

# Legionnaire's Disease - Advice for Tenants

Please carefully read the following information about the risks of contracting Legionnaire's disease, and how to safely prevent it.

As your Landlord we have a legal obligation to ensure you are aware of the possible causes and symptoms of Legionnaire's disease so you can identify any problems easily and report any concerns to us.

## What is Legionnaire's disease?

Legionnaire's disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia, which can affect anybody. It is caused by the inhalation of small droplets of water from contaminated sources containing legionella bacteria.

## Where is Legionella found?

All hot and cold water systems in residential properties are a potential source for legionella bacteria growth.

The main areas of risk are where the bacteria can multiply and increase to dangerous levels and then spread, e.g. in spray from showers and taps, even in dishwasher and washing machine pipes.

Conditions ripe for colonisation are where water of between 20°C and 45°C stagnates, and where there is sludge, rust and scale present for the bacteria to feed upon and multiply.

## Who is at risk?

Legionnaire's disease most commonly affects the elderly, or people with chest or lung problems. Not everyone exposed to legionella bacteria becomes ill.

Legionnaire's disease is not contagious and you cannot get it from drinking water.

On average, there are approximately 500 reported cases of Legionnaire's disease a year.

The symptoms of Legionnaire's disease are similar to those of flu:

- high temperature
- fever or chills
- headache
- tiredness
- muscle pain
- dry cough

There is no need for concern. Legionnaire's disease is easily preventable by putting in place some simple control measures. The information below will help you identify any potential problems.

## What precautions can I take?

Taking the following simple precautions will help keep you safe:

- inform us if you believe the hot water temperature is below 50°C or the hot water tank/boiler is defective in any way
- not adjust the temperature of the hot water
- advise us if you believe the cold water temperature is above 20°C

- flush through little used outlets for 2 minutes at least once a week and every outlet for 20 minutes after a period of non use (eg. after you come back from holiday.)
- clean, disinfect and descale shower heads at least once every 6 months
- notify us if you notice any debris or discolouration in the hot or cold water

**What do I do if I think I may have contracted Legionnaire's disease?**

If you suspect that you or someone in your home has contracted Legionnaire's disease, contact your doctor immediately.

You should also contact us so that we can take the appropriate measures.

We undertake an annual Risk Assessment and if this requires any action to be taken you will be duly notified.

Alec J. Cocker