

Uber Leaks' outrage as water company uses taxi firms to investigate spills



This programme has huge safety implications for customers, drivers, and the public at large

GMB, the water union, has expressed outrage after a water company was exposed using taxi companies to investigate leaks.



Severn Trent, which provides water to 4.3 million homes across the East and West Midlands, has been using Uber and taxi drivers to investigate leaks more than 30 times a week.

Customers have not been impressed with the 'Virtual Fieldworker Programme' – dubbed 'Uber leaks' internally.

““ Severn Trent needs to see sense and cancel the Uber leaks programme immediately

Stuart Fegan, GMB National Officer:

One complained: “Amazed you sent a black cab taxi to investigate [a] leak.”

Severn Trent wastes more than **400 million litres of water every single day** through leaks.

The company recently **pledged to reduce the amount of water wasted.**

Stuart Fegan, GMB National Officer, said:



“When I found out Severn Trent are using taxi drivers to investigate leaks I thought it must be a joke.

“But no one is laughing – this has got huge safety implications for customers, the drivers and the public at large.

“Water engineers are highly trained specialists – they can spot if water is contaminated and if water produces a risk to the public. I doubt most taxi drivers can.

““ – GMB UNION (@GMB_union) **March 10, 2019**

“They also don't know how to pin-point leaks – meaning repair crews can dig unnecessary holes in the highway.

“And how is someone going to feel after they report a leak, expecting a Severn Trent worker to attend with a uniform and the necessary training and a taxi driver turns up. They'd think it was a hoax call.



"Have Severn Trent consulted with its customers about this practice or discussed it with the regulator or HSE?"

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