

Factsheet 1

Legionella Risk Management in Educational Establishments



Whilst children are at much lower risk of contracting Legionellosis, rare cases have been known, and if any child suffers from a compromised immune system through respiratory problems, diabetes etc., then the risk does increase, as it does for adults. However, it's not just children in schools and teachers, parents and visitors are at a higher risk level.

We are all aware that there are schools in poor states due to reduced funding for building maintenance, many are old and the water systems will have been altered over time leaving lengths of redundant pipework where water can stagnate and bacteria proliferate. Legionella does not just thrive in old buildings though, the bacteria are omnipresent in all manmade water systems, despite utility company treatment of mains water.

Education facilities have an additional risk in that for periods of time during school holidays most of the system will not be used. This means that water is not circulating through the pipework and can be susceptible to temperature change. Where cold water temperature rises and hot water temperatures fall they can slip into the critical range of between 20-45°C which is ideal for bacterial growth. If there are any nutrients in the system – sludge, debris, corrosion etc., bacteria will feed off this, it particularly thrives on rust.

THE LAW: Under Health and Safety at Work Regulations it is incumbent upon the building's owners to ensure that a Risk Assessment is undertaken, that identified risks are removed or mitigated to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) and that monitoring and maintenance of the systems (often more than one) is carried out routinely and logged as being done. It is common now for courts to issue fines into 6 and 7 figures where Legionnaires' cases occur, and even where there is no bacterium in the system, if it is not being managed properly.

LEGIONELLOSIS: *Legionella pneumophila*, the most serious strain, has a mortality rate between 10-12%. Those who do survive are left very unwell. It is a debilitating disease, often leaving people deaf or blind, or with lost limbs because over the course of the illness they have gone into coma or they have suffered brain damage and it has affected their entire systems. Recovery can take 12 – 18 months. Often people do not ever recover fully due to complications.

PEACE OF MIND: An Aqua Legionella Risk Assessment will identify and assess the source of any risk, take samples for laboratory analysis and provide you with a complete 'toolkit' to prevent and/or control that risk. We help you to implement and manage the control programme and provide you with the means to keep records. More than that though, we are always here to offer guidance and answer questions - our support doesn't stop when we provide you with the report - which consists of...



1. Detailed Risk Assessment including schematics required by law
2. Management Summary Report - what you need to do in plain language
3. A Logbook based on your system
4. All of this in electronic format, plus legislation and guidance on a disc
5. A framed Certificate of Compliance and peace of mind!