

**Legionella (Water Management) Policy**

**Original - January 2024**

**Updated – September 2024**

**Reviewed Annually**

# Policy for the Management of Legionella Risks

In recognition of its statutory duty under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HASWA), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). Tree of Life undertakes to identify and assess the risk of legionella infection to its employees, students and visitors arising from the manner in which the water systems, over which Tree of Life has day to day control, are operated, managed or designed. Tree of Life undertakes to at all times comply with the Health and Safety Executive’s Approved Code of Practice L8 (Fourth edition), Legionnaires’ disease: The control of legionella bacteria in water systems (ACOP) and HSG274. We will prevent its employees, building users and any person it owes a duty of care from respiratory exposure to legionella bacteria within its premises so far as is reasonably practicable.

**Understanding Legionnaires’ Disease**

Legionellosis is the term used for infections caused by Legionella pneumophila and other bacteria from the family Legionellaceae. Legionnaires’ disease is a pneumonia that principally affects those who are susceptible due to age (over 50), illness, immunosuppression, smoking, lack of fitness etc. and may be fatal. Legionellae can also cause less serious illnesses which can affect all people. Infection is attributed to inhaling legionella bacteria, in water droplets or aerosol which are small enough to penetrate deeply into the lung. Symptoms include myalgia and headache followed by fever and chills. Infection with legionella bacteria can be fatal in approximately 12% of reported cases. On average there are approximately 400 reported cases of Legionnaires’ disease each year in the UK. Legionella bacteria are widespread in natural sources of water. They may enter man-made systems where, under favourable conditions, they can multiply. Legionella bacteria can survive under a wide variety of environmental conditions and have been found in water at temperatures between 6°C and 60°C. Water temperatures in the range 20°C to 45°C seem to favour growth. The organisms do not appear to multiply below 20°C and will not survive above 60°C. They can remain dormant in cool water and multiply only when water temperatures reach a suitable level. Legionella bacteria also require a supply of nutrients to multiply. The presence of sludge, scale, sediment, algae and biofilm play an important role in harbouring and providing favourable conditions in which the legionella bacteria may grow. If water droplets are created and dispersed into the atmosphere from systems containing Legionella bacteria, then people in the vicinity may be at risk.

A number of factors are required to create a risk of legionellosis:-

* The presence of legionella bacteria
* Conditions suitable for the proliferation of those bacteria
* A means of creating and disseminating an aerosol
* The presence of susceptible individuals

Conditions favouring the proliferation of legionella are:- • Moisture

* Temperature between 20°C and 45°C
* Presence of nutrients and biofilm

The elimination of as many of these conditions as possible forms the basis for control of the risk. The prevention of risk requires elimination of the possibility of exposure to water spray.

The Responsible Person shall:-

Accept management responsibility for all aspects of Legionella control. Ensure suitable arrangements are in place to identify all water systems managed by Tree of Life and assess them for the potential risk of legionella infection. Establish suitable arrangements to manage identified risk areas, including identification of management responsibilities, training and competence. Ensure that adequate resources are available to address any needs identified in the risk assessments and that the risk assessments are acted upon. Review the risk assessments and remedial measures implemented every two years. Ensure that the established procedures are brought to the attention of all persons affected by them. Appoint the Statutory Compliance Officer (Asbestos & Legionella) as ‘Deputy Responsible Person’ to implement and coordinate the procedures for the prevention of Legionnaires’ disease.

The Deputy Responsible Persons shall:-

Arrange for Risk Assessments to be carried out on water systems, for each water source within the Tree of Life premises. The Risk Assessments shall be reviewed every two years and when the original assessment may no longer be valid. Keep permanent records of all Risk Assessments. A copy shall be held in the on-site water services logbook. The records will be kept for 5 years and will be readily available for inspection. Put in place water temperature monitoring, cleaning, disinfection and certification routines on water systems. Arrange for any water temperature monitoring, cleaning, disinfection, certification routines and non-conformance to be fully recorded. Arrange for remedial work to be carried out as highlighted by water temperature nonconformance reports when the control limits are exceeded, where applicable. Keep permanent records of all the remedial work in the on-site water services logbook, where applicable, with the Risk Assessments. The records will be kept for 5 years and will be readily available for inspection.

# Water Services Monitoring

The Deputy Responsible Persons shall put in place water temperature monitoring, cleaning, disinfection and certification routines on water systems. In order to comply with the ACOP it may be necessary to employ outside contractors with specific training and expertise in water temperature monitoring. During the tender process, a questionnaire will be used to determine the Contractors’: resources, experience, expertise, trade body membership, insurance cover, quality system, and number of staff, their experience and qualifications.

The following tasks shall be completed at the stated frequencies:-

Cold water tank inspection - annually

Cold water tank certification - annually

Cold water tank disinfection - as required

Shower disinfection and descale - as required

Shower inspection certification - quarterly

Temperature checks sentinel\* hot taps - monthly to be >50°C after 1 minute sentinel\* cold taps - monthly to be <20°C after 2 minutes

Other taps on rotational basis – annually