



Legionella control within existing dwellings

Six things you need to know;

- 1** Legionella is a bacteria found in water. It is found in low levels in all natural water systems but can multiply to dangerous levels.
- 2** Legionnaires' Disease is a fatal form of Pneumonia contracted by inhaling infected water droplets.
- 3** If taps, showers or other water outlets remain unused, the bacteria can multiply quickly.
- 4** A competent person is required to assess the risks of Legionella and decide on the action necessary.
- 5** Residential landlords are responsible for ensuring that the risk of exposure to Legionella is properly assessed and controlled.
- 6** Health and safety law does not require landlords to produce a 'Legionnaires testing certificate', although testing may be considered necessary if an installation is assessed as being high risk.

Key Facts

Legionella Risk Assessment

What is Legionella?

Legionella is a bacteria found in water. It is found naturally in low levels in all water systems but it multiplies in stagnant water between 20°C and 50°C. It can cause Legionnaire's disease- a fatal form of pneumonia contracted by inhaling fine water droplets containing high levels of bacteria.

What are Landlords' requirements for a Legionella risk assessment?

It is necessary for a competent person to assess the risks of Legionella in domestic rental properties and decide on the action necessary. Legionella testing will be required only in exceptional circumstances and generally not in domestic hot and cold water systems.

What can I do to control it?

Simple measures could include flushing rarely used taps and cleaning shower heads regularly, but also include correct design and maintenance of water systems.

Is it law to have a Legionella risk assessment?

Yes. Landlords have duties under health & safety law to assess the risk of Legionella and take appropriate action.

What will a Legionella risk assessment highlight?

A risk assessment will highlight any issues present, as well as appropriate control measures for controlling the growth of Legionella bacteria.

What increases the risk of Legionella?

Bacteria will multiply daily in water if taps, showers and other outlets are not used. Dangerously high levels of the bacteria could be reached in as little as 10 days.

Are there any published guidance documents?

The Health and Safety Executive has published guidance for landlords, free to download from the HSE website:

www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/faqs.htm

- As a landlord, what are my duties?

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg274part2.pdf

PDF - Paragraphs 2.138-2.146

Why use an Elmhurst member?

Elmhurst Members are all trained, qualified and checked to ensure they are "fit and proper" persons, so you can be assured of excellent service, an accurate, reliable energy assessment and certificate. Elmhurst regularly sample work done by their assessors to ensure it is to the right standard.

All Elmhurst members are required to adhere to a strict Code of Conduct which describes the level of service you can expect. In the unlikely event that a problem occurs, Elmhurst will help you resolve the issue, and if that fails all reports issued with Elmhurst are fully insured.

What Next?

Elmhurst Energy operate an approval scheme where members are required to have recent training in legionella control and can advise on how to meet your legal obligations.

Given the risks to landlords and tenants, arranging a legionella risk assessment would be appropriate to understand the risks within a property.

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