

WATER

Business Perspective

The impact of water scarcity varies greatly by business sector and for office-based businesses its commercial relevance can appear slight. Those businesses for which water is an essential raw material are well aware of the impact on their business that can be caused by an interruption of supply, but the indirect effects of water scarcity can impact the production of food crops and natural resources, causing price volatility in commodities that have a knock-on effect.



The water supply is all drinking quality, but many commercial flushing or washing operations do not need drinking water and can be carried out equally well with grey-water or rainwater. Building in (or retrofitting) greywater recycling or rainwater collection systems to substantial commercial premises can be beneficial, as can adapting processes to use less water or adjusting frequency. Water used in one process could be re-used in another at the same site – or even by a different company; for example, water that has been used to wash food could be re-used to wash down construction equipment in a neighbouring business. As with energy, using less water can reduce costs, and as water becomes increasingly scarce, we can only expect those costs to increase.

The effects of flooding can have a very direct and damaging impact on business continuity. It can prevent staff from reaching their place of work or visiting customers, it can disrupt shipments of products or provision of services and it can directly damage the workplace. Increased flood risk also influences the cost of commercial insurance. Flooding should be an essential consideration in any business risk assessment or continuity plan.