



Health and Safety Standard For Water Quality

1. [Scope](#)
2. [Purpose](#)
3. [Definitions](#)
4. [Managing Property Compliance & Remedial Actions](#)
5. [Responsibilities](#)
 - [5.1 Responsible Person](#)
 - [5.2 The Head of Property](#)
 - [5.2.1 General Management of Water Quality](#)
 - [5.2.2 Water Risk Assessment](#)
 - [5.2.3. Written Scheme of Control](#)
 - [5.2.4 Action in the Event of Failure of Routine Test Results](#)
 - [5.2.5 Action in the Event of Identifying Legionella Bacterium](#)
 - [5.2.6. Record Keeping](#)
 - [5.3 The Property Manager](#)
 - [5.4 The Project/Scheme Manager](#)
 - [5.4.1. Voids/Vacant Properties](#)
 - [5.4.2 What Residents should know](#)
 - [5.5 Employees](#)
6. [Document Control](#)
7. [Appendices](#)
 - [Appendix 1 Water Risk Assessments](#)
 - [Appendix 2 Written Scheme of Controls](#)
 - [Appendix 3 Water Maintenance](#)

Related H&S Policies/Standards

Health & Safety Policy

Accident/Incident (Reporting & Investigating)

Selecting & Managing Contractors

* Related policy & Standards are available within the  [Health & Safety Management System](#)

1. Scope

This Water Quality Standard is applicable to all properties under the control of The Charity where any system, or portion of system, uses or stores water. It is to be implemented by nominated managers and staff (including agency staff) fulfilling the responsibilities outlined below.

Note: The design and build, (including refurbishment) of water systems is not covered by this Standard.

2. Purpose

Health and Safety Standards form part of The Charity's Safety Management System and outlines the responsibilities and arrangements for assessing and mitigating risks

associated with the growth of microbiological organisms in water systems, including legionella as defined in point 3 below.

This standard will assist The Charity comply with current legislation and guidance, such as:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- [The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems \(L8 4th edition\)](#)

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Standard, the following definitions will apply:

Legionnaire's disease: a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing the organism legionella.

L8/ACoP: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) and guidance that apply to the control of legionella bacteria in any work premises and/or activities.

Water Risk Assessment: A specific risk assessment, in accordance with the L8 ACoP and industry best practice standards, which assesses the risk of exposure to legionella bacteria from work activities and water systems in a building or premise and identifies any measures necessary to control the identified risks.

Written Scheme of Control: Is a risk management document, identifying the measures required to control the water systems and reduce the risk of exposure to legionella bacteria and is used as a record of monitoring actions taken.

4. Managing Property Compliance & Remedial Actions

Effectively managing property safety is vital to ensure the safety of staff, residents and visitors and demonstrates a positive approach to health and safety.

External contractors are engaged as the competent persons to undertake specific compliance inspections, surveys or assessments, in line with The Charity's Health & Safety Standard for 'Selecting & Managing Contractors'

The procedures for managing the compliance programme and resulting remedial actions that arise from the inspections, assessments and/or surveys is available in the [health and safety guidance folder](#) on The Charity's intranet site.

5. Responsibilities

Everyone has some degree of responsibility with all health and safety issues. In order to manage water quality and the risks from legionella in the properties for which The Charity is responsible, the following specific responsibilities have been identified:

5.1 Responsible Person - Group Director of Property & Places

The Charity's nominated Responsible Person for water quality is the Group Director of Property & Places, who shall have overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation

of this Standard and will provide adequate resources for the Head of Property to fulfil their responsibilities and by monitoring the overall compliance.

5.2 Head of Property

The Head of Property has responsibility and control of maintenance and repair activities for The Charity's premises and must assist the Director of Property & Places in fulfilling the duties of this Water Quality Standard.

Whilst the Head of Property may delegate responsibilities to competent person(s) to assist them with their duties, they have overall responsibility for the management and operational implementation of this Standard and Legionella Risk Management Procedures to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees and other relevant persons are not exposed to the risks associated with legionella by having adequate arrangements and controls in place. They must:

- a) Ensure Legionella Risk Management Procedures are in place to support the operational implementation of this Standard. To include implementation of recommendations arising from legionella risk assessments (referred to as water risk assessments), and regular water hygiene programme – as outlined in points 5.2.1 to 5.2.5 below.
- b) Ensure the Property Managers and Project/Scheme Managers are aware of and competent to fulfil their responsibilities as outlined within this Water Quality Standard.
- c) Ensure appropriate information, instruction, training, and supervision is provided to identified employees
- d) Ensure suitable arrangements are in place for 5.2.1 to 5.2.5 below:

5.2.1 General Management of Water Quality

- i. Engage a competent Water Quality Specialist, who are members of the Legionella Control Association, is appointed.
- ii. The requirements this Standard are incorporated into the lease conditions for premises leased to or from a third party.
- iii. That all records of maintenance, tests, inspections, water risk assessment, and system alterations etc, are retained electronically, for at least five years, and are readily available to the relevant Project/Scheme Manager.

5.2.2 Water Risk Assessment

- a) The competent Water Quality Specialist is to undertake a risk assessment for each premise under the control of The Charity.
- b) Contracts and/or agreements for all water risk assessments must include the requirement that all significant findings are submitted in writing, with suitable recommendations within five-working days, unless mutually agreed otherwise.
- c) All water risk assessment and associated recommendations must be uploaded to the property database at the earliest opportunity, to ensure it is available to the Head of Property, Head of Health and Safety, Property Manager, and Project/Scheme Manager.

- d) To ensure the recommendations within the water risk assessments are reviewed and appropriate action taken to implement within the recommended timeframes.
- e) To ensure the Project/Scheme Managers and other appropriate persons are made aware of the arrangements to implement the recommendations from the water risk assessments.
- f) The water risk assessment is formally reassessed/reviewed within two years, or prior to the scheduled review (or informal review) if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid, such as:
 - i. Significant changes to a water system or its use, or a building/premises use as identified by the Head of Property.
 - ii. The availability of significant new information about risks and/or control measures
 - iii. When the assessment of a failure of a routine test result indicates that the control measures are not adequate or effective
 - iv. A case of legionnaires' disease is associated with the system
- g) Ensure that the water risk assessment includes:
 - i. The name of the competent person conducting the assessment.
 - ii. The assessment date and date it must be reviewed by.
 - iii. A description of the water system, including measurement and assessment of the building/premise water storage capacity
 - iv. Record or monitoring results and any potential risk sources and any controls currently in place and any additional controls required.
 - v. Assessment/summary of trends and out of specification sample results since the previous assessment and /or changes to the water systems or their use
 - vi. A documented audit of the water treatment records
 - vii. A formal report of the results of the review to the Head of Property, Head of Health and Safety, Property Manager, and relevant Project/Scheme Manager, within an agreed, reasonably practicable, timescale and format.

5.2.3. Written Scheme of Control

- a) A [Legionella written scheme of control](#) is based on HSE's HSG274 guidance, detailing how to manage risks from bacteria in water systems. It must include up-to-date system schematics, showing the layout of the plant or system including any parts temporarily out of use and its safe operation; defined responsibilities for specific control measures (e.g., temperature monitoring, cleaning), routine maintenance, and emergency procedures
- b) Where there is a foreseeable risk of legionnaire's disease, the Water Quality Specialist must produce a written scheme for controlling the risks and supporting procedures that comply with this Standard and clearly identify responsibilities:
 - i. The precautions and checks and their frequency, to be carried out to ensure the written scheme is effective - including water sampling, water temperature, tank inspection and cleaning as necessary.
 - ii. Remedial action to be taken if the scheme is shown not to be effective
- c) The written scheme of controls is to be updated whenever circumstances arise that could affect the scheme's ability to control risks. For example:
 - i. Departures from the planned maintenance/cleaning schedules
 - ii. Changes in the process

- iii. Staff/contractor changes
 - iv. Intermittent use of plant
 - v. Unusual weather conditions
- d) The Water Quality Specialist is to implement and maintain effective controls and conduct the routine testing and monitoring schedule (with the exception of the weekly flushing of infrequently used outlets) and act upon the results, to include
- i. **Weekly: Infrequently used outlets**
 - A routine flushing regime must be arranged by the Property Managers for infrequently used outlets.
 - ii. **Monthly: Water Temperature Monitoring**
 - The temperature of hot and cold sentinel taps to be monitored and recorded. All hot and cold-water outlets should be checked of intervals not exceeding twelve months.
 - iii. **3-monthly: Showers**
 - Dismantle, clean, descale and disinfect shower heads and hoses.
 - iv. **Annually: Storage tanks/cisterns**
 - Visual inspection, to identify build-up of debris/scale and biofilms and clean and chlorinate following unsatisfactory inspections.
 - Sampling of each tank/cistern if the monitoring regime or annual inspection shows the system is contaminated or not under temperature control and the sample analysed for Total Viable Count of bacteria and legionella species.
 - Check and record the tank water temperature remote from ball valve and the mains temperature at the ball valve (as indicated by the temperature profiling).
 - v. **Annually: Calorifiers**
 - A visual check of the internal surfaces of each calorifier for signs of scale or sludge. Clean as necessary and review frequency of future inspections based on level of fouling.
 - If internal inspection is not possible or practicable, each calorifier should be purged to a suitable drain point and the condition of the drain water assessed for clarity and level of debris.
 - Flushing may be required if this is excessive. The frequency of the purge may need to be increased depending on the rate and level of fouling. The flow and return temperature from each calorifier should be monitored and recorded monthly.
 - vi. **Annual: Sampling**
 - A representative number of samples should be taken from the distribution outlets if the monitoring regime or inspection of the tanks and calorifiers show the system is contaminated or not under temperature control.
 - The samples should be analysed for Total Viable Count of bacteria and Legionella species.
 - vii. **Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMV) - Annually**
 - TMV's must have regular routine maintenance carried out considering any manufacturer's recommendation as protection against scald risks.

- e) The Water Quality Specialist must obtain written permission from the Head of Property prior to any water system alteration or commissioning any new or out of service water system.
- f) All alterations to existing water systems or new systems must comply with BS 6700:2006.

5.2.4 Action in the Event of Routine Test Failure

- a) Appropriate arrangements to ensure the responsible person, or an authorised deputy can always be contacted must be in place. And should be readily available within the Legionella Risk Management Procedures, which support the operational implementation of this Standard
- b) Where routine tests are considered a "failure", the Water Quality Specialist must notify:
 - i. The Head of Property
 - ii. The Property Manager
 - iii. The Project/Scheme Manager
- c) The immediate advice of the Water Quality Specialist will be sought, in the event of any situation arising within the terms of this Standard likely to be hazardous to health (including any routine test that failed to meet set criteria).

5.2.5 Action in the Event of Identifying Legionella Bacterium in System

- a) If the Water Quality Specialist, identifies legionella bacterium in any system, they must notify:
 - i. The Head of Property
 - ii. The Head of Health and Safety
 - iii. The Property Manager
 - iv. The Project/Scheme Manager
- b) The Water Quality Specialist must fully assess the impact of any legionella contamination and all known contaminated areas, both in terms of plant and equipment imposing risk of human ingestion such (showers, taps etc) and ensure they are physically isolated
- c) A course of action must be agreed with the Head of Property and Water Quality Specialist to cleanse the system of the bacterium.
- d) Arrangements must be made for the contaminated area to be sampled and retested after cleansing.
- e) An investigation must be conducted to identify the probable cause of the contamination and any remedial work required to minimise the risk of recurrence.
- f) Any remedial works must be agreed and completed within an agreed timescale.
- g) The contaminated areas must be added to, if not already included in, the established routine testing and monitoring schedule
- h) Cases of legionnaire's disease are reportable under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) when a doctor notifies the employer and the employee's current job involves work on or near cooling systems which are in the workplace and use water; or work on water service systems located in the workplace which are likely to be a source.

5.2.6 Record Keeping

Records of any monitoring inspection, test or check carried out, and the dates, should be retained for at least five years. Records should include details about:

- a) The appointed responsible person(s) for conducting the risk assessment, and/or water hygiene maintenance and implementing the written scheme.
- b) any significant findings of the risk assessment.
- c) The written scheme of controls and its implementation.
- d) Details about the status of operation of the water system, ie in use/not in use.
- e) The results of any monitoring inspection, test or check carried out, and the dates.

5.3 Property Manager's Responsibilities

Property Managers will support (and deputise, where necessary) the Head of Property, in fulfilling the responsibilities of this Standard for the properties within their region. They must liaise with the Head of Property regarding any issues with the programme of water risk assessments and:

- a) Ensure the water risk assessments remain current/valid.
- b) Undertake any relevant training identified as necessary by the Head of Property.
- c) Ensure any scheme of controls issued by the water specialist are implemented.
- d) Liaise with the Project/Scheme Manager and other appropriate persons regarding:
 - i. The programme of water risk assessments for the relevant premise
 - ii. The implementation of the recommendations within the relevant water risk assessments
 - iii. The routine water hygiene inspections and testing
- e) Support the Head of Property when the water specialists have identified any issue with a water system.
- f) Ensure the routine inspections and testing are recorded in The Charity's database.
- g) Ensure there is a procedure in place and implemented for weekly flushing of infrequently used outlets (such as outside taps) and properties that are expected to be vacant/void for over seven days, for a minimum of five minutes – [see 5.4.1.](#)
- h) Liaise with the Head of Property and the Health and Safety when notified of identified cases of legionnaire's disease.

5.4 Project/Scheme Manager's Responsibilities

The Project/scheme manager must support the Property Manager and the Head of Property in the day-to-day implementation of this standard and shall, within their area of responsibility:

- a) Inform residents of steps they can take regarding water quality – [see 5.4.2](#)
- b) Cooperate with the Water Quality Specialist with regards to inspections, tests, and maintenance activities
- c) Undertake any relevant training identified as necessary by the Head of Property.
- d) Liaise with the Property Manager and other appropriate persons regarding concerns regarding:
 - i. The water risk assessment for the property.
 - ii. The implementation of recommendations from the water risk assessments
 - iii. The written scheme of control

- iv. The routine water hygiene inspections and testing.
- v. Records of maintenance, tests, inspections, risk assessments and system alterations for the premise.
- vi. Any significant changes to a water system or its use, or a building/premise use.

5.4.1 Vacant/Void Properties

It is important that water is not allowed to stagnate within the water system, so there should be careful management of properties left vacant for extended periods. To ensure the risks are managed during periods of non-occupancy, a suitable flushing regime must be implemented if a property is to remain vacant for longer than one week – see 5.2.3(d).

5.4.2 What Residents Should Know

Shower heads have the means of creating and dispersing water droplets (aerosols) which may be inhaled, causing a risk of exposure to legionella. Whilst showers that are used regularly and instantaneous electric showers (because they are generally cold water-fed and heat only small volumes of water) reduce those risks, residents should be advised

- To regularly clean and disinfect showerheads within their accommodation.
- Not to adjust any control measures put in place i.e. adjusting the temperature setting of the clarifier.
- How to report any problems with the system, such as if the hot water is not heating properly etc, so that appropriate action can be taken.

6. Managing Compliance Programme & Remedial Actions

Effectively managing property remedial actions is vital to ensure the safety of staff, residents and visitors and demonstrates a positive approach to health and safety.

External contractors are engaged as the competent persons to undertake specific compliance inspections, surveys or assessments, in line with the 'Selecting & Managing Contractors Standard'

The procedures for managing the compliance programme and resulting remedial actions that arise from the inspections, assessments and/or surveys is available in the [health and safety guidance folder](#) on The Charity's intranet site.

7. Employees

Employees are responsible for taking reasonable care of themselves and others that may be affected by their actions or lack of actions and must:

- a) Not attempt to tamper with the water system, unless competent to do so and instructed to do so by the Head of Property or the Property Manager.
- b) Notify the Project/Scheme Manager of any faults they notice or are informed of,
- c) Cooperate in any health surveillance in line with The Charity's requirements

8. Document Control

This document is maintained, updated, and controlled through The Charity's intranet site. Documents printed from this site and kept as a hard copy should not be considered as current when referred to later.