

Covid-19: Hertfordshire Legionella Checklist

If you have water systems (including taps and hoses) in premises that you either own or occupy it is important that you take measures to control Legionella bacteria. If your building was closed or has reduced occupancy during the **coronavirus (COVID-19)** outbreak, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of **Legionnaires'** disease.

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal type of pneumonia, contracted by inhaling airborne water droplets containing Legionella bacteria. Such droplets can be created, for example, by: hot and cold water outlets (including showers and certain tap fittings); hose pipes, atomisers; wet air conditioning plant; and whirlpool or hydrotherapy baths.

If you are a tenant, you may need to contact your landlord to get assurances that general legionella controls are in place and to ascertain if you have any responsibilities regarding checks. Many of the checks can be carried out by nominated personnel on site but you may need to employ the services of a specialist water company in the case of more complex systems or when you are carrying out your risk assessment.

The checklists below outline the controls necessary to control Legionella bacteria and can form part of your risk assessment.

[Appendix 1 Measures to be taken before opening](#)

[Appendix 2 Standard operating procedures \(to be carried out during normal operation\).](#)

Appendix 1 Checklist for premises that have not been occupied for over 1 month

Description	Control	Comments
System should be flushed through	All outlets taps, showers, hoses, irrigation systems turned on for 5 minutes.	It is very important that aerosol is not generated during this process. Where possible shower heads should be dismantled before flushing. If this is not possible place a plastic bag over shower head and secure by means of a rubber band. Cut a hole in the bottom of bag and turn on shower for 5 mins. All showers on system should be flushed through.
Disinfection	Where possible disinfect all parts of system to 50ppm of free chlorine or equivalent biocide (Milton can be used). If it is not possible to disinfect all parts of system, then at least consider removing shower heads and other potential	If it is not possible to carry out this disinfection at least turn showers onto maximum heat. This will kill some of the legionella bacteria in the shower head. Run through for 5 minutes as above ensuring that there is no aerosol generation.

	aerosol generating equipment and soak these in disinfectant.	
Hot water temperatures	Initially heat water to 60°C to all parts of the hot water system. Under normal operation Hot water should flow out at 60°C and ensure return loop is at least at 50°C	Check any heaters/calorifiers are working effectively. Open valves and flush all outlets.
Water storage tanks	Water storage tanks should be drained down and disinfected.	Ensure all tanks have a fitted lid.
Spa pools	Drain down, clean and disinfect entire system	See HSG 282 Control of Legionella in Spa Pools.
Spray Humidifiers, air washers and wet scrubbers	Drain down, clean and disinfect spray humidifiers/air washers and make up tanks including all wetted surfaces, descaling as necessary	See L8 'Control of Legionella Bacteria in water systems' and associated technical guidance
Cooling towers	All systems should recommissioned in accordance HSE's specific technical guidance on cooling towers.	See L8 'Control of Legionella Bacteria in water systems' and associated technical guidance and HSG 274