



Legionella Policy

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Review Plan: e.g. annually	Three yearly
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Related Documents:	Maintenance and Repairs Policy
Owner:	Highstone Housing Association
Document Controller:	Supported Housing Director

Changes made	Sections	Date	By	Date approved by board
Titles updated	Throughout	02/04/2019	LB	
Align with current HSE guidance	2.2	02/04/2019	LB	
How board will be notified of risks	2.4	02/04/2019	LB	

1. Statement of General Policy

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella. All man-made hot and cold water systems are likely to provide an environment where Legionella can grow. The Health and Safety Executive provide guidance on what landlords must do to control any risks, this policy has been developed using this guidance.

Landlords' duties apply to a wide range of accommodation, occupied under a lease or a licence, which includes but not exclusively, residential premises provided for rent by:

- local authorities
- **housing associations**
- private sector landlords
- housing co-operatives
- hostels

The law is clear that landlords who rent out property have legal responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of their tenants by keeping the property safe and free from health hazards.

Section 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) The general duties require under **section 3(2)** that "It shall be the duty of every self-employed person to conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that he and other persons (not being his employees) who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety.". Landlords, under Section 53 of HSWA are regarded as being self-employed and tenants fall into the class of "other persons (not being his employees)".

2. What Highstone Housing Association Must Do

As a landlord we recognise our health and safety responsibilities and the need to take the right precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to legionella. We will do:

- Identify and assess sources of risk
- Manage any risks
- Prevent or control risks
- Keep and maintain records

2.1. Identify and assess sources of risk

- An individual description of the water system will be produced for each scheme and this will form the basis of the risk assessment.
- Risk assessment form at appendix one will form the basis of each assessment
- Although not required by the HSE, a detailed record of the inspection will be made which will include: monitoring results, inspection and checks undertaken, remedial work carried out and any risks identified requiring additional attention

2.2. Manage Risks

- HHA named responsible person is Steven Hawley, Regional Site Director
- An assessment of risk at each scheme will be carried out annually by a HHA Housing Officer and overseen by a HHA Maintenance Engineer.
- HHA Maintenance Engineers have detailed knowledge of all schemes and water systems and are competent plumbers and will receive appropriate awareness training on any changes to legionella management advised by the HSE.
- HHA Housing Officer will conduct an annual risk assessment
- Additionally, HHA Housing Officer will test the temperature of the hot water quarterly
- Support Providers will conduct a weekly test of the hot water using an appropriate draw off point e.g. kitchen sink or a hand washbasin using a digital thermometer
- Void properties: where a property is likely to be void for a long period of time, hot water storage will be managed in accordance with current HSE guidance.
- Tenants will be provided with an easy read handy guide explaining what they can do to keep their water safe. See Appendix 2
- Support Providers will be given a copy of this policy.

2.3. Prevent or Control Risks

- According to the HSE, testing or sampling for Legionella is not usually required for domestic hot and cold water systems.
- As detailed above though, HHA commits to undertake an annual risk assessment at each scheme

2.4. Keep and Maintain Records

- According to the HSE, HHA is not required to maintain records
- However, HHA commits to reviewing risk on an annual basis, recording its findings for action, as required, and notifying the HHA board of any risks identified.

3. What Our Tenants and Support Providers Need to Know

- Tenants and/or their support provider will be advised of any control measures put in place that should be maintained, for example, not to adjust the temperature setting of the calorifier, to regularly clean showerheads etc.
- Tenants and/or their support provider must inform HHA, using the repairs and maintenance process, if the hot water is not heating properly or there are any other problems with the system so that appropriate action can be taken.
- Where showers are installed, these have the means of creating and dispersing water droplets (aerosols) which may be inhaled causing a foreseeable risk of exposure to Legionella. If used regularly (as in the majority of most domestic settings) the risks are reduced but, in any case,, tenants and/or their support providers are advised to regularly (at least quarterly) clean and disinfect showerheads. Instantaneous electric showers pose less of a risk as they are generally cold water-fed and heat only small volumes of water during operation.

Tenants and Support Providers will be provided with an easy read handy guide explaining what they can do to keep their water safe.

Legionella Risk Assessment Form

Appendix 1

Scheme Details	
Support Provider	
On Site Contact	
Date of Risk Assessment	
Name and signature of HHA Assessor	

Note to assessor: this assumes all accommodation relating to this scheme has been checked. Please record exceptions noting the flat/apartment/bungalow number as appropriate.

Question	Response	Details
How is water fed into the dwelling?	Mains/Other	
Is hot water stored?	Yes/No	
Have quarterly hot water temperature checks (50 C +) been completed by HHA?	Yes/No	
Is the support provider on site representative aware of the need to carry out weekly hot water temperature checks (50 C+)?	Yes/No	
Date of service for combi-boiler (if applicable)		
Record hot water temperature at an appropriate draw off point (kitchen or hand washbasin)		
Do shower heads look clean	Yes/No	

Are there any dead-legs?	Yes/No	If yes, what action is being taken?
Are all valves and pipes in good working condition?	Yes/No	
Have tenants and support providers been given information about the control of legionella?	Yes/No	
Are adequate procedures in place to manage void periods?	Yes/No	
Any other risks identified?	Yes/No	

Appendix 2

Legionella Guide for HHA Tenants– How to Keep your Water Safe

What is Legionnaires Disease?

Legionella is the name given to a type of bacteria that is sometimes found in water in the UK

It is usually found in streams and rivers but sometimes it can end up in the water in your home.

Legionnaire's disease is the name given to the illness which people can get when they come in to contact with the legionella bacteria.

Is it Harmful?

Small amounts of it are not harmful.

It is only dangerous if the bacteria are allowed to grow.

If it grows and you breathe in the water droplets containing the bacteria then it can make you very ill.

How can I keep my water safe?

We carry out checks to make sure your water is safe and you can do things to make it safe too.

Legionella grows best in water that is not too cold or not too hot.

It also grows when the water in your pipes and taps is stagnant. This means if you have not used your taps or shower in a while.

To keep your water safe:

Clean your taps and shower regularly as the bacteria can grow on rust and dirt.

Shower heads should be disinfected and cleaned at least once every three months.

If you have not been at home for seven or more days, then when you get back you should run all taps and shower for a few minutes before drinking any water. This will make sure you get fresh and clean water in your pipes.

The chances of it being in your home are very small and you should not need to worry if you do these things.