

### **Key workers keeping the south east's water running**

Water company staff, at work during the current COVID-19 crisis are providing an essential water supply to our customers, businesses and hospitals and have been officially designated by the Government as 'key workers' in this capacity.

As a result, people working for South East Water continue to be out on local streets, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, carrying out repairs to burst water pipes, finding and fixing leaks, critical maintenance and the laying of new pipes while observing the social distancing rules

To continue its vital work uninterrupted while ensuring compliance with Government instructions in keeping its workforce safe, major changes have been made to how it operates.

From its call centre to control room, the company has swiftly organised for employees to be home working wherever possible and is using video conferencing, email, the intranet and social media channels to keep everyone up-to-date with the latest business information.

For staff still working out in the community, in its offices, water treatment works or in its water testing laboratory, the way we are working is aligned to Government guidelines as a minimum.

While the call centre remains open with the vast majority of staff working from home, the company is directing non-urgent queries to its website, social media channels and MyAccount online portal to increase self-service and provide reassurance during this uncertain time.

David Hinton, Asset and Regulation Director, South East Water, said: "We are working extremely hard to maintain the high quality water supply service our customers expect, while making major changes to the way we work.

"It has been a mammoth operation behind-the-scenes to change working practices so quickly and it's testament to the agility of our workforce and our contractors that it is gone extremely smoothly.

“Our employees are providing a vital supply of water and have been officially designated as key workers by the Government so if you see them out working repairing a pipe or dealing with a leak, please don't approach them as in line with Government advice and like everyone else we are all practising social distancing.

“It is our priority to keep customers and our people safe so please keep your distance and our essential workers will carry on with their essential work for you.”

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Picture caption: A South East Water Technician flushing pipes

For more information contact Christine King on 01634 276316 or email [press.office@southeastwater.co.uk](mailto:press.office@southeastwater.co.uk)

For out of hours media calls please call 0333 000 0365 to arrange to speak with the duty press officer.