

Legionnaires Disease Risk Assessment & Guidelines

If you are a landlord or letting agent you can carry out a Legionnaire's risk assessment if the property is a single dwelling or a flat with its own water supply (hot and cold).
You must be competent to do so, if not ask someone else to do it.

The person carrying out the assessment should:

- understand the water systems and associated equipment in the property, in order to conclude whether the system is likely to create a risk from exposure to Legionella.
- understand the factors which increase the risk of an outbreak
- understand the measures to reduce the risk of an outbreak
- Read [Legionnaire's disease: A brief guide for duty holders](#)
- Read [HSE - Legionnaires' disease - Risk systems - Hot and cold water systems](#)

The risk assessment process

The practical risk assessment should include a site survey of the water system. Our template is suitable for a basic system and can be adapted as required.

It is important to identify whether:

- water is stored or re-circulated as part of the system (water tanks, dead legs, shower heads and/or long runs of pipe work containing warm water)
- water in some or all parts of the system is between 20 – 45°C (hot water should be stored in any tanks at 60°C)
- there are sources of nutrients such as rust, sludge, scale and organic matters
- conditions are present to encourage bacteria to multiply
- it is possible for water droplets to be produced and, if so, whether they could be dispersed, e.g. showers
- there are parts of the system that are used infrequently e.g. guest bathrooms
- any of the tenants or visitors are more susceptible to infection due to age, health or lifestyle and whether they could be exposed to any contaminated water droplets

Reviewing the risk assessment

If the risk assessment concludes there is no reasonably foreseeable risk or the risks are insignificant and are managed properly to comply with the law, the assessment is complete.

Although no further action may be required, existing controls must be maintained.

The assessment should be reviewed regularly and specifically when there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

Initial risk assessment

Section 1: Assessment Details

Question	Answer
Property address (inc. postcode)	
Date of assessment	
Name of person who carried out assessment	
Describe property type	
Is there any tenant, resident or regular visitor particularly susceptible to Legionella due to age, health or lifestyle?	
Describe type of cold-water system e.g. mains feed or from storage tank	
Describe type of hot water system e.g. mains feed via combi boiler or from storage tank.	

Section 2: Risks

Water outlet temperature

Question	Answer
Is the cold water temperature below 20°C at outlets? If not what is the reason?	
What action will you take and who will be responsible for fixing this?	
Is the hot water temperature above 50°C at outlets? If not what is the reason?	
What action will you take and who will be responsible for fixing this (e.g. lagging pipes or adjusting settings)	

Cold water storage tanks

The water in the tank should be below 20°C and the tank should be insulated to stop the temperature rising above this.

All cold water tanks should have tight fitting lids to prevent debris entering the system. If any debris is in the system it should be drained and thoroughly cleaned. If debris is from corrosion on the tank itself then the tank may need to be replaced.

Question	Answer
Do you have a cold water storage tank? If yes where is it?	
Does the tank have a tight fitting lid?	
Is the water in the tank clean and free from rust, debris, scale and organic matter?	
Is the water in the tank below 20°C?	
Is the tank insulated?	
If you noticed any defects or risks what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Hot water

The temperature setting on the boiler and/or hot water tank should be set and maintained at 60°C. If the temperature is above 60°C this can scald users.

Question	Answer
Is the temperature setting on the boiler and/or hot water tank such that the hot water is heated to and stored at a temperature of 60°C?	
If you noticed any defects or risks what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Outlets used less than once a week (e.g. guest bathroom)

These should be flushed through weekly by running water through the outlet for at least 2 minutes. Aerosol production should be minimised during this process.

Question	Answer
Are there any water outlets that are used less than once per week? If yes where are they?	
If you noticed any defects or risks what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Shower heads

All shower heads should be cleaned, disinfected and descaled at least once every 6 months. Aerosol production should be minimised during this process.

Question	Answer
Are there any showers? If yes where are they?	
If you noticed any defects or risks what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Dead legs and redundant pipework

Sections of pipework which are redundant or owing to the system design and have little/no through flow of water (known as “dead legs”) can allow water to stagnate. Any dead legs in pipework should be removed or the system altered so that water flows through all pipework on a regular basis.

Question	Answer
Are there any dead legs? If yes where are they?	
If you noticed any defects or risks what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Unoccupied properties (e.g. summer holidays, Christmas/New Year)

During periods of inoccupancy all outlets on hot and cold water systems should be flushed through at least once a week for at least 2 minutes. For long periods consider draining the system. Make sure that the system is flushed through when it is re-occupied by running all outlets for at least 2 minutes. Aerosol production should be minimised during this process.

Question	Answer
Is the property left unoccupied? If yes when?	
If you noticed any defects or risks what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Supporting tenants

Landlords should inform tenants of the potential risk of exposure to Legionnaire's disease within domestic properties and its consequences. They should advise on any actions arising from the findings of the risk assessment, where appropriate. Tenants should be told to not adjust the temperature of the hot water and flush through little used outlets for 2 minutes at least once a week. Ask them to inform the landlord or letting agent if they believe:

- the hot water temperature is below 50°C
- the hot water tank/boiler is defective in any way
- the cold-water temperature is above 20°C
- there is debris or discolouration in the hot or cold water

Question	Answer
Has advice been given to the tenants about Legionnaires Disease and their responsibilities to minimise risk? If yes when?	
If you noticed any risks in passing on this information what action will you take and who will be responsible?	

Section 3: Declaration

I declare that the information on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

I will review the assessment at least once a year and specifically when there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

I will any recommendations above are implemented and any existing controls maintained.

Assessor Signature(s):

Date:

Print name:

Review risk assessment

Section 1: Assessment Details

Question	Answer
Property address (inc. postcode)	
Date of assessment	
Name of person who carried out assessment	
Is there any tenant, resident or regular visitor particularly susceptible to Legionella due to age, health or lifestyle?	

Section 2: Changes to risks since the original assessment.

Question	Answer
Has there been a change to the water system or the way it is used by occupants?	
Has there been a change to the use of the building where the system is installed?	
Is there new information available about risks or control measures?	
Does hot water flow from outlets below 50C?	
Does cold water flow from outlets above 20C?	
Are the tenants and their visitors more susceptible due to their age, health or lifestyle?	
Has there been a case of Legionnaires Disease associated with the system?	

Section 3: Declaration

I declare that the information on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

If I answered yes to any of the questions above, a new risk assessment will be carried out. I will review the assessment at least once a year and specifically when there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

Assessor Signature(s):

Date:

Print name: