



# Our guide to water safety in your home

**This information is intended to make all LYHA residents aware of the risks of contracting Legionnaires' disease and how to safely prevent it.**

## **What is Legionnaires' disease?**

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia which can affect anyone.

It is caused by the inhalation of small water droplets from contaminated sources containing legionella bacteria.

## **Your safety and those living with you**

Legionnaires' disease most commonly affects the elderly, or people with existing chest or lung problems. Not everyone exposed to legionella bacteria becomes ill.

Legionnaires' disease is not contagious and you cannot get it from drinking water.

## **Where is legionella found?**

Legionella can be found in all hot and cold water systems. The risk of legionella increases:

- If the water temperature in all or part of the system is between 20-45°, which suits the growth of legionella bacteria.
- Where breathable water droplets are created and dispersed e.g. from showers and taps.
- If water is stored and/or re-circulated e.g. in cold water tanks or hot water heaters.
- There are solid deposits which provide a rich source of nutrients for bacteria growth e.g. rust, sediment or scale. These can commonly be found on shower-heads, filters, cold water storage tanks and water heaters.

**On average, there are around 500 reported cases of Legionnaires' disease in the UK every year.**

## **Legionella and your home**

We will carry out regular servicing of our customers' water tanks where these are situated in common parts of the building where you live.

We will contact you if we need to gain access to your home to do this.

What you can do to minimise your risk

### Please Do .....

- Ensure the cold water temperature runs under 20°C and the hot water runs above 50°C after two minutes of running. If this is not the case, please contact us straight away and do not use your water supply.
- Any water outlet that is not used at least once a week should be run or flushed for two minutes every week.
- Flush through any showers or taps for ten minutes after a period of non-use.
- Keep all shower-heads and taps clean and do not allow limescale, mould or algae to build up.
- Flush toilets with the lid down following a period of non-use.
- Drain hose-pipes after use and keep out of sunlight.

### Please Don't .....

- Change any pre-set water temperatures on the water system in your home. If you are in doubt, please contact us on 0113 278 3335.

## Your Questions Answered

### How and what do I need to do to clean my shower?

We recommended that you dismantle, clean, descale and disinfect your shower every three months.

Make sure you include any removable parts, including shower heads, inserts and hoses.

### How do I know the temperature of the water coming out?

You can get a low cost thermometer from many high street or DIY stores to monitor your water temperature.

As your landlord we will not routinely test the water temperature inside your home. However, if the cold water temperature is above 20°C or the hot water below 50°C, please contact us on 0113 278 3335.

### What are the symptoms of Legionnaires' disease?

The symptoms are very similar to the flu - they include a high temperature, tiredness, fever or chills, muscle pain, headache, nausea or a dry cough.

If you have any concerns about the condition of the water system in your home, please contact us immediately on: **Tel: 0113 278 3335** or **Email: [info@lyha.co.uk](mailto:info@lyha.co.uk)**



**Leeds & Yorkshire**  
Housing Association