NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
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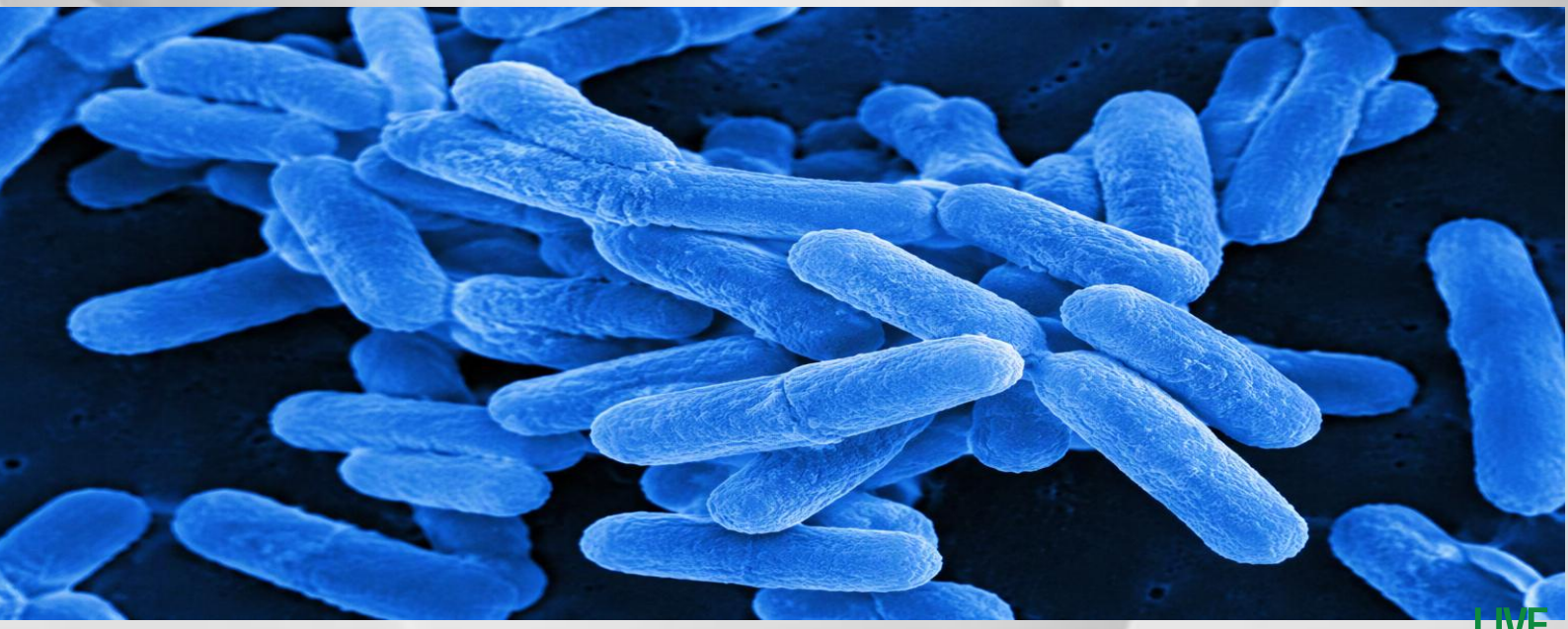
LEGIONELLA POLICY

NOVEMBER 2026



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Strategic Alignment

The Plan for North Lanarkshire: Improve North Lanarkshire's Resource Base

Ambition Statement: Ensure we keep our environment clean, safe, and attractive

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1. Introduction

North Lanarkshire Council is the 4th largest local authority in Scotland and has a housing stock of approximately 37,000 homes. The council has a legal duty to maintain homes to an acceptable standard and to provide the platform for a quality standard of living for its residents. As such, the council is committed to ensuring Legionella risks are effectively managed across housing stock.

Legionella is a water borne bacteria which is dangerous to humans. There are over 60 different species of the microorganism, and it can result in a variety of illnesses, ranging from flu-like symptoms to legionnaires diseases. Legionellosis is contracted through inhalation of contaminated water and vulnerable persons (such as but not limited to elderly persons and those with supressed immune systems and smokers) are more susceptible to it.

North Lanarkshire Council recognises its duty to protect employees, tenants, residents, contractors and others who may be affected by its activities from the risks associated with legionella bacteria in water systems and forms part of the council's overall framework for water hygiene and safety management.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice and Guidance (ACOP L8): The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems and supporting guidance including HSG274.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear framework for the management and control of legionella risks within water systems which North Lanarkshire Council has responsibility for.

This policy aims to:

- Protect tenants, employees, visitors, contractors and the wider public from exposure to legionella bacteria.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant statutory and best practice arrangements
- Define roles and responsibilities for the management of legionella risks
- Establish arrangements for risk assessment, monitoring, control, record keeping and remedial works
- Promote consistent standards across council housing assets and relevant water systems
- Ensure contingency arrangements are in place where legionella risks are identified
- This policy is designed to maintain robust governance arrangements.
- Recognise and outline the risks to public health associated with the management of Legionella in North Lanarkshire council owned properties.

3. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all communal domestic water systems and associated assets managed by Housing Property and Projects and includes

- All properties owned and managed by North Lanarkshire Council.
- Communal facilities including laundries and other communal water systems.

- Both occupied and void properties where the council has a responsibility for water systems

This policy applies to all council employees, contractors, consultants and service providers who have responsibilities relating to the management, maintenance monitoring and or control of associated water systems.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Council will comply with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements for managing legionella risks. Set out below is the principal legislation which applies to legionella management for the Council.

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002.
- Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013,
- Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L8 – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems.
- HSG274 Part 2 – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Hot and Cold Water Systems.
- All other associated legislation, guidance and industry standards referenced within ACOP L8 and HSG274.

The council will adopt the principles of control set out within ACOP L8 and HSG274 which requires duty holders to;

- Identify and assess sources of risk.
- Eliminate risk where reasonably possible.
- Implement effective control measures where risk cannot be eliminated.
- Prepare and maintain a written scheme of control.
- Monitor, review and record control measures.
- Appoint competent persons to manage and control risks.
- Provide appropriate information, instruction and training.

5. Policy Statement

North Lanarkshire Council is committed to preventing or controlling exposure to legionella bacteria if present within any water system that it owns or operates.

The council will ensure, as far as reasonably possible, that all relevant water systems are risk assessed, have effective control measures in place, planned monitoring and remedial actions in place where necessary.

The council will maintain a written scheme of control, ensure competent management arrangements, host appropriate records and robust contract management processes to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and sector wide good practice.

Where legionella risks cannot be eliminated, suitable precautions and monitoring arrangements will be implemented to ensure risks and adequately controlled.

6. Roles & Responsibilities

Chief Executive

The chief executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that employees, contractors, tenants and residents are protected from the risks associated with legionella bacteria. North Lanarkshire Council has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day management of legionella risks within housing properties.

Deputy Chief Executive

The deputy chief executive, as delegated by the chief executive, will ensure that implementation of this policy and supporting documentation and procedures for all areas within it's scope.

Chief Officer (Housing)

The Chief Officer (Housing) is responsible for the implementation of this policy throughout Housing Property and Projects and will lead the council's response where contingency measures are required following elevated legionella sampling results or identified system failures.

Repairs and Maintenance Manager

Responsible for supporting implementation of this policy and ensuring appropriate maintenance activities are carried out to manage legionella risks.

Investment Manager

Responsible for ensuring legionella requirements are incorporated into planned investment programmes and capital works affecting water systems.

Project Delivery Manager (Investment)

Responsible for ensuring investment and improvement works are delivered in accordance with legionella control requirements and current legislation.

Duty Holder

The Project Delivery Manager (Services and Legislative), acting as Duty Holder, shall ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken and that appropriate arrangements are in place to identify, assess and control legionella risks.

Supporting Duty Holder Responsibilities

The Project Delivery Manager (Repairs) shall support the Duty Holder by facilitating access arrangements, implementing flushing regimes and supporting control measures identified through risk assessments and monitoring activities.

Responsible Person

The Service Delivery Manager (Services and Legislative), acting as Responsible Person, shall:

- Ensure risk assessments, monitoring activities, sampling programmes and control measures are undertaken by competent persons.
- Maintain and review the written scheme of control.
- Ensure remedial actions are completed.
- Ensure records are maintained.
- Monitor contractor competence and performance.
- Ensure compliance with ACOP L8 and supporting guidance.

Managers, Employees and Contractors

All employees and contractors must cooperate with the arrangements established under this policy, follow relevant procedures, undertake required training and report any concerns which may affect the integrity or safety of water systems.

7. Training and Awareness

- All staff involved with the implementation, operation, and management of legionella control activities shall receive appropriate training relevant to their job role.
- Training shall ensure staff understand:
- Health risks associated with legionella
- Relevant legal duties and responsibilities
- The requirements of ACOP L8 and HSG274
- Site-specific control measures and operational procedures
- Emergency and reporting arrangements

The council will ensure contractors undertaking legionella related activities are competent and fully trained for their role.

8. Policy requirements

The council will maintain a risk-based approach to legionella management and will ensure:

- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken by competent persons.
- Risk assessments are reviewed periodically and whenever significant legislative changes occur.
- Written schemes of control are established and maintained.
- Water quality logbooks and associated records are maintained.
- Temperature monitoring, inspections, testing and sampling regimes are undertaken in accordance with the written scheme.
- Water storage tanks, outlets, calorifiers, showers and associated systems are maintained in accordance with prescribed inspection and cleaning frequencies.
- Dead legs and redundant pipework are removed where identified.
- Suitable flushing programmes are implemented for low-use or void properties.
- Remedial actions are prioritised and completed within agreed timescales.
- Contingency arrangements are implemented where elevated risks or positive legionella results are identified.

9. Council Housing Stock

The council shall maintain an inventory of communal domestic water systems within housing stock under its control.

A programme of risk assessment, inspection, monitoring, sampling and maintenance shall be implemented across relevant properties including:

- High-rise blocks.
- Low-rise communal systems.
- Sheltered housing complexes.
- Supported accommodation.
- Temporary accommodation.
- Communal laundries and ancillary facilities.

Additional controls may be implemented where systems are more complex, where water is stored, where vulnerability factors are present, or where risk assessments identify an increased likelihood of legionella growth.

Void properties shall be managed in accordance with approved flushing and recommissioning procedures prior to reoccupation.

10. Construction Works

All construction, refurbishment, replacement and alteration work affecting hot and cold-water systems shall comply with relevant statutory requirements, ACOP L8, HSG274 and Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations.

Project teams, consultants and contractors shall ensure:

- Legionella risks are considered during project design and planning.
- New installations are designed to minimise stagnation and facilitate maintenance.
- Redundant pipework and dead legs are removed wherever reasonably practicable.
- Systems are appropriately cleaned, flushed, disinfected and commissioned before occupation or use.
- Asset information and schematics are updated following completion of works.

11. Communication

North Lanarkshire Council will clearly communicate its policy to employees, contractors, residents and other stakeholders where appropriate.

This may include:

- Information on planned maintenance and inspections.
- Resident advice regarding flushing and water hygiene.
- Access requirements for inspections and remedial works.
- Guidance following periods of vacancy or low water usage.
- Communication relating to incidents or contingency arrangements where required.

12. Monitoring and Review

Implementation of this policy will be monitored through:

- Risk assessment reviews.
- Compliance monitoring.
- Contractor performance monitoring.
- Water quality testing and sampling results.
- Internal management reporting.
- Audit and assurance activities.
- Review of incidents, non-compliances and corrective actions.

13. Equalities, Human Rights and Impact

North Lanarkshire Council is committed to ensuring that the implementation of this policy promotes equality, fairness and inclusion and does not unlawfully discriminate against any individual or group.

The council recognises that some individuals may be more vulnerable to the effects of legionella infection, including older persons, those with respiratory or kidney conditions, smokers and individuals with compromised immune systems. These factors may be considered during risk assessment processes to ensure appropriate control measures are implemented.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as required and reviewed periodically to ensure the policy continues to meet the needs of service users and stakeholders.

The council will also have due regard to relevant human rights obligations and the need to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of those who may be affected by its activities.

14. Glossary

Legionella

Water-borne bacteria which can cause Legionnaires' disease and other forms of legionellosis.

Legionnaires' Disease

A potentially serious form of pneumonia caused by inhalation of legionella-contaminated aerosols.

ACOP L8

Approved Code of Practice and Guidance: The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems.

Duty Holder

The person with overall responsibility for ensuring suitable arrangements are in place to manage legionella risks.

Responsible Person

The competent person appointed to implement and manage legionella control measures.

Written Scheme

The documented arrangements for controlling legionella risks within a water system.

Water Quality Logbook

Site-specific records detailing monitoring, inspections, testing, maintenance, remedial works and other activities relevant to legionella control.

HSG274

Health and Safety Executive technical guidance supporting ACOP L8.

Risk Assessment

The process of identifying hazards, evaluating risks and determining appropriate control measures.