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Canterbury City Council

Legionella and water management policy – public buildings

Scope: This policy covers the management of legionella and applies to all public (non-housing stock) buildings owned, managed or occupied by Canterbury City Council. It covers the legal duties to comply with in relation to legionella. The policy does not deal with the operational detail. This is dealt with under the legionella management procedure which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Introduction

Legionellosis is a pneumophile illness that can be fatal. There are various sources of the organism and various routes of transmission to humans. The bacterium is widespread in natural fresh water. The principle route of infection is through inhalation of the bacteria into the lungs. The disease may affect healthy people but there is a greater risk of infection for certain recognised groups of “at risk” individuals, eg elderly, sick, immuno compromised. Canterbury City Council recognises that it has a duty of care towards employees, residents, contractors, visitors and others who may be at risk. This policy sets out where those duties arise and how Canterbury City Council will operate to discharge these duties and responsibilities.

Legal duties

Canterbury City Council will abide by the responsibilities contained within the following legislation in relation to the management of legionella:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974;
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- The Housing Act 2004 which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System Regulations 2005;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 as amended in 2004.

Policy statement

Canterbury City Council is committed to taking all reasonable steps to fulfil its statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the requirements of the approved codes of practice and health and safety executive guidance.

This policy supplements the corporate health and safety policy by detailing the arrangements put in place to manage the risks associated with legionella.

Canterbury City Council will:

- Protect so far as reasonably practicable, staff, contractors and visitors to CCC properties;
- Provide adequate resources in support of the legionella management procedure;
- Ensure lessees are aware of the presence of the control measures for legionella and manage accordingly. Where a full repairing lease is in place ensure the lessee has identified the control measures and is managing appropriately;
- To help comply with the legal requirements and to ensure that control measures in premises are properly managed, the council will identify a person (and in some cases a deputy) within the organisation who will be responsible for that management. The appointed person will be given the resources, skills, training and authority to ensure that the control measures are managed effectively;
- Formulate a specific operational procedure to ensure the overall integrity of water systems and equipment with HSE guidelines;
- Only engage appropriately trained, qualified and competent persons to undertake any surveys and risk assessments of all relevant systems and equipment to establish any items of non-compliance in accordance with the operational procedure;
- Ensure the design of relevant building services for new, refurbished or modified systems is such that complies with codes of practice. Including the assessing of equipment to be connected to the building services;
- Establish a programme of modification of systems and equipment to work toward compliance;
- Maintain a record to comply with as far as reasonably practicable the installation, maintenance and cleaning of water systems and equipment to reduce the risk of legionella, including schematic drawings of water pipe-work systems;
- Ensure that all water systems and associated equipment are safe for use at all times.

A documented process and procedure will be implemented to achieve the above-stated objectives.

Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for health and safety within Canterbury City Council lies with the **Chief Executive**.

Responsibility for ensuring this policy is being carried out lies with the **Senior Management Team** for all areas under their direct control.

The **Senior Management Team** will ensure an appropriate system of communication is in place whereby all significant accidents, incidents, audits, reviews or other documents relating to the management of the organisation are brought to the attention of the Chief Executive at the earliest opportunity.

Responsibility for regular review, updating of this policy and that adequate resources are provided to enable compliance lies with the **Director of Resources**.

Responsibility for ensuring this policy is being implemented via a documented procedure and process lies with the **Building Services and Maintenance Manager**.

Departmental Managers and **Heads of Services** are responsible for adhering to the policy and procedure. Providing evidence of this where managing associated maintenance works or projects to public buildings and the training of their staff.

All employees have a responsibility to co-operate with Canterbury City Council to achieve a healthy and safe work place and take reasonable care of themselves and others. Any employee who notices a health and safety problem, which they are not able to correct, **must** straight away, inform their line manager who in turn must ensure corrective action is taken. If a line manager is unavailable then the employee should contact the next appropriate person in their management structure. All employees who are involved in the management of premises or the management of building and maintenance works shall ensure compliance with this policy within their area of responsibility and by those persons and contractors under their control.

Review

Canterbury City Council will review this policy regularly to ensure that the organisations' policy and practices remain effective, keeps up-to-date with legislative change, reflects good practice guidance, and continues to be capable of achieving the stated objectives.