

Press Information

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UNITED UTILITIES ADDS TWO MORE VOLVO FMX TRACTOR UNITS TO ITS SAFETY-CONSCIOUS FLEET

Warrington-based United Utilities has taken delivery of two new Volvo FMX 6x4 tractor units with sleeper cabs, for operation with bulk tipping trailers on the bioresources side of its business.

Supplied by Paul McNicholas, Customer Solutions Manager at Thomas Hardie Commercials, the new model FMX trucks benefit from the latest cab design offering superior comfort, agility and durability, with distinctive V-shaped LED headlamps with headlamp protectors, new anti-slip foot steps and a striking digital dashboard display.

United Utilities has a strong relationship with the Swedish manufacturer and its long-established local dealer, having bought Volvos since the late 1980s. The two 6x4 tractors join an influx of Volvo trucks recently added to its 350-strong HGV fleet, including two FMX 8x4 tippers.

Martin Shaw, Regional Logistics & Industrial Cleaning Manager at United Utilities, says: “Our vehicles work on five-year asset management periods, so when it was time to refresh our contracts, we shared our vehicle specifications and requirements with all the major players in the industry. Volvo has been awarded the contract for the past two renewals as its vehicles have consistently proven to be the best fit for our operation.

“Through Thomas Hardie Commercials, Volvo has an excellent dealer support network in the North West, something we haven’t always experienced with its competitors.”

The new FMX tractor units – powered by Volvo’s D13K engine generating 500 hp and 2,500 nm of torque – are paired with bulk tipping trailers manufactured by Wilcox Commercial Vehicles and are being used to transfer sewage sludge to farmland across the UK.

Operating up to six days a week, the trucks are covered by a Volvo Gold Contract to guarantee maximum uptime, with servicing and maintenance to be carried out at Thomas Hardie Commercial’s Warrington dealership. The double drive tractor units benefit from an innovative tandem axle lift, which enables drive to the rearmost axle to be disengaged and lifted clear of the ground, ideal for United Utilities’ line of work.

Inside the new FMX cab, United Utilities has specified a range of features focused on safety. Aligning with the company’s strapline, “We believe that nothing we do is worth getting hurt for”, the vehicles each benefit from an Active Safety+ pack that contains driver support

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systems designed to improve driver comfort and enhance safety in demanding traffic situations. This includes adaptive cruise control with emergency brake assistance, lane changing support radar system, driver alert support, Volvo Dynamic Steering, automatic trailer brake activation and stretch brake, which kicks in to help prevent jack-knifing when driving downhill on a slippery, winding road.

Volvo's 12-inch fully dynamic and high-resolution digital instrument display with a user-friendly interface allows the driver to easily see important information and select between four different screen views, depending on the driving situation. A separate nine-inch touchscreen side display provides drivers with access to infotainment, navigation assistance, transport information and camera monitoring.

Shaw adds: "The new vehicles have proven to be a hugely popular choice with our drivers, and they are particularly impressed with the added safety features. We have recently brought some outsourced operations in-house, so these new FMX tractor units are important additions to our fleet."

United Utilities' Bioresources Services Team transport 2,000,000m³ of liquid sludge and around 400,000 tonnes of sewage sludge cake each year. Sludge is moved from the company's 569 wastewater treatment works to one of its 37 bioresource treatment facilities where digestion technology is used to produce high energy fertiliser that is then distributed to farms across the country.

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Caption for photograph:

United Utilities has added two new FMX 6x4 tractor units to the growing number of Volvos on its fleet.

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