FALKIRK COUNCIL

LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE POLICY

Reviewed January 2013
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Appendix 1: Legionella Emergency Plan
PART 1

1.1 POLICY STATEMENT

Falkirk Council is committed to maintaining the health and safety of its employees and service users. The Council recognises the health risks associated with the presence of Legionella bacteria in water systems. Although the risk of Legionella infection in water systems in Falkirk Council properties is minimal, due to the design of the water systems installed in these properties, the Council is required to have suitable management arrangements in place in accordance with legislation.

1.1.2 The recommendations provided in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance on Legionnaires’ Disease Approved Code of Practice L8 and the findings of the HSE "Report of the public meetings into the legionella outbreak in Barrow-in-Furness, August 2002" have been adopted in this Policy. All Falkirk Council workplaces, leased commercial premises and sheltered housing properties will comply with the standards defined in this policy. In addition, Housing Services, in line with national best practice, will ensure that domestic systems in Council houses comply with the standards defined in this Policy. The Council will ensure that management systems and monitoring programmes are in place to control all identified risks from Legionella and that the communication of any alterations to these control measures is effectively managed.

Part 2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Legionnaires Disease is caused as a result of water borne bacteria being inhaled when it is suspended in small water droplets, normally as an aerosol or spray. It is commonly found in natural and artificial water systems and only presents a risk when the bacteria are allowed to proliferate (multiply) due to water temperatures being between 20°C – 45°C (optimum temperature for growth is at 35°C - 37°C) and where other favourable conditions exist, such as:

a) Areas within a water system where water can stagnate, i.e. dead legs and rarely used showers or taps, etc.

b) Where sludge, scale, rust, algae and organic matter has accumulated in a water system, i.e. water pipes, storage tanks etc.

The bacteria may cause a number of diseases, the most serious being a potentially fatal form of pneumonia which can affect anyone, but principally will affect those persons who’s health is vulnerable because of age, illness, smoking etc.

Part 3

3.1 SCOPE

This Policy applies to the following types of Falkirk Council premises:

- Council Workplaces including Residential Homes;
• Council Housing including Sheltered Housing;
• Leased Commercial Properties.

3.2 A Legionella Management Plan must be developed for water systems in the above premises. The Legionella Management Plan will take into account the specific risks relevant to each type of water system and the risks to individuals who use the facility or who may be in close proximity to the facility. Further information on the development of a Legionella Management Plan is provided in section 4 below.

3.3 The types of water systems defined by the HSE that require to be managed by a Legionella Management Plan are as follows:

• Water systems that incorporate a cooling tower;
• Water systems that incorporate evaporative condensers;
• Hot and cold water systems;
• Other plant and systems containing water which are likely to exceed 20°C and which may release a spray or aerosol during operation or when being maintained.

3.4 Falkirk Council does not have any properties that have the higher risk systems i.e. water systems incorporating a cooling tower, or water systems incorporating evaporative condensers. Falkirk Council therefore has no Notifiable Devices under the “Notification of Cooling Towers & Evaporating Condensers Regulations 1992”. The Council is still, however, required to develop legionella management plans for water systems in every premises that they are responsible for to minimise the risk form potential exposure to legionella.

Part 4

4.1 LEGIONELLA MANAGEMENT PLANS

Relevant Heads of Service will ensure that a Legionella Management Plan is developed for each of the 3 types of Council premises as follows:

• The Head of Roads & Design Services – Council Workplaces, including residential homes;
• Head of Housing Management Services – Council housing including Sheltered Housing;
• Head of Economic Development and Environmental Services – Leased Commercial Properties.

4.2 Each of these Heads of Service will nominate a manager as the “Responsible Person” for the development and implementation of the Legionella Management Plans. Each Management Plan will detail the management systems and procedures to meet the criteria for controlling risks from Legionella as identified in this policy.

4.3 Falkirk Council has adopted a management system based on the HSE’s Guidance on
Legionnaires’ Disease (L8) which means that the water system in each property must be assessed to determine the level of risk from Legionella and to identify control measures required to minimise risk. Each Legionella Management Plan must include the following:

- The criteria used to determine the competency of team members or other key personnel/contractors in Legionella management
- A list of premises covered by the Management Plan together with details of the types of water systems
- Procedures to ensure that the schematic diagrams of the water systems are updated if alterations to systems are made
- A programme for carrying out and reviewing Legionella Risk Assessments
- A monitoring programme for each premise as determined by the outcome of the Legionella Risk Assessment for each premises
- A procedure for the review of risk assessment following any material alteration to the water system or where there is reason to believe that the risk assessment is no longer valid
- Details of how any requirement for biological testing, chemical dosing or the taking of independent water samples will be managed, if identified as necessary by the risk assessments
- A procedure which will ensure that risk assessments are undertaken prior to any work being carried out on a water system and how it will be identified that specialist contractors require to undertake the work
- Details of how the results of any testing will be recorded, both centrally and in Premises Managers Handbooks
- An emergency plan/procedure to be implemented in the event an outbreak/suspected outbreak of Legionella
- Training arrangements for all persons who are named in the Legionella Management Plan as having defined roles
- A quality control procedure for monitoring Legionella maintenance, dosing schemes and biological monitoring programmes.

Part 5

5.1 RISK ASSESSMENTS

Legionella Risk Assessments will be undertaken by a competent person(s) i.e. a person who has been trained and is familiar with the design and functioning of water systems and with the potential risks from Legionella. The completed risk assessment will define the appropriate control measures to be implemented to reduce the risks and recommend the appropriate monitoring regime.

5.2 The risk assessment must include design schematics of the water system and identify areas where there are problems with design and/or potential for contamination etc. It should incorporate evidence such as line drawings or photographs. It will also identify action required to comply with the recommendations of the HSE’s Guidance on Legionnaires Disease (L8) and it will also identify frequency for monitoring.

5.3 The Premise Manager’s Handbook will provide a framework for monitoring and recording the required Legionella checks on the water quality in the premises.
Part 6

6.1 QUALITY CONTROL

Managers nominated as “Responsible Persons” must ensure that quality control checks are carried out on a minimum of 5% of work undertaken by contractors on Legionella Management systems. These checks should be carried out on 10% of the work of new contractors until the manager is satisfied that the contractor has demonstrated competence in this area. The Responsible Persons will determine the requirements for quality control in Legionella Management Plans and the arrangements made for independent consultants to carry these out. The quality control checks should consider the Legionella Risk Assessment’s findings in critical areas such as the maintenance of water systems, chemical dosing or biological testing.

Part 7

7.1 SPECIALIST CONTRACTORS/WORKERS

All contractors appointed to undertake work for Falkirk Council must be competent heating/water engineering contractors and must undertake to work in accordance with the Water Treatment Companies, “Code of Conduct for the Control of Legionellosis”. The specification for the work proposed to be undertaken will be detailed clearly to ensure contractors have a clear understanding of the extent of work to be carried out and the level of competency required of their employees.

The Legionella Management Plan will define the quality control regime put in place to ensure quality of work carried out by contractors to the specification of the contract.

Part 8

8.1 LEGIONELLA EMERGENCY PLAN

In the event of a Legionella outbreak or suspected Legionella outbreak Falkirk Council will implement the Legionella Emergency Plan as detailed at Appendix 1. This plan has been adapted from the HSE Approved Code of Practice L8.

Part 9

9.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

9.1.2 Service Directors

Service Directors are responsible for ensuring the effective operation of this Policy within their Service. They are also responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are available to implement procedures, such as training for key personnel, acting on the recommendations from the Legionella Risk Assessments.
9.1.3 Heads of Service

Heads of Service are responsible for nominating a Premises Manager for each of their premises who in turn will ensure that appropriate Legionella checks are undertaken as identified in the Legionella Management Plan for the premises. They must regularly monitor the status of the Legionella checks in each of their premises.

9.1.3 Head of Roads and Design (Development Services)

The Head of Roads and Design will be responsible for the appointment of a Responsible Person to ensure the development and maintenance of a Legionella Management Plan for all Council Workplaces including the control of Legionella Risk Assessments and building maintenance repairs on water systems in Council premises (excluding housing stock and commercial leased properties).

The Head of Roads and Design is responsible for ensuring that all design projects take account of the standards in the Legionnaires Disease Policy and that all new and refurbished water systems comply with the HSE’s Guidance on Legionnaires disease Approved Code of Practice (L8). The Head of Roads and Design will also ensure that risk assessments are undertaken on water systems prior to project completion and that the Legionella Risk Assessment is included in the Health and Safety File handed over to “Responsible Person” for the Service acting as the Client.

9.1.4 Head of Housing, (Corporate and Neighbourhood Services)

The Head of Housing Management Services will be responsible for the appointment of a Responsible Person to ensure the development and maintenance of a Legionella Management Plan for all Council Housing Stock and Sheltered Housing, including the control of Legionella Risk Assessments and building maintenance repairs on water systems in the Council’s housing water systems.

9.1.5 Head of Economic Development & Environmental Services

The Head of Economic Development be responsible for the appointment of a Responsible Person to ensure the development and maintenance of a Legionella Management Plan for all Leased Commercial Properties including the control of Legionella Risk Assessments. The Plan will specify the requirements for Legionella risk assessments, and the implementation of appropriate action, prior to the handover of new water systems to leaseholders. The Head of Economic Development will ensure that the responsibilities of both Leaseholders and the Council regarding the management of Legionella are specified in all leases.

9.1.6 Managers nominated as “Responsible Persons”

Managers nominated as “Responsible Persons” are responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Legionella Management Plan for the premises as detailed at section 5.
9.1.7 Premises Managers of Falkirk Council Workplaces

The Premises Manager responsible for each property will have access to the Risk Assessment on Legionella for his/her property. Local Trade Union Safety Representatives or Employee Representatives will also have access to premises Legionella Risk Assessments via the relevant Premises Manager.

The Premises Manager will be responsible for the development and implementation of a local procedure to monitor the water systems as defined by the risk assessment for their workplace or premises. He/she will ensure that all employees delegated to carry out testing as defined in the risk assessment are trained in the procedures and that these duties are carried out as specified.

Part 10

10.1 MONITORING & REVIEW

The Head of Human Resources, in conjunction with Service Directors and Trade Unions, will monitor and review this policy as required.

The provisions within this document will be implemented with effect from 12th February 2013.
**Emergency Plan**

**Action to be taken in the event of an outbreak/suspected outbreak of Legionnaires Disease**

**Introduction**

An outbreak of Legionnaires Disease will be confirmed by the Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) via the Designated Medical Officer for Forth Valley Health.

The HSE and Falkirk Council’s Environmental and Regulatory Services will be notified of the outbreak. Then they will establish an Outbreak Committee to take any appropriate actions to prevent further infection of the public. This will be initially focussed on the determination of the source of the Legionella bacterium.

If the HSE suspects a Falkirk Council premises is a possible source of the infection they have the legal authority to take action to halt any further spread of infection.

**Action to be taken**

1. The relevant “Responsible Person” and the Premises Manager will be required to ensure the water system is closed down to prevent further infections e.g. parts of process capable of disseminating airborne water droplets.

2. They will also co-operate with the HSE in their investigation by providing any details requested by them which may include details of all specialist contractors, records of all maintenance and monitoring programmes etc. The HSE will focus on the following actions in their investigation:
   - Taking water samples from the suspect water systems
   - Requesting health records of employees
   - Investigation of any premises, infrastructure, procedures, contracts and records
   - Taking statements from employees, contractors or consultants

3. The “Responsible Person”, in consultation with the Service Director and the Corporate Health, Safety and Care team, will ensure the following actions are taken as appropriate:
   - Switch off pumps and decommission plant as soon as practicable
   - Keep all personnel away from source of infection
   - When cleared by the HSE, instruct specialist contractors to undertake complete sterilisation of the infected system(s), if required
   - Consult with enforcing authority before allowing water system to be re-used
   - Ensure samples of water are taken for laboratory investigation, if required
   - Test system to ensure free from infection prior to return to normal use