

## DOGS TAKE THE LEAD ON LEAKAGE DETECTION

2 years ago



A special partnership between [Morrison Water Services](#) (a part of M Group Services' Water Division), South West Water and specialist dog trainers, Cape SPC, has been established to help find water leaks in rural areas using highly-trained dogs.

Working on behalf of South West Water to detect and reduce water leaks across the region, Morrison Water Services first suggested the innovative concept of using specially trained detection dogs to find water leaks in rural areas. The dogs can cover a wide area in more rural and inaccessible locations and can accurately pinpoint water leaks, reducing the impact on the environment.

The pioneering approach was trialled last month and proved to be a success with two springer spaniels searching 44 kilometres of hard to navigate rural land over five days, finding a total of seven leaks.

Led by Cape SPC's expert handlers, the dogs – eight-year-old Denzel and three-year-old Kilo – are trained to detect small traces of chlorine in treated drinking water and can cover rural land more efficiently than traditional methods, allowing for a more targeted deployment of resources. Once the dogs located a potential leak, it was then investigated so a repair could be made.

Jeremy Rogers, Regional Manager at Morrison Water Services, said: "We use a variety of techniques to detect leaks across our client's network. It was impressive to watch the dogs and their handlers at work. This pilot has been invaluable in understanding the leakage detection potential of this low carbon solution to the challenge of finding and fixing leaks.

"We are committed to transitioning to a more sustainable delivery model and trialling the use of specialist detection dogs is just one way in which we can drive down the carbon footprint of our work and contribute

towards the M Group Services pledge to reduce its carbon footprint by 50% by 2030 and be carbon neutral by 2050.”

Ali Milton, South West Water’s Leakage Delivery Manager at South West Water, said: “With our region still officially in drought, saving water is more important than ever. We’re fixing more leaks, more quickly than ever before, working around the clock to conserve our water resources and fixing up to 2,500 leaks a month.

“We continue to invest in innovative technology to help locate hard-to-spot leaks such as utilising satellites to find invisible water leaks underground and drone pilots to cover hard to reach places across Dartmoor and Exmoor.

“Using Denzel and Kilo with the Cape SPC team to cover large areas of hard to access rural land quicker than any human would be able to adds another string to our bow when it comes to tackling leakage.

Luke Jones, Cape SPC Director, said: “Denzel and Kilo are trained to detect small traces of chlorine in treated drinking water. They are not only able to cover large areas of tough terrain more efficiently, but they can also smell what can’t be seen, and have the ability to differentiate between naturally occurring water and water from leaks. This makes them even more valuable when the weather is wet and conditions are more difficult for people.