



Advice on Legionnaires' Disease

Legionella is a bacteria that lives naturally in water and is found in puddles, ponds anywhere where there is water it is also found in earth and even compost heaps. Normally it is harmless and doesn't cause problems.

However when given the right conditions and environment it can breed and become dangerous and even lethal to us.

These conditions and environments include hot water systems, cold water systems, air conditioning units and jacuzzis and swimming pools. It is especially harmful to us when it is transmitted as air borne water vapour and causes flu like symptoms.

The two things that Legionella bacteria need to grow and reproduce are:

- a water temperature of 20-45C (68-113F)
- impurities in the water that the bacteria can use for food – such as rust, algae and lime scale

Although rare, Legionnaires' disease has also come from contaminated showers, sprinkler systems and spas.

We advise you conduct a risk assessment of your own water systems to ensure that the risk of legionella growing is minimised and that you don't inadvertently provide the environment needed for it to grow. Good hygiene and cleaning practises are essential but these simple steps will help too.

- Cold water systems should provide cold water as a temperature of below 20c
- Hot water systems should provide hot water at a temperature of above 45c; it is best practise that normal hot water should be above 60c anyway.
- Showerheads and taps are regularly cleaned and free of lime scale, rust etc
- Water storage tanks should be clean and rust free
- Swimming pools and jacuzzis should be regularly tested anyway for a range of bacteria and be appropriately treated with chlorine/chemicals as advised.
- If bathrooms are left unused for a period of time the hot and cold water should be run through the taps and showers before they are re-let to new customers.
- And of course following good food hygiene practises at all times

Further advice can be found on the NHS website

www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Legionnaires-disease/Pages/Introduction.aspx

and the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/

Please do contact us if you need any additional help or guidance on 01743 261919 or email us on enquiries@shropshiretourism.co.uk