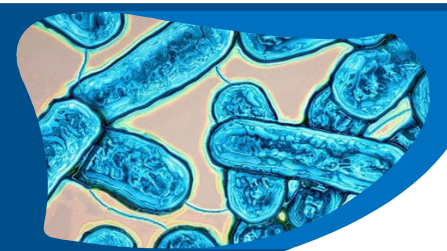


Toolbox Talk

Legionnaires Disease



What?

- Legionella can cause disease when a water system becomes contaminated, an aerosol is generated and the bacteria inhaled, infecting the body
- Legionnaires disease has an incubation period of 2 to 10 days with initial symptoms of high fever, chills, headache, muscular pain, dry cough, breathlessness, diarrhoea, vomiting and confusion
- It is often mistaken for flu as the symptoms are very similar
- Medical advice should be sought immediately

Why?

- Legionnaires disease can cause serious illness and death
- The bacteria is found in poorly maintained water systems used in many applications including showers, spray taps, cooling towers, humidifiers, running taps, spa baths, water features and car washes
- Be vigilant when working on or near this equipment for poorly maintained systems
- Legionella is often found where there is a build up of sludge, sediment, scale, bio film and corrosion deposits
- Legionella can survive in pipework, dead legs and infrequently used outlets like emergency showers
- This is why it is very important that systems are regularly cleaned, flushed and dosed to ensure the proliferation of legionella bacteria is prevented
- Legionella grows best in temperatures between 20 °C and 45 °C
- As the duty holder, sites are required to manage their water systems and arrange for a risk assessment and water treatment programme to be conducted by a competent person
- Refer to Publication: 8-50 The Prevention of Legionnaires' Disease



Do



- Properly assess the risk of contamination
- Ensure the site has a water risk assessment and treatment programme
- Report water systems that are not clean where there is a building up of soiling
- Ensure sentinel (start and end) taps are running below 20 °C and above 50 °C, on a monthly basis
- Ensure infrequently used outlets are flushed every week

Don't



- Ignore the symptoms of Legionella
- Ignore the build up of scale, sludge, sediment, biofilm and corrosion