

# A guide to water hygiene in your home

This leaflet provides information about Legionella bacteria, what it is, where it can be found and how to prevent it. ccha has an obligation to ensure our residents are aware of the possible causes so you can identify any problems easily and report any concerns to us.

## WHAT IS LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE?

Legionnaires' disease is a form of pneumonia, a serious lung infection, caused by Legionella bacteria. Anyone can catch it, but most sufferers tend to be over 50 years old. You may be at a greater risk if you have a weak immune system, an underlying health condition, or smoke. Legionnaires' disease must be treated with a course of antibiotics when contracted.

There is a very low risk that Legionella bacteria can develop in stored or stagnant water however water stored between 20°C and 45°C provides the best breeding conditions for Legionella bacteria. The bacteria won't multiply in temperatures below 20°C and can't survive above 60°C.

## HOW DO PEOPLE GET LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE?

Legionnaires' disease comes from breathing in bacteria contained in small droplets of water, like spray from a shower or taps. It isn't spread directly from person to person, and you can't get it from drinking water. Legionella bacteria can be found in most water systems, but does not usually cause any problems.

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP TO KEEP BACTERIA NUMBERS LOW AND PREVENT DISEASE:

1. If you have been on holiday or away from your home for some time, run your taps and shower heads (remove shower head to reduce spray) for a couple of minutes to flush through any stagnant water.
2. Close toilet lid and flush your toilet a couple of times to circulate fresh water through the cistern.
3. Descale your taps and shower heads at least every three months. Any household descaling product available from supermarkets will do this.
4. Make sure taps that are not regularly used, such as taps in gardens, are flushed on a weekly basis.
5. Hot water in tanks must be kept at a minimum of 60°C so please do not interfere with the thermostat on your hot water tank
6. Report any concerns about low hot water temperatures, low water flow, defective taps, or any unusual substance flowing from your taps to us on 0208 680 7532 or email [maintenanceinbox@ccha.biz](mailto:maintenanceinbox@ccha.biz)