

Legionella Management Policy

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Regulations and Standards:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Workplace Regulations 1992.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999.

The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015.

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

Housing Acts 1985 and 1988.

HSE – Scalding and Burning, available at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/scaldingburning.htm>

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1. Introduction:

This policy will summarise how HND Children's Care Ltd will endeavour to keep their clients safe from Legionnaires disease by ensuring all employees of HND Children's Care Ltd abide by this policy.

Definitions:



Legionella - A naturally occurring bacteria within water sources. Inhalation or ingestion of them can cause illness.

HND Children's Care Ltd recognises that it has a duty of care to employees, children, visitors, and the general public that may be affected by the operation and maintenance of premises by the organisation.

To ensure that the highest reasonably practical standards are maintained throughout the organisation all directives issued by the Health & Safety Executive, Department of Health and the British Standards Institution relating to prevention and control of Legionella will be adopted where relevant.

HND Children's Care Ltd will therefore ensure that sufficient resource is made available to ensure that water storage and distribution systems are operated and maintained in accordance with current legislation and guidance and shall take all reasonably practical steps to ensure risk of Legionella proliferation and contamination is minimised.

2. Scope of the Policy:

This policy covers the management and control of Legionella and other contaminants in water systems in our general needs, residential children's homes, including all communal areas / facilities and offices within HND Children's Care Ltd.

3. Responsibility:

HND Children's Care Ltd employees are all responsible for carrying out Health and Safety checks, within the properties, which includes water checks on a weekly basis.

4. Policy:

Aims & Objectives:

Legionnaires' disease can prove fatal as confirmed by a number of cases, all of which could have been prevented if adequate preventative measures and contingency plans were in place. It is these preventative measures that HND Children's Care Ltd wish to address across its portfolio of premises in order to protect staff, visitors, residents, and the general public.

As Legionella is a naturally occurring organism widely dispersed in nature, it must be accepted that there is a constant risk of the bacteria entering the building services of our properties. Therefore, the size and complexity of the properties under our control naturally increases the likelihood.

Water services, in particular hot & cold-water systems, evaporative cooling towers, humidifiers and showers are sensitive areas requiring close scrutiny with regard to maintenance methods and procedures. It is therefore essential that measures reflect current knowledge and best practice within the industry.

Legionella Bacteria:

Legionnaires' Disease can affect anybody, but some people are at higher risk e.g., men are 3 times at risk, those over 45 years of age, smokers, and heavy drinkers, those suffering from



chronic respiratory or kidney disease and people whose immune system is impaired. Legionella bacteria can multiply in domestic water systems under certain conditions.

In particular, water temperatures in the range 20°C to 45°C favour growth.

The bacteria will not survive temperatures above 60°C and remains dormant at temperatures below 20°C.

The bacteria also require a supply of nutrients to multiply such as:

- Algae, amoebae, and other bacteria within the water itself
- Sediment, sludge, scale, and other material within the water system.

A reasonably foreseeable risk of exposure to Legionella bacteria exist in:

- Water systems incorporating a cooling tower or evaporative condenser.
- Hot and cold-water systems.
- Other plant and systems containing water which are likely to exceed 20°C and which may release a cloud of droplets and/or droplet nuclei (residue that remains when water has evaporated) during operation or when being maintained.

The disease is normally contracted by inhaling Legionella bacteria, either in tiny droplets of water in the form of aerosols or in droplet nuclei which are particles left after the water has evaporated and are contaminated with Legionella, deep into the lungs.

In accordance with the requirements of the Legislation and Guidance:

- Identify and assess sources of risk.
- Prevent or control the risk where possible.
- Keep thorough records and check that what has been done is effective.

HND Children's Care Ltd will carry out the relevant risk assessments to ALL properties to determine any need for monthly, annual, or less frequent monitoring. This applies to all HND Children's Care Ltd properties / homes / offices etc.

5. Implementation:

Risk Assessment:

A detailed assessment shall be undertaken at all sites where a significant risk exists, which include:

- General needs domestic dwellings will have generic risk assessments carried out.
- Daily water temperature checks to be carried out and temperatures recorded.
- All water temperatures should be recorded and any concerns to be passed on to



Manager, who will inform the Environmental Health Department if required.

- All risk assessments will be undertaken by persons who are competent and experienced to carry out these duties. The risk assessment should be reviewed at regular intervals or earlier if significant modifications are undertaken with regard to the utilisation of the premises.

We will keep a record of the risk assessments undertaken as well as information regarding the maintenance, tests and remedial works carried out together with the results.

The assessments will contain direction as to how the risk is to be eliminated, or where this is not possible, how the risk will be managed. Where the risk assessment identifies no reasonably foreseeable risk, no further measures are necessary.

Prevention and Control:

- Wherever practicable HND Children's Care Ltd will remove the potential source of future contamination including the removal of cold-water storage tanks.
- On new developments, refurbishments and when carrying out planned improvements we will 'design out' risks where possible.
- When risk assessments identify required works to remove or reduce risks they will be carried out as responsive repairs or as part of a planned improvement programme with agreement from the landlords where required. Where we cannot remove the risk, we will control it as far as possible in line with the Approved Code of Practice by doing the following:
 - Ensuring that the release of water is properly controlled.
 - Avoiding water temperatures and conditions that favour the growth of Legionella and other micro-organisms.
 - Ensuring water cannot stagnate anywhere in the system by keeping pipe lengths as short as possible or by removing redundant pipe work.
 - Ensuring that all water outlets are run / flushed through at least once weekly.
 - Avoiding materials that will encourage the growth of Legionella.
 - Keeping the system and water in it clean. Despite legionella growing in conditions where the water is between the temperatures of 20 – 45 degrees Celsius; there would be a legitimate risk of being scalded should water within our hot taps be dispensed above this temperature:

'Health and social care settings have increased water temperatures for a number of reasons including the need to satisfy hot water demand, efficient running of the boiler and controlling the risk from Legionella bacteria. High water temperatures (particularly temperatures over 44°C) can create a scalding risk to vulnerable people who use care services.

Those who are vulnerable to the risk may be in hospitals and other care settings, care homes, social services premises and special schools. The risk of scalding/burning should also be assessed in community facilities such as hostels, or staffed and sheltered housing, where vulnerable people may be at risk.

Many accidents involving scalding have been fatal and have mainly occurred during bathing or showering. Where vulnerable people are at risk from scalding during whole body



immersion, water temperatures must not exceed 44°C. Any precautions taken should not introduce other risks, e.g., from Legionella bacteria’.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/scalding-burning.htm>

As mentioned previously, risk management measures will be introduced to prevent Legionella’s disease.

Water temperatures should be as follows:

Cold Water – less than 20 Degrees Celsius

Hot water – between 40 – 44 degrees Celsius.

Monitoring:

Regular audit of the management processes will take place by HND Children’s Care Ltd or by an external assessor.

End.