considered the specific site requirements.



Watertight™ is designed to help

Water Direct helps manage risk, protect your reputation and minimise the impact a water outage can have on your business. The Watertight™ service includes a detailed site, operational and infrastructural audit and risk assessment, as well as a step-by-step action plan that leaves nothing to chance. It's the most comprehensive business continuity planning for water in the UK market, winning Excellence in Business Continuity in the Continuity Insurance and Risk (CIR) Awards.



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Get in touch

Have a chat with our team to see how Water Direct can help your business prepare for the unpredictable and leave nothing to chance. We're here for you all the way, with 24/7 support and guaranteed response to water-critical sites if required. It's all part of the Watertight™ service.

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Alternatively, you can now Live Chat with one of the team at www.water-direct.co.uk