

Legionella



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Uniformly Different

The one common factor for the water systems we see is that they are all different. Variations in design, condition and the controls applied combine to produce significant differences in the potential for Legionella bacteria to colonise and grow in what are apparently similar systems. Where conditions exist for the bacteria to grow and for water droplets to be emitted there is the risk of infection by Legionella bacteria.

Steps for Control

Since Legionella has been recognised for more than a quarter of a century, its control is no longer a new issue. Understanding has developed significantly in recent years and the means to prevent infection are now well understood. For properly managed water systems the risk from Legionella can be controlled.

Control measures are required and the UK, Health and Safety Commission has produced an approved code of practice. This document sets out the framework for control and can be summarised as follows:

- Appoint a Responsible Manager.
- Identify and Assess Sources of Risk.
- Prepare a Scheme for Preventing or Controlling the Risk.
- Implement and Manage the Precautions.
- Keep Records of the Precautions.

In all cases site specific risk assessment is the starting point for identifying systems presenting a risk from Legionella and determines the control measures required.

The Responsible Manager is key to the control programme, being responsible for putting in place the risk assessment; ensuring it remains valid; implementing the precautions; and ensuring that appropriate records are kept. The Responsible Manager should have sufficient authority, competence and knowledge of the installation to ensure that all operational procedures are carried out in a timely and efficient manner.

Not Just Cooling Towers

Cooling towers are readily associated by most people with outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease. The majority of infections by Legionella are however sourced from domestic hot and cold water systems. Furthermore with systems as diverse as humidified food chiller cabinets, water features and spa

baths having been shown to be the source of past outbreaks it is imperative that all site water systems are considered as part of the risk assessment.

First Environment has undertaken Legionella risk assessment for premises as diverse as shops, offices, airports, hotels, refineries, ships and even aeroplanes. From single buildings to significant property portfolios, we have quantified risks and devised control programmes for many client organisations.

Code of Conduct Association

The Code of Conduct Association for Legionella Service Providers is an industry body established to provide purchasers with a level of assurance that the advice or treatment services procured will meet expected standards. First Environment has been a registered service provider with the association since inception holding Tier 1 status.

First Environment Provides

First Environment provides the technical expertise to assist client organisations in establishing detailed risk assessment for all site water systems and associated support. Including

- Risk assessment of water systems for the risk from Legionella.
- Identification of areas for improvement action.
- Design of suitable control programmes.
- Establishment of record systems.
- Preparation of corporate policies.
- Analysis and investigation.
- Independent monitoring and audit.

As an independent company First Environment is able to consider all available options and assist our clients in implementing the most appropriate Legionella risk control programme for their particular location.



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