

LEGIONELLA

What is legionella?

Legionella bacteria occur naturally in locations such as rivers, lakes and reservoirs. It may also be found in:

- Domestic water systems in people's homes
- Places where water droplets may be formed such as showers and taps.
- Hose pipes

The most likely way to be infected by legionella is by inhaling the bacteria when it is carried by water droplets.

Legionella bacteria thrive in any suitable water system, the temperature at which the bacteria will grow is between the temperature range of 27⁰c and 46⁰c. All hot water storage cylinders in our properties include a thermostat which makes sure that the hot water is stored at 60 degrees Celsius.

The risk of infection from exposure in domestic properties is very low but as part of the health and safety regulations we have **A DUTY OF CARE** to our residents to inform and protect you. This guide provides an overview of the practical steps you can take to reduce the risk of being effected by legionella bacteria in water droplets.

Your responsibilities and how to reduce the risk of legionella

- If you feel that your hot water system is not working as it should please contact Wrekin Housing Trust 0300 555 0302 or report it online at: <http://bchg.co.uk/residents-hub/online-services/report-a-repair> An engineer will attend your property to check your system is working correctly.
- Disinfect and descale your shower head every 3 months in addition to normal cleaning process (using a recognised shower head descaling product to remove lime scale build up) If you are unable to do this and you live in one of our sheltered schemes you must inform the scheme manager who will report it to the maintenance department. If you live in one of our other properties and you are unable to do the cleaning you must report this to the maintenance department. (please be aware there might be a service charge for this)
- If you have a shower or water outlet you don't use regularly, you should flush the system at least once a week by running water through it for several minutes. If you don't use your shower head for a two week period we advise you that you should remove the shower head and allow the shower to run for a minimum of 2 minutes, you should disinfect the shower head before re-fitting.
- You should flush garden hoses for several minutes without creating sprays each time they are used. You should flush through external hose pipes every week and if they are not used for two weeks or more you should remove the nozzle or adjust it so it will not produce a spray, you should let the hose run for 2 minutes. You should disinfect the nozzle before re-fitting.

If you would like further information in reference to Legionella and Legionnaire's Disease, information can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk or you can contact us by emailing maintenancedept@bchg.co.uk.