Control Of Legionella Policy

Cornwall Housing

Treven Kernow

Date: 08/09/2011

Version 2.2
**Policy control sheet**

### Current document status

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### Version history

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<td></td>
<td>J.Williams</td>
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<td>08-09-11</td>
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<td>J.Williams</td>
<td>Stock Investment Working Group</td>
<td>T.Tregenza-Hall</td>
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Notes
This policy reflects joint practice across East Cornwall Landlord Services and Carrick Housing Ltd, and was agreed with tenants at the Stock Investment Steering Group.

Legal influences on this policy
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended)
The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems (Approved Code of Practice L8)
The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations 1992
Equality Act 2010

Non-legal influences on this policy

Other documents linked to this policy
Control of Legionella Policy

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1.0 **APPLICATION**

1.1 This policy applies to all water systems and water storage within buildings managed by us, including residential, commercial and any other properties.

1.2 From April 2012, the Managing Director will have responsibility for all properties managed for and on behalf of Cornwall Council, including the Council’s housing stock.

2.0 **POLICY STATEMENT**

2.1 In recognition of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) and The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems (Approved Code of Practice L8) and our duties in respect of the effective control of Legionella bacteria, where tenants, employees, visitors, customers, contractors and members of the public may be affected, we undertake to manage identified water systems to control Legionella bacterial growth.

2.2 We will undertake, or commission a competent contractor to undertake suitable and sufficient risk assessments of installed hot and cold water systems at identified premises to assess the level of risk of Legionellosis associated with those systems.

2.3 We will undertake or commission a competent contractor to undertake appropriate monitoring of installed systems that have been identified as having a risk of Legionella bacterial propagation.

2.4 We will notify the appropriate authority of any water systems that are required to be reported under The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations 1992.

2.5 We will avoid the use of systems that give rise to a foreseeable risk of Legionellosis or, where this is not reasonably practicable, either modify the system to reduce the risk to an acceptable level or, prepare a written scheme for minimising the risk of exposure.

2.6 We will implement and manage the scheme of precautions, including the appointment of a person, or persons, to have managerial responsibility and who are to provide appropriate supervision for the effective control of Legionella.
2.7 We will keep appropriate records of all installed systems, risk assessments, control measures, system modifications, treatments, monitoring and inspections where the associated risk assessments have identified the risk of Legionella bacteria propagation.

2.8 We will provide appropriate training to all those with responsibilities for the effective management and control of Legionella. This will include training for those who work on installed water systems to ensure that their activities do not contribute to Legionella propagation through poor working practices (such as the leaving of system dead ends).

2.9 We will ensure that no individual is discriminated against on grounds of sex, marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language, social origin or other personal attributes including beliefs or opinions (such as religious beliefs or political opinions). We will promote equality of opportunity by publishing information in different languages and other formats such as large print, audio and Braille, on request.

3.0 WHAT IS LEGIONELLA?

3.1 Legionella bacteria is found naturally in water sources such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs, but usually in low numbers. Legionella bacteria can exist in water at temperatures between 6°C and 60°C but temperatures between 20°C to 45°C seem to favour the maximum growth rates.

The organisms do not appear to multiply below 20°C and will not survive above 60°C, they may however remain dormant in cool water and multiply only when water temperatures reach a suitable level. Legionella bacteria also require nutrients to propagate; sources include commonly encountered organisms within the water itself such as algae, amoebae and other bacteria.

The presence of sediment, sludge, scale and other material within the system, together with biofilms, also harbour nutrients and provide favourable conditions in which the Legionella bacteria may grow. (Biofilm is a thin layer of micro-organisms which may form a slime on the surfaces in contact with water). Such biofilms, sludge and scale can protect Legionella bacteria from temperatures and concentrations of biocide (such as Chlorine) that would otherwise kill or inhibit these organisms if they were freely suspended in the water.
4.0 WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS?

4.1 Legionnaires’ disease was first identified following a large outbreak of pneumonia amongst people who attended an American Legion Convention in Philadelphia in 1976. A previously unrecognized bacterium was isolated from lung tissue samples that were subsequently named *Legionella pneumophila*.

Not all those exposed to Legionella will be affected by the bacteria. The incubation period is between 2 – 10 days (usually 3 – 6 days). The initial symptoms of Legionnaires’ disease include high fever, chills, headache and muscle pain (similar to flu) and patients may develop a dry cough; most suffer difficulty with breathing. About one third of patients infected also develop diarrhoea or vomiting and about half become confused or delirious.

*Legionella pneumophila* is also responsible for a short feverish form of the illness without the pneumonia, this is known as **Pontiac fever**. Another species of Legionella, *Legionella micdadei*, is responsible for a similar form of the illness without pneumonia called **Lochgoilhead fever** after an outbreak in Lochgoilhead, Scotland. There have been no recorded deaths associated with either Pontiac or Lochgoilhead fevers.

Infection with Legionella bacteria is fatal in approximately 12% of reported cases. This rate can be higher in a more susceptible population; for example in immunosuppressed patients, men appear more susceptible than women, as do those over 45 years if age, smokers, alcoholics, diabetics and those with cancer or chronic respiratory or kidney disease.

Legionella is contracted by inhaling the bacteria, either in tiny droplets of water (aerosols), or in droplet nuclei (the particles left after the water has evaporated) where it gets deep into the lungs. Legionnaires’ disease can be treated effectively with appropriate antibiotics.

5.0 REVISION AND AUDIT

5.1 This policy will be reviewed at intervals of not more than one year, or when there are any significant changes in legislation or best practice appropriate to this policy.

5.2 All risk assessments and written schemes for the identification and management of Legionella will be reviewed at intervals of
not more than two years or when there are changes in legislation, best trade practice or significant changes to installed systems.
## Appendix A Monitoring the Temperature Control Regime (in agreement with Health and Safety Executive Guidance)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Check</th>
<th>Standard to Meet</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Sentinel Taps</td>
<td>The water temperature to be below 20°C after running the water for up to two minutes</td>
<td>The water temperature to be at least 50°C within a minute of running the water. This ensures the supply and return temperatures on each loop are unchanged i.e., the loop is functioning as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If fitted, input to thermostatic mixing valve (TMV) on a sentinel basis</td>
<td>The water supply to the TMV should be at least 50°C within a minute of running the water</td>
<td>Measurement is achieved through the use of a surface temperature probe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water leaving and returning to calorifier</td>
<td>Outgoing water should be at least 60°C; return at least 50°C</td>
<td>If fitted, the thermometer pocket at the top of the calorifier and on the return leg are points for accurate temperature measurement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six Monthly</td>
<td>Incoming cold water inlet (at least once in the winter and once in the summer)</td>
<td>The water should preferably be below 20°C at all times</td>
<td>The measure is usually at the ball valve outlet to the cold water storage tank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Represen</td>
<td>The water</td>
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Appendix B  Recommended Inspection Frequencies for Systems
Checklist 1:  Hot and Cold Water Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hot water services</td>
<td>Arrange for samples to be taken from hot water calorifiers, in order to note condition of drain water</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check temperatures in flow and return at calorifiers</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check water temperature up to one minute to see if it has reached 50°C in the sentinel taps</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual check on internal surfaces of calorifiers for scale and sludge. Check representative taps for temperature as above on a rotational basis</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold water Services</td>
<td>Check tank water temperature remote from ball valve and mains temperature at ball valve. Note maximum temperatures recorded by fixed maximum / minimum thermometers where fitted</td>
<td>Six monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check that the temperature is below 20°C after running the water for up to two minutes in the sentinel taps</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visually inspect cold-water storage tanks and carry out remedial work where necessary. Check representative taps for temperature as above on a rotational basis</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shower Heads</td>
<td>Dismantle, clean, and descale shower heads and hoses</td>
<td>Quarterly or more frequently if necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little used outlets</td>
<td>Flush through and purge to drain immediately before use, without release of aerosols</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
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Alternative formats

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If you would like this information on audio CD, audio tape, Braille, large print, any other format or interpreted in a language other than English, please contact:-

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