

Homes & Neighbourhoods

Water Quality Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this document is to define the policy for the Control and Management of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems in compliance with statutory legislation within all properties managed by Kirklees Council Home and Neighbourhoods (H&N).
- 1.2 This document outlines the standards required for the effective control and management of Legionella bacteria. H&N acknowledge that health hazards may arise from exposure to Legionella bacteria and are committed to ensuring that risks are suitably assessed and effectively eliminated or managed to minimise the likelihood of Legionella related health risks to customers, employees, contractors and any other persons occupying and using its premises, as far as is reasonably practicable. This includes ensuring that appropriate information is made available to any person who may work on or with plumbing and water installations.
- 1.3 Applicable legislation includes, but not exhaustive to, the:
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
 - HSE publications including the Approved Code of Practice: (L8) Legionnaires' disease - The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems 2013.
 - Technical guidance: HSG 274 Legionnaires Disease:
 - Part 1: The control of Legionella bacteria in evaporative cooling systems (2013).
 - Part 2: the control of Legionella bacteria in hot and cold water systems (2014).
 - Part 3: the control of Legionella bacteria in other risk systems (2013).
 - BS 8580:2019 Water Quality. Risk assessments for Legionella control. Code of Practice.
 - Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.
 - The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.
 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.
 - Management of Health & Safety regulations (MHSWR) 1999

2 Policy Scope

- 2.1 This policy is aimed at all H&N employees and contractors who have responsibility for / or may come into contact with water systems or equipment during their normal work activities. It should be read and understood by all parties who have responsibilities relating to Water Quality Management within H&N and a duty of care under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Approved Code of Practice: (L8) Legionnaires' disease - The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems.
- 2.2 Legionellosis is a collective term for diseases caused by Legionella bacteria including the most serious Legionnaires' disease, as well as the similar but less serious conditions of Pontiac fever and Lochgoilhead fever. Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia and everyone is susceptible to infection. People contract Legionnaires' disease by inhaling small droplets of water (aerosols), suspended in the air, containing the bacteria. Certain conditions increase the risk from Legionella if:
- The water temperature in all or some parts of the system may be between 20-45 °C, which is suitable for growth.
 - It is possible for breathable water droplets to be created and dispersed eg aerosol created by a cooling tower, or water outlets
 - Water is stored and/or re-circulated.
 - There are deposits that can support bacterial growth providing a source of nutrients for the organism eg rust, sludge, scale, organic matter and biofilms.

3 Policy Statement

- 3.1 H&N is responsible for the maintenance and repair of circa 22,500 domestic and non-domestic premises owned by Kirklees Council. As responsible social landlords, H&N is committed to minimise the risks associated with water quality in compliance with the Approved Code of Practice: (L8) Legionnaires' disease - The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems and all other regulatory and industry body requirements.
- 3.2 This policy aims to ensure that we meet our obligations as a landlord and seeks to provide assurance that the control of Legionella is effectively managed to ensure the safety of our employees, contractors, tenants, leaseholders and members of the general public.
- 3.3 H&N will:
- Maintain a safe and healthy environment in premises managed by H&N.
 - Prepare a management plan that sets out in detail the procedures to manage the risks from Legionella.
 - Take the necessary steps to put the plan into action.

- Ensure that all water systems are flushed prior to letting of H&N managed properties.
- Assess each maintenance, upgrade and renewal scheme for modifications to water systems to prevent, control or reduce the risk of Legionella.
- Review and monitor the plan annually, or sooner if there are any changes to legislation or working practices and act on it so that the plan remains relevant and up-to-date.
- Establish and maintain emergency procedures for responding to an incident where high levels of Legionella have been detected or there is a suspected case of Legionellosis.
- Ensure that each individual domestic and commercial gas engineer and plumber is trained, competent and holds relevant industry recognised qualifications.
- Maintain up to date records of the H&N assets and the water quality precautions, controls and testing which is carried out at the properties.
- Undertake regular water quality audits.
- Communicate to other persons that they have a duty to co-operate as far as is necessary to allow H&N to comply with the above requirements.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods has strategic responsibility for the management of Water Quality, and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained. They will oversee the implementation of this policy.
- 4.2 The Housing Advisory Board [HAB] has overall governance responsibility for ensuring this policy is fully implemented in order to ensure full compliance with legislation and regulatory standards. This oversight will be supported by the Building Safety Assurance Board (BSAB) – an officer Board of compliance and building safety officers. As such, the HAB will formally approve this policy and review it every year (or sooner if there is a change in legislation or regulation).

- 4.3 For assurance that this policy is operating effectively in practice, the BSAB will receive regular updates on its implementation.
- 4.4 The Housing Advisory Board will receive quarterly performance reports in respect of asbestos safety and ensure compliance is being achieved. They will also be notified of any non-compliance issue identified.
- 4.5 The Head of Building Safety has operational responsibility for the management of water quality and will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of these programmes. The Head of Building Safety will fulfil the role of the appointed Duty Holder and will be the overall Responsible Person on behalf of H&N.
- 4.6 Housing teams will provide support where gaining access to properties is difficult, as part of the no access process and will engage with Legal Services and/or Environmental Services where appropriate to enforce access where necessary.
- 4.7 The H&N Legionella Responsible Person (LRP) and Deputy LRP will act as the Competent Persons for managing and controlling any identified risk from exposure to Legionella bacteria.

5 Monitoring and Review

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed annually or following any legal or regulatory changes.
- 6.2 Monitoring water quality and updating risk assessments are an integral part of the Water Quality Management System.
- 6.3 A system of formal audit (internal and / or external) of the Water Quality Management System must be in place to ensure that both Policy and Procedures are being implemented.
- 6.4 The Health and Safety Group will maintain an on-going audit plan to address the management of water quality, reporting key findings to the Service Director for Homes and Neighbourhoods.
- 5.5 Where the Head of Building Safety or appointed competent person(s) have reason to believe that the Water Quality Management System is not achieving the aims of this Policy, the Service Director for Homes and Neighbourhoods and the SHE Manager shall be notified, and a review of the System shall be carried out. If the review identifies deficiencies, the Head of Building Safety shall take action to amend the System as required.
- 5.6 Communicate and consult employees and contractors by bringing the Policy, and any subsequent amendments, to their attention through induction and training. This may be in alternate formats / languages as and when necessary.

- 5.7 Water Quality Safety Guidance information and the Water Quality Management Policy are available on the H&N website for tenants, Elected Members and the wider public. The information may be in alternate formats / languages as and when necessary.
- 5.8 Regular communications on Water Quality, including the responsibilities of H&N, tenants and leaseholders, will be included in the Communication Strategy (in development).

7 Referenced Documents and Further Reading

- The Kirklees Council 'Corporate Water Quality Management Plan'
- H&N Water Quality Management Plan
- HSE publication L8
- Technical guidance: HSG 274 Legionnaires Disease, Parts 1, 2 and 3.
- BS 8580:2019 Water Quality. Risk assessments for Legionella control. Code of Practice
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.
- Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- Building Regulations 2010.
- Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.
- Notification of Cooling Towers & Evaporative Condenser Regulations 1992.
- Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988.
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999.
- The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2010.
- Management of Health & Safety regulations (MHSAWR) 1999