



A guide to **Legionella**



Legionella is hazardous bacteria that can be found in water. In a residential property, Legionella can grow in water stored at temperatures between 20°C and 50°C degrees. If swallowed or inhaled, water containing Legionella may lead to Legionnaires' disease or legionellosis – an infectious and potentially fatal form of pneumonia. You can reduce the risk within your home by following simple steps, some of which are detailed below.

To help minimise any impact we would like to encourage you to take these basic steps to maintain good water hygiene:

- Leave any insulation fitted around your hot water cylinder and pipework in place. This will help keep your hot water at the right temperature, and will also make your system as efficient as possible saving you money on your hot water bills.
- Allow Platform to undertake inspections, servicing and maintenance on equipment installed at your home to ensure its running as safely and efficiently as possible.
- Do not change the settings on your boiler or hot water system.
- Ensure all taps and the shower in your home are used regularly (at least once a week).
- Please clean and de-scale all taps at least once every 3 months.
- Please clean, de-scale and disinfect your showerhead at least once every 3 months. Please ensure that it is clean and fully rinsed before using it again.

- If you use a garden hose or water butt remember to flush these out so any stagnant water is removed.
- If you go away on holiday, when you get home, run all of the taps and shower in your home for at least 3 minutes and keep away from the water while it is running.
- If you find any issues with the water (temperature and/or discolouration) please call the Hub **0333 200 7304** or alternatively log into the customer Portal and report it straight away.

The symptoms of Legionnaires' disease are similar to the symptoms of the flu:

- High temperature, feverishness and chills;
- cough;
- muscle pains;
- headache; and leading on to
- pneumonia, very occasionally
- diarrhoea and signs of mental confusion
- If you develop the above symptoms and you are worried that it might be Legionnaires' disease, see your general practitioner.

Platform Housing Group has a responsibility to take precautions to maintain water hygiene in the hot and cold water system of your home, we are also responsible for the cleaning and descaling of showerheads in the communal areas of our Independent Living Schemes. You as tenants and residents are responsible for the taps and showerheads in your home and have an important part to play in taking these simple steps.

How to...

Descal and clean your taps

You will need:

- Descaling agent
- Supply of clean water
- Gloves

1. Pour the descaling agent into a suitable container, pouring enough so that the affected area of the tap would be fully submerged in the liquid.
2. Hold the container up to the outlet, ensuring that all areas affected by lime scale are exposed to the descaling agent.
3. Submerge the area for around three minutes to allow the descaling agent to soak into the lime scale.
4. Clean off all the loosened limescale with a suitable cloth. Repeat this process until all visible scale has been removed.
5. Wipe clean and flush with fresh water.
6. Repeat the process every three months or more frequent should further cleaning be required.



Descal and clean your showerhead

You will need:

- Descaling agent or white vinegar
- Supply of clean water
- Gloves

1. Remove both the showerhead and hosing from the shower unit.
2. Separate the showerhead from the hosing.
3. Fill either a container or bag with enough descaling agent or white vinegar to be able to submerge all items.
4. Carefully submerge the items so that all surfaces are covered.
5. Leave to soak for around 15 minutes.
6. Remove all items and rinse thorough with clean water.
7. Reattach all items back to the shower and flush the system.
8. Repeat the process every three months or more frequent should further cleaning be required.



Advice!

Caution should be exercised when working with the cleaning agent. Always refer to the manufacturers safety guidelines.