



Water safety at your home

**This leaflet explains how
water safety can be improved
in your home to avoid Legionella**



Tenant's Information

Legionnaire's Disease

Tenant's information

This summary has been provided to inform you about the risks of contracting Legionnaire's disease, and how to safely prevent it.

As your Letting Agent, we need to ensure that you are aware of the possible causes and symptoms of Legionnaire's disease so you can identify any problems easily and report any concerns that you may have 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, eg: 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?

The risk of Legionella is very low indeed, but you can take steps to avoid it. The risk is greater when you move into a new property. It is also higher if you are returning home after a long break

Taking the following simple precautions will help keep you safe:

- Keep you water cistern covered, insulated, clean and free from debris.
- Make sure your pipe work is insulated.
- Flush through showers and taps for at least 5 minutes following a period of non-use (ie: after you have been on holiday or if a room is not in regular use). This will flush out any bacteria.
- Keep all shower heads and taps clean and free from a build-up of lime scale, mould or algae growth (regular bleaching every 3 months will help sterilise and kill any bacteria).
- 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 Legionnaire's disease?

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

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

LEGIONNAIRE'S IS NOT CONTAGIOUS

