



Chemical Reporting Made Easy for a New York Utility Company

Views expressed in this case study are those of Heather De Matteo, chemical subject matter expert, and not Con Edison.

Company Overview

Con Edison operates one of the world's largest energy delivery systems. Founded in 1823 as the New York Gas Light company, their electric, gas, and steam service now provides energy for the 10 million people who live in New York City and Westchester County.

Heather De Matteo has spent 14 years as the Chemical Subject Matter Expert for Con Edison (and prior to that as a pharmaceutical scientist) and shared her experiences using the HSI chemical management platform and other tools to manage hazardous chemicals at Con Edison. Her job involves oversight of all the chemical regulations the company has to abide by whether it's OSHA, DEC, EPA, FDNY, DEP, and the rest of "the alphabet soup" that regulate a hazardous substance before it becomes waste.

Con Edison has been using HSI's chemical management solutions since 2009, however they review other companies and evaluate other solutions regularly, with HSI continuing to win the bids year after year.

Challenge

The biggest challenge is the oversight of the multiple facilities across many regions and the numerous reporting

Solution

SDS Management

Industry

Public Utilities

Size

14,000 Employees

340 Facilities

Location

New York

requirements. In addition to federal (EPA, OSHA) and New York state regulations and the variety of reporting among them, regionally within New York there are different requirements. Each regulatory body has different reporting requirements and thresholds for reporting, what needs to be contained in the reports, format and how to submit. With multiple tracking and reporting needs, the work of chemical management can become burdensome and take many workers hours of time to complete.

On top of that, New York City reporting is intricate and difficult. There are specific requirements for different chemicals, depending on weight and chemical composition that can make accurate reporting next to impossible when done manually. "Being a utility company in New York City means basically anything a utility company can do in another state, in New York City you can't. Their regulations are really tight, so that chemical reporting piece for a utility in New York City is our high focus".

Solutions

HSI worked with New York DEP to ensure the reports could be automated and meet the needs of New York requirements. The HSI SDS (safety datasheets) system is connected to NYC reporting and uploaded automatically via one data dump vs. dozens of individual reports manually calculated and submitted by almost 60 different employees.

At Con Edison, they have set up different workflows and approvals in the HSI chemical management system that are specific to the location, personnel, area of the company (ex. underground vs. by oil, etc.) which allows them to better evaluate chemicals, decide what can come in and out, what can be used at which locations and by whom. Each person within their area of expertise reviews and approves chemicals, which is tracked for review later if needed.

With EPA changes, the ability to look up a history and track every action as it pertains to inventory is key for compliance. Unlike other systems, the audit history tracks information by user, which allows for tracking at a granular level to ensure data integrity. Tracking and reviewing what was changed and who did what allows Con Edison to continuously improve their processes.

Why It Matters

REPORTING:

HSI provides the intricate reports for New York City DEP, uploaded into the NY system automatically. In addition, they can generate the unique and specific reports needed for multiple state and federal regulatory bodies.

SAVE TIME AND MONEY:

Streamlining processes reduced the monthly work of 60 employees allowing them to spend their time on more important tasks.

AUDIT HISTORY:

Individual user audit history allows them to see if something went wrong, and more importantly, how to fix it.

Results

Reporting:

The accuracy and efficiency of reporting is vastly improved. They are able to generate unique reports for the various regulatory agencies and automatically upload the intricate NYC reports.

The chemical reporting piece is the most important benefit of the system, not only for the different types of reports but to track historical information as well.

Better use of employee time:

Time spent on data gathering and reporting that was distributed across multiple workers and locations is now streamlined and consolidated.

Access:

All employees use the system to access SDSs and print labels “Labeling is easy, everybody loves it,” added De Matteo. Additionally, over 300 employees have CRS access for inventory and reporting, segmented based on role and job function.

Chemical Safety:

Con Edison does a lot of research on their own vs. blindly trusting manufacturers and chemicals sales reps regarding what the SDS says. They continuously work towards using safer chemicals for their employees and the community, in addition to reviewing them against NY regulations. The workflows they have set up in the HSI system allows them to more easily accomplish this important organizational goal.

“The HSI chemical management system has allowed the monthly reporting work of 60 people at around 300 facilities to roll down to one person: me. It reduced the workload for a lot of people.”

– Heather De Matteo
Environmental Manager