

Press Release

SeSys helps Southern Water to improve water sampling procedures with innovative CCTV system

Major UK water utility goes beyond mandated requirements as part of a multi-million pound programme to safeguard and ensure quality drinking water

UK - September 20th, 2010 - SeSys Ltd, a specialist in network vision solutions, has been selected by Southern Water to deploy an innovative CCTV solution to provide additional visual verification for its drinking water sampling procedures at up to 100 sites across the south of the UK.

Southern Water supplies fresh, quality drinking water to households across Sussex, Kent, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The company inspects the quality of its drinking water every week at locations across its regions via a manual sampling process that includes a critical sequence of actions to ensure that the sample reaches the highest standards. To ensure that the samples are properly carried out and verifiable, Southern Water began a project to install a high resolution Digital CCTV system which alerts its main control centre when a water supply site is visited, records the entire sampling process and archives the footage for a minimum time period, in line with Data Protection requirements.

Following a framework based tender, Southern Water selected a solution from SeSys which included a high resolution 3 megapixel camera. SeSys are a specialist in digital IP and networked video who has worked with major utility providers including Yorkshire Water, Northern Ireland Water and Scottish Water for several years. The firm is well known within the industry for innovative, bespoke projects- especially within challenging outdoor, subterranean and haz-chem environments.

“The solution from SeSys was run at a pilot site for a number of weeks and proved extreme reliability with good image quality while the built-in record-to-flash capability allows us to deploy only a minimal amount of equipment on each site” explains Paul Leverett, Telemetry Projects Team Manager for Southern Water, “The cameras only start recording when somebody enters a water sampling kiosk and this activity also sends an alert to our control centre near Worthing, which allows a technician to simultaneously monitor the process in real time.”

The new Southern Water visual assurance system goes beyond the Drinking Water Quality Inspectorate (DWI) guidelines and is part of an ongoing commitment by Southern Water to ensure safe and clean water supply to over 1 million households across southern England. Each day, the company supplies 555 million litres of drinking water from 90 water treatment works along more than 13,600 kilometres of water mains to customers’ taps.

“The system has been installed in around half of all our water supply sites and will be fully operational by June” explains Leverett.

Each site uses hemispheric camera to provide a 360° all-round view able to capture an entire sample collection area and locally store the video footage. Each camera is also connected by either ADSL or MPLS to allow the Southern Water Control Centre to view each sample collection process and to archive video footage if required.

“The project with Southern Water is a great example of CCTV as a health and safety asset and cost saver,” explains Dan Eames, Technical and Projects Manager, “Water sampling is vitally important to Southern Water and must be 100% reliable. With visual verification, Southern Water can confirm when and how the sample collection was conducted, providing a valuable audit record and the opportunity to reinforce good practice and training.”

SeSys are in discussion with several other water utility companies across the UK to deliver similar solutions, “The return on investment for the system is relatively short if you take into account the cost of re-tests and the operational impact of ‘false negatives’, which trigger a significant amount of work due to the stringent DWI requirements” comments Eames, “This is one of those instances that CCTV can really help stop a small issue turning into a major problem.”

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