

# Case Study

Industry: Utilities



## SafeTec Shines a Light on Chemical Footprint for Electric Utility Company

**HSI Products:** SafeTec On-site Inventory Service and SDS Management System.

**Challenge:** Accurate and comprehensive inventory for multiple locations with site-specific distribution data, converting to an automated chemical approval workflow and ensuring access to an up-to-date, complete safety data sheet (SDS) collection.

**Why It Matters:** A utility provider needed to quickly provide assurance of a chemical hazard-free work environment for its employees and surrounding communities.

**Solution:** A large Midwest utility provider discovered the power of the SafeTec SDS management system after a successful on-site inventory engagement that streamlined its SDS collection and reporting.



In late 2016, that utility provider had contracted with SafeTec for its on-site inventory (OSI) services. It selected multiple locations and worked with SafeTec to create a schedule. By the second quarter of 2017, SafeTec's technicians had a comprehensive overview of the utility provider's chemical assets, including the distribution of those chemicals at its facilities, a data point it did not have as part of its previous chemical footprint understanding.

At that time, its chemical compliance records contained 24,000 safety data sheets and no real system for tracking, updating and distributing them. That collection was immediately pared down to 11,000 sheets through the elimination of out-of-date sheets, which SafeTec then narrowed down to 3,700 required sheets for the whole utility company's network. Of those 3,700 SDS, the provider had only 26% on file. Through SafeTec's comprehensive SDS collection, it was able to immediately supply all but 125 sheets, which its SDS experts then tracked down from the chemical manufacturers, giving the provider an SDS for every chemical in its inventory.

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In addition to the OSI work, SafeTec automated the provider's chemical approval workflow. Through SafeTec's SDS management platform, programmers created online approval forms with questions relevant to the provider's chemical usage and other specific EHS compliance requirements. After a form is completed, reviewers are automatically notified and sent a link to the form. Chemicals that trigger a Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) registration requirement are flagged, giving the EHS team a prompt to find an alternative if available. The system also gives reviewers an option for issuing conditional approvals, with any mandatory personal protective equipment (PPE) or modified work environment requirements clearly spelled out. After review and approval, other stakeholders such as purchasing departments and safety committees are auto-notified and a new SDS is added to the system.

Along with the automated workflow, SafeTec also created a throughput report for a running tally of how long approval processes are taking in real time. This customized feature showed the provider's management that its chemical approval wait time had dropped from over a month to less than a week.

The provider also needed to know exactly what chemicals were on each site and whether any of those chemicals could exacerbate any conditions for its employees. Users of SafeTec's SDS management system were able to take advantage of the reporting features they needed and generated an accurate overview of appropriate locations without requiring any tech support assistance from SafeTec. Empowered with comprehensive knowledge about any potential exposure risk, they were able to confidently manage employee reassignments regardless of conditions.

Such site-specific data was also put to good use when an OSHA inspector visited one of the provider's locations. Through SafeTec's SDS management system, it was immediately able to locate and print out a list of onsite chemicals for the inspector.

With the SafeTec SDS management systems, the provider has inventory, documentation, approval workflow and Tier II or CFATS reporting at their fingertips, with a refined and up-to-date SDS collection.

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