

Tenants Information on Legionella



Legionnaires' disease

This leaflet has been provided to inform you about the risks of contracting Legionnaires' 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 Legionnaires' disease?

Legionnaires' 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?

Legionnaires' disease most commonly affects the elderly, or people with chest or lung problems. Not everyone exposed to legionella bacteria becomes ill. Legionnaires' disease is not contagious, and you cannot get it from drinking water.

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

The symptoms of Legionnaires' disease are like those of flu:

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

There is no need for concern. Legionnaires' 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:

- Flush through showers and taps for 10 minutes following a period of non-use (i.e. after you have been on holiday or if a room is not in regular use)
- Keep all shower heads and taps clean and free from a buildup of l i m e scale, mould or algae growth.
- Keep hot water on your boiler system at a temperature of 60°C or greater.

WARNING: BE AWARE OF SCALDING!

Report any deposits such as rust or any unusual matter flowing from your water outlets.

What do I do if I think I may have contracted Legionnaires' disease?

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

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

How you can contact us

Call: 01290 421130 **Email:** info@shirehousing.com

Or write to us at:

Shire Housing Association
Netherthird House
Netherthird
Cumnock
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KA18 3DB