

# YOUR GUIDE TO

## Legionella

Legionella bacteria occur naturally in rivers and streams – sometimes making their way into your home's water supply. They aren't a problem if you take the necessary precautionary measures, such as keeping your hot water at 50°C or higher and avoiding the build-up of stagnant water in your pipes. Legionella bacteria can, if inhaled, lead to a respiratory disease called Legionnaires' disease.

### What you can expect from us

We will regularly check all your homes to ensure they are safe and well maintained.

### Low-risk homes

We complete assessments on all homes to check legionella risk levels, with most homes deemed low-risk. Even in low-risk homes we will carry out some basic checks to minimise the risk of legionella - often at the same time as your annual boiler service. Our technician will make sure your hot water supply is set to 50°C or above, and they will check for any unnecessary pipework which doesn't lead to anything, as this is where stagnant water can build up and legionella can multiply.

### High-risk homes

If we decide that your home is high-risk, we will make sure that monthly water temperature checks are done, and we will put in place a comprehensive legionella risk assessment which will be reviewed every two years. High-risk homes are often those where the hot water supply is shared between several different properties.

### What you need to do

To keep your home safe from legionella, you should:

- Clean your shower head regularly (at least once every three months)
- Not lower your hot water temperature
- Make sure all taps and water outlets are run every week
- Run all taps and water outlets in your property for two minutes if you have been away from your home for any longer than a week
- Empty garden hoses after use
- Keep any water butts clean and out of direct sunlight where possible. Regularly empty the water, especially over summer, and only use the water for watering plants (don't drink it)

### What to look out for

Legionella bacteria grow in warm water, when the temperature is between 20°C and 45°C. If you notice your hot water temperature is not hot enough, you should contact us for advice.

If your hot water is stored in a tank, it should be between 60°C and 65°C. If your hot water is heated by a gas boiler, it should be above 50°C.

If you spot any pipes that don't lead to an appliance, like a washing machine, then you should also alert us because these need to be removed.

### How to contact us

If you have any questions or are worried about legionella in your home, you contact us:

- Call: **0800 953 0213 (option 1)**
- Email: [customerservices@communitygateway.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@communitygateway.co.uk)
- Visiting: [www.communitygateway.co.uk/contact-us](http://www.communitygateway.co.uk/contact-us)

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