

# What is Legionella?

Legionella is a type of bacteria found in freshwater. The bacteria multiply when temperatures are between 20-45°C and nutrients are available, putting household water at risk if systems are not regularly checked and controlled.

Legionella bacteria can be harmful, causing illnesses such as Legionnaires' disease - a potentially fatal type of pneumonia. The disease is contracted when water droplets or vapour containing Legionella bacteria are inhaled. You cannot contract it from drinking water unless you cough or choke whilst drinking.

Anyone can contract Legionnaires' Disease, with around 200-400 cases being reported in the UK each year; but older people, smokers, and people with cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory and kidney diseases are most at risk. The symptoms of Legionnaires' Disease are similar to those of the Flu, but Legionnaires' Disease is not contagious.



## When to contact us

You should contact us for help if:

- Your boiler or hot water cylinder are not working properly, especially if the water is not coming out of the taps at a high enough temperature.
- The cold water is still running warm even after you have run off any water which may have accumulated in the pipes. Your cold water should not go above 20°C.
- You notice any debris or discolouration in the water.

You can report issues with your boiler on our website, using our solve an issue tool or email us:

 [livewest.co.uk](https://www.livewest.co.uk)

 [enquiries@livewest.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@livewest.co.uk)

# What you should do to protect yourself?



## Run taps for five minutes

When you first move into your home or return after a few weeks away, run the bath, shower and sink taps continuously for at least five minutes to flush through any bacteria.



## Clean shower heads regularly

Ensure you keep your shower head and taps clean and free from a build-up of lime scale, mould or algae growth. You should fully disinfect your showerhead every 3 months.



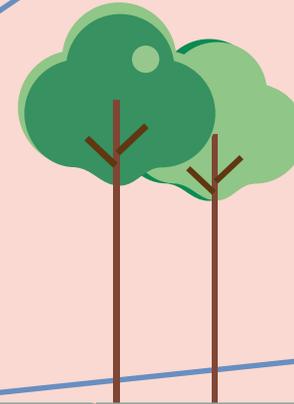
## Flush out the hosepipe

After using the hosepipe, ensure you drain any remaining water out of it and store it out of direct sunlight. You should also flush your hosepipe through for a couple of minutes before filling paddling pools, as bacteria may have built up inside.



## Do not use sprinklers...

If the temperature of stored water is above 20°C, you must not use it in sprinklers or mist irrigation.



## Clean out water containers

You should keep water storage containers clean by emptying them and scrubbing them out once a year. You can also insulate or paint them with a light colour to reflect the heat and prevent the water heating up in the summer.



## Clean hotub filters

If you have a hot tub, regularly check and clean the filters. If you haven't used your hot tub in a while, you should empty and refill it with fresh water.



## Avoid altering boiler settings

You should not interfere with the settings on your boiler or hot water cylinder. The hot water must be heated up to 60°C. Remember, Legionella thrives at temperatures between 20°C and 45°C.

