



Severn Trent Costain (STC) has announced that major UK dairy, First Milk, is to become the first business customer to switch water supplier since the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) altered the regulations to allow more businesses to be able to choose their water supplier. Until recently only businesses that used more than fifty megalitres of water a year, equal to 20 Olympic sized swimming pools, could switch from their existing water supplier to a new one. The threshold has now been reduced to just five megalitres of water, equivalent to two Olympic sized swimming pools, which has substantially increased the number of businesses that are able to choose their water supplier from just 2,200 to 26,000 businesses.

Severn Trent Costain a joint venture that combines the skills and experience of Severn Trent Services, one of the world's leading suppliers of water and wastewater solutions, and Costain the UK's leading engineering solutions provider, has signed up First Milk, in a deal that will see STC supply, manage and monitor their water across six major sites in England, Wales and Scotland involving over 600 million litres of water per year. The new arrangement builds on an ongoing successful relationship with First Milk. The two organisations have already been working together to improve asset performance, deriving ongoing savings from day-to-day operational efficiencies and delivering plant optimisation.

The contract underlines Severn Trent Costain's focus on providing customers with the benefits of water competition as the water retail market moves to full opening in 2017. Managing Director, Wayne Earp said: "The competitive market is clearly now a reality and will drive innovation in the water industry. STC are focussed on taking the lead in creating enhanced services for customers, reducing their costs and making more efficient use of resources".

STC will be installing state-of-the-art monitoring equipment at all of the six First Milk sites. Coupled with STC's expertise this will enable First Milk to develop a detailed understanding of their water usage, as well as options for how it can become more efficient. First Milk has recently set out its sustainability objectives within its first Sustainability Report, published October 2012. There are five specific programme areas within First Milk's sustainability policy and improving the efficiency of water use at its sites, is a key objective within the 'Reduce, Renew, Recycle' pillar supporting their drive towards renewable energy, zero waste and recovered water use throughout the supply chain.