



LEGIONELLA POLICY STATEMENT

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LEGIONELLA POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose

The aim of this Policy is to ensure the effective inspection, maintenance and management of all water systems within premises controlled by Castlehill Housing Association (CHA).

Definitions

Legionella – *“a potentially dangerous type of bacteria when inhaled with water vapour. Bacterium grows best in warm, nutrient rich water.”*

Legionella Risk Assessment – *“a specific risk assessment carried out to determine the risk level of Legionella Assessment proliferation, and exposure from a specific water system.”*

Log Book – *“a record book provided to record all local checks and tests carried out, as specified by legionella risk assessment.”*

Legionnaires’ disease – *“a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the legionella bacteria.”*

Legal Duties

CHA has several specific legal duties which relate to water safety and, in particular, Legionella risk management. These include:

- Identifying and assessing sources of risk;
- Preparing a scheme for preventing or controlling the risk;
- Implementing and managing the scheme;
- Keeping records and checking what has been done is effective.

Legionella Information

Legionella bacteria is common in natural water (such as rivers and ponds). However, legionella can grow in other water systems such as cooling towers, evaporative condensers, showers, spray apparatus and hot and cold water systems.

Legionnaires’ disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of Legionella bacteria. This includes the most serious Legionnaires’ diseases, as well as the similar but less serious conditions of Pontiac Fever and Lochgoilhead Fever. The bacteria is normally contained within fine water droplets (aerosol) that may be caused by operating a cooling tower, shower, spray apparatus, running a tap outlet or operating a humidifier.

Legionnaires' disease has the potential to affect anybody. However, those more susceptible are normally in the age range of 45 and above, smokers, heavy drinkers, or suffer from chronic respiratory or kidney disease or have impaired immune systems.

Legionella survive low temperatures and thrive at temperatures between 20-45 degrees C if the conditions are right (e.g. if a supply of nutrients is present such as rust, sludge, scale and other bacteria).

Water temperatures in the range of 20 – 45°C favour the growth of Legionella in water systems. It is uncommon to find proliferation below 20°C and it will not survive above 60°C. In addition to temperature control, other methods of protection include ionisation, UV light, chlorine dioxide, ozone treatment or thermal disinfection.

Legionella Policy

CHA will aim to minimise and control the risk from Legionnaires' disease and, to this end, will:

- Appoint a responsible person who will have a duty to put in place an action plan to minimise the risk of Legionella and to manage and monitor the necessary work systems and procedures;
- Identify and assess sources of risk (e.g. where conditions are present that may encourage Legionella bacteria to multiply or where there is a means of creating and disseminating breathable droplets), and establish any items of non-compliance;
- Assess the level of risk through a structured Legionella Risk Assessment programme, and aim to eliminate or reduce the risk to an acceptable level;
- Arrange for routine inspection and maintenance of water systems, and where needed, a programme of disinfection;
- Retain records of maintenance, inspection and testing for a minimum of five years.

General Information

- a. Hot water will be stored at a temperature of at least 60°C.
- b. Water pipes will be as short and direct as possible and pipes and water tanks will be effectively insulated. Tanks will be protected against contamination and materials used which do not encourage Legionella growth.
- c. Hot water output from each outlet will reach 50°C within one minute of running (55°C in health care premises).
- d. Cold water will be stored and distributed at a temperature of less than 20°C.
- e. Where water is used or stored for consumption in any devices, e.g. water coolers, tea urns, drinks machines etc., an effective system of regular cleaning and disinfecting will be introduced, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Review

CHA will review its methodology for managing Legionella every three years or sooner if required by Statutory or best practice requirements.

References

- Health & Safety at Work Act etc. 1974
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, as amended
- L8 Legionnaires' Disease - The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems, Approved Code of Practice and Guidance (4th Edition)
- HSG274 Legionnaires' Disease – Technical Guidance (in 3 Parts) (2013)
- IACL27 (rev2) Legionnaires' Disease – A Guide for Employers
- INDG458 Legionnaires' Disease – A brief guide for Duty Holders (2012)
- HSG220 Health & Safety in Residential Care Homes (2001)
- British Standard 8580:2010 - Water Quality: Risk Assessments for Legionella Control
- Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008
- The Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- The Private Water Supply (Scotland) 2006
- The Water Supply (Water Fittings) (Scotland) Byelaws 2014
- The Water Supply (Water Quality) (Scotland) Regulations 2001