Water Hygiene and Safety Policy

Scope:	Housing Solutions Properties/Staff and Contractors
Legislation:	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 Control of substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 Private Water Supplies (England) Regulations 2016 The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 Housing Act 2004 (England and Wales) Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 Building Safety Act 2022 (as amended The Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) L8 Legionnaires' disease 2013 INDG458 Legionnaires disease. A guide to duty holders HSG274 Legionnaires' disease Part 2: The control of Legionella bacteria in hot and cold systems. Part 3: The control of Legionella in other risk systems. HSG282 Control of Legionella and other infectious agents in spa-pool systems Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) 2006 BS 7942:2011 Thermostatic mixing valves for use in care establishments BS 8580-1 Water quality risk assessments for legionella control 2019

Author:	Compliance Manager
Approved by:	Executive Team
Date of approval:	29th July 2025
Date of next review:	29th July 2028

Regulatory/ Governance:	Regulator of Social Housing Home Standard Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023	
Related Policies:	Repairs & Maintenance Policy Planned Maintenance & Investment Policy	Access Policy Empty Homes Policy Health & Safety Policy

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy provides guidance on the methods by which Housing Solutions will endeavor to control water hygiene and safety. The policy covers the premises and systems it manages or systems over which it has reasonable control.

1.2 Housing Solutions will take all reasonable steps to manage and establish effective systems to manage water hygiene within our properties.

1.3 This document has been produced in partnership with Sureserve Compliance Water who have acted as Housing Solutions external health and safety advisors on water hygiene.

2. Scope

2.1 The scope of this policy is applicable to all non-domestic buildings managed and maintained by the group. The following buildings are deemed to be non-domestic premises.

Non-Domestic Premises
Housing Solutions offices & administrative buildings
Registered care homes
Sheltered Housing – communal facilities
Common parts of multi-let buildings
Void properties currently undergoing works
Void buildings / premises

2.2 Although there is no requirement to test the water hygiene in void properties, as part of our commitment to providing safe homes, we will undertake a water hygiene risk assessment during every void period. Assessment to include inspection of hot and cold services including stored water. Each tap and water outlet including showers to be flushed weekly to control legionella. Individual flushing to be a minimum of 5 minutes.

2.3 Where Housing Solutions let commercial buildings/premises, it is deemed the responsibility of the tenant to carry out their duties to water hygiene.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Detail roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy/procedure

Board	Strategic overview of all HS Policies
CEO	Overall responsibility to the HS Board for the control of the Water Hygiene Policy and Management Systems.
Director of Property & Development	To provide support, structure and ensure that the Chief Executive and Executive Team are kept informed of required resources and incidents* in relation to the policy.
Assistant Director of Property services	Ensure that all persons are provided with the necessary information, instruction and training to fulfil their roles and responsibilities under this policy and procedures.
~~Fire and~~ Corporate Health & Safety Manager	Notify the HSE upon receipt of a diagnosis of a water borne infection.
Head of Fire and Compliance	Responsibility to the Assistant Director of Property Services in ensuring that the policy is fully implemented and immediately in- formed regarding any issues* in implementing the policy and required resources/training. Take control to control of waterborne disease outbreak and responsible for appointing a person to take control and to co-ordinate activities with the HSE and other relevant bodies
Compliance Manager	Responsible for ensuring technical, maintenance, property management staff and contractors have received adequate information, instruction and training on the prevention and control of water hygiene and that they comply fully with the policy and procedure and are working safely in accordance with the policy. Responsible for ensuring that routine monitoring and preventative and precautionary measures are undertaken in accordance with the policy and that appropriate actions are taken in the event of an emergency. Responsible for ensuring that immediate action is taken where staff/contractors are not working safely or complying with HS policy. The Compliance Manager is to ensure that there is a nominated contractor who is capable of competently conducting: • Risk assessments and provision of scheme of

	control for the prevention and control of the risks from water borne infections. • Plumbing and engineering works on air conditioning and hot and cold-water systems; and • The cleaning of water systems and chemical treatment of water supplies; and bacterial and chemical water testing and analysis Take control to control of waterborne disease outbreak and responsible for appointing a person to take control and to co-ordinate activities with the HSE and other relevant bodies Ensure that all records are to be kept for five years from the date of the last entry and are available on demand for inspection by internal auditors. Ensure the list of Private Distribution Network sites are maintained as new properties are added/removed. Carry out an annual review of sites.
Property/Scheme (Home) Managers (Inc. Sheltered)/ Trade Supervisors/ Supported Team Leaders/Extra Care Housing Officers/ Sheltered Housing Officers	Responsible to the Compliance Manager for the Day-to-day implementation of the policy. The Property/Scheme Manager to ensure that routine monitoring, precautionary and preventative measures are undertaken in line with HS policy. Any issues* in the implementation of the policy are immediately reported to the Assistant Director or Property Services/ Head of Fire and Compliance / Compliance Manager

**Incidents that may affect the image or reputation of Housing Solutions, or may lead to enforcement action, criminal prosecution or civil action being taken against Housing Solutions*

4. Definitions

4.1 **PDN**: Private Distribution Network

4.2 **ACOP**: Approved Code of Practice

4.3 **HSG**: Health and Safety Guidance

4.4 **TMV**: Thermostatic Mixing Valve

4.5 **Legionnaires disease**: a lung infection (pneumonia) transmissible from the inhalation of water droplets containing Legionella bacteria found in contaminated water systems

5. Legislation

5.1 With reference to Legislation, Regulations and Guidance listed on the cover page of this policy, Criminal liability for a waterborne disease outbreak or individual deaths or illness would fall under the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, s2-7
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002

5.2 Failure to comply with these laws is a criminal act that could result in unlimited fines for Housing Solutions and possibly fines and imprisonment for directors and senior managers found to be individually culpable.

5.3 In addition to the criminal liability, there would be potential liability for breach of contract and negligence. These could result in withdrawal or limitation of insurance cover.

5.4 This policy has been developed to allow Housing Solutions to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 and has regard to Ap- proved Code of Practice L8 'Legionnaires' disease: The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems.' HSG274 (Legionnaires Disease technical Guidance) Part 2 & 3 and INDG458 Legionnaires disease. A guide to duty holders.

6. Water Hygiene

6.1 Housing Solutions will maintain an open information policy and will work with residents, staff groups, contractors and statutory bodies to agree and deliver solutions to water hygiene issues.

6.2 Where applicable, we will endeavor to work with management agents to obtain water hygiene risk assessments and ensure compliance with actions from these. Housing Solutions will continue to undertake a water hygiene risk assessment during every void period of properties with managing agents.

6.3 Housing Solutions will implement its policy through a clear internal structure as set out in the roles and responsibilities in section 3 of this policy document.

6.4 If water hygiene issues pose a serious or imminent risk to the health of persons, Housing Solutions will take all practical measures as soon as possible to control the risk.

6.5 If there is a risk of waterborne disease, but the risk is not serious or imminent, Housing Solutions will take all reasonably practical measures to control the risk of water borne disease.

6.6 Whilst the risk of waterborne disease is present, Housing Solutions shall ensure that it is managed in such a manner that the risk to the health of our residents, employees, contractors, visitors and other peoples using our premises is minimised.

6.7 All work to prevent or the control risk of waterborne disease shall be carried out in accordance with the current legal standards using the best working practices.

6.8 If you have any doubts or questions about this policy or procedures, please contact your manager who will be able to provide you with advice or further information.

6.9 This document is not intended to provide detailed technical guidance on handling and dealing with waterborne diseases. Staff should refer to the appropriate HSE guidance. Lists of all current HSE publications may be obtained from the HSE Web- site. Lead staff will be trained to be competent to manage water hygiene in buildings. Copies of all relevant publications will be issued to all staff trained by Housing Solutions.

6.10 The Health and Safety Executive has produced a number of Approved Codes of Practice and a number of Technical Guidance Notes. Compliance with all relevant regulations and guidance is necessary so that all work involving water hygiene can be carried out safely without any risk to any person.

7. Procedure

7.1 Water hygiene is managed through staff training, risk assessments, inspections and monitoring as well as other remedial actions. The Procedure is detailed in Appendix 1.

8. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

8.1 HS recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equalities Act 2010. HS works closely with its partners to ensure it has a clear understanding of its resident community with clear regularly updated service user profiles. HS will record, analyse and monitor information on ethnicity, vulnerability and disability.

9. Confidentiality

9.1 Under the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR), all personal and sensitive organisational information, however received, is treated as confidential. This includes:

- anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, staff or board member
- sensitive organisational information.

9.2 Housing Solutions employees will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information where there is a legal basis for processing the information.

10. Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed on a 3-yearly basis or more frequently in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice or changes in other relevant Housing Solutions' policy.

10.2 Our performance in relation to the delivery of the services and activities set out in this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through our established reporting mechanisms to the Executive Team, Board and associated committees.

11. Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1: Procedure

Appendix 1: Procedure

1. Staff Training

1.1 All technical staff (employed and sub-contractors) providing technical services to high-risk properties such as buildings with infrequently used fixtures like showers and taps, void properties, larger multi dwellings with complex water systems (care homes) HMO's (Houses of Multiple Occupancy), stored water systems or responsible for maintaining domestic type hot and cold systems are to attend Water hygiene awareness training at least once every three years.

1.2 All staff with responsibilities under this policy are required to complete annual Legionella eLearning training. Additional training to also be delivered through tool box talks and issue of latest technical updates.

1.3 Water hygiene awareness training shall include the following topics in appropriate detail, by means of both written and oral presentation, and by demonstration as necessary:

1.3.1 The health risk from waterborne infections.

1.3.2 The facts affecting the risk of growth and infection by waterborne infections

1.3.3 The general procedures to be followed to deal with an emergency; and

1.3.4 How to avoid the risks from waterborne infection.

2. Nominated Competent Persons

2.1 The nominated competent person will be our current water hygiene management provider. They will provide support and advice along with risk assessments, monitoring and sampling. The competent person(s) will meet the BS8580-1 definition of competence or hold relevant professional qualifications (e.g., City & Guilds Legionella Risk Assessment). These qualifications of the competent person(s) should be documented within the Legionella written scheme of controls.

3. Risk Assessments

3.1. The purpose of risk assessments is to establish the risk of waterborne infections such as Legionnaires Disease. Domestic buildings will undergo a written risk assessment at void stage, with a programme for all domestic homes to be risk assessed in the next 10 years. The buildings classed as non-domestic will be assessed every 2 years. LRA's will be undertaken in accordance with documents HSG274 and BS 8580-1 Water quality risk assessments for legionella control 2019.

4. Site Inspections

4.1 The Compliance Manager is to arrange for a site inspection of the hot and cold-water storage and distribution systems, and for a risk assessment to be produced for all properties, where there is a need for a full site survey and risk assessment

4.2 Site inspections and risk assessments must be carried out by a competent specialist water hygiene consultant or other competent person.

4.3 The inspection shall comply with the requirements of L8 - Approved Code of Practice and Guidance: Legionnaires Disease: The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems and BSRIA Guide to Legionellosis - Risk Assessment Application Guide AG 20/2000, along with the requirements outlined in BS8580-1:2019.

4.4 The Compliance Manager is to instruct the specialist water hygiene consultants to carry out a site inspection of the hot and cold-water systems in the non-domestic parts of designated premises to:

4.4.1 Produce a risk assessment having regard to the occupancy of the premises

4.4.2 Prepare a detailed written scheme of control to manage the water installation at the premises that includes a schematic diagram of the hot and cold- water systems

4.4.3 Make recommendations about:

4.4.31 Measures needed to remedy deficiencies in the hot and cold-water systems

4.4.32 The preventative and precautionary measures needed to prevent waterborne bacteria growth and distribution

4.4.33 The specific monitoring scheme required at the premises

5. Written Scheme of control

5.1 Where the water consultant concludes that the risk of waterborne infections is insignificant and that no further works are required then this shall be recorded in the water hygiene register.

5.2 Where the water consultant concludes that there is a significant risk of water-borne infections, the findings of the inspection and risk assessments are to be recorded in a written scheme of control for the property. This written scheme of control is in electronic format and accessible via a secure portal and will include:

5.5.1 Details of hot and cold-water systems and wet air conditioning systems, including up-to-date plans or schematic diagrams.

5.5.2 Details of who is responsible for managing the property and carrying out maintenance works.

5.5.3 Details of the safe and correct operation of relevant systems.

5.5.4 Details of what control methods and precautionary measures are to be taken; and

5.5.5 Details of the frequency and type of checks that are required.

5.6 The written scheme of control is to be available and readily accessible at the site where it applies as outlined in the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) L8 and is to be kept up to date at all times. All persons with any duty in the written scheme of control including contractors are to be informed of the presence and location of the written scheme of control.

6. Remedial Actions

6.1 The Compliance Manager is to ensure that the system is maintained in good repair and kept clean. The Compliance Manager or designated competent person is responsible for ensuring that all routine measures detailed in the written scheme of control are implemented, in accordance with the required time intervals, and that accurate, complete and up to date records are kept.

6.2 If the Compliance Manager or designated competent person decides, upon the findings of a site inspection, that the risks are insignificant then this shall be recorded in the water hygiene register.

6.3 If risks are identified then staff must be provided with information, with the Compliance Manager or designated competent person instructed to implement the written scheme of control for that property and resources must be allocated to ensure proper controls are introduced. Specific controls for at risk properties will be detailed in the logbook for that property. Controls may include taking any of the following measures to prevent the growth of waterborne diseases within the water system:

6.3.1 Carrying out maintenance or remedial works on the system.

6.3.2 Disinfecting of the system.

6.3.3 Keeping water cisterns covered, insulated, clean and free of debris.

6.3.4 Ensuring water cannot stagnate anywhere in the system, e.g., remove redundant pipe work, run taps/showers in unoccupied rooms.

6.3.5 Insulating pipe work.

6.3.6 Maintaining the correct temperature at the hot water cylinder.

6.3.7 Advising personnel working on the system about the risks and how to minimise them; and

6.3.8 Advising residents about the risks, the control measures and precautions that can be taken, such as flushing through showers following a period of non- use.

6.3.9 All routine measures detailed in the written scheme are to be implemented, in accordance with the required time intervals. Accurate, complete and up to date records are to be kept and will be recorded via the online portal.

7. Scalding and Risk Management

7.1 To control the risk of Legionella, hot water must be stored at 60°C and distributed so that it reaches outlets at a minimum of 50°C within one minute. However, this presents a potential risk of scalding with the danger of skin damage or burns caused by contact with hot liquids or steam, primarily hot water. This risk is particularly relevant for vulnerable individuals, such as young children, the elderly, and those with sensory or mobility impairments who may not be able to recognize or react to hot water temperatures quickly.

7.2 To suitably manage and reduce the risk of injury through scalding, HS to install Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMV's) to hot water outlets for residents who have been identified as vulnerable.

7.3 Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMV's) to be installed in areas where people would be at highest risk of scalding and sited as close as possible to the point of use with the temperature set to between 38°C and 46°C.

7.4 Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMV's) used on domestic water systems must have Water Regulations Approval Scheme (WRAS) and TMV2 or TMV3 certification depending on where the TMV is installed. TMV2's are primarily installed in new build domestic properties and homes undergoing refurbishment works such as replacement of baths or shower outlets. Whereas TMV3's are specifically designed for use in healthcare environments such as care homes and other settings where vulnerable residents may be at risk of scalding.

7.5 Annual maintenance and servicing of Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMV's) to be undertaken to include temperature and failsafe checks as well as regular cleaning and descaling to prevent build-up of limescale.

8. Water hygiene risk register

8.1 The Compliance Manager shall ensure a record of the findings of any site inspection and risk assessment in the water hygiene risk register.

9. Review of risk assessments and written scheme of control

9.1 The Compliance Manager is to ensure that the risk assessment and written scheme of control are reviewed, and amended every 2 years (non-domestic) or when:

9.1.1 Significant changes are planned or have been made to a system, e.g., remedial works or planned modifications have been implemented

9.1.2 Changes have been made to the management and/or maintenance of the system, e.g., 6 months after a new maintenance company has been appointed.

9.1.3 Significant changes have occurred in the way a system is being used, e.g., a formerly fully occupied building is now only partially occupied.

9.1.4 In the event of any reported waterborne infections to persons.

10. Action to be taken in the event of an outbreak

10.1 In event of being notified of an outbreak, an outbreak is defined as two or more cases where the onset of illness is closely linked in time (weeks rather than months) and where there is epidemiological evidence of a common source of infection, (with or without microbiological evidence) and from a Housing Solutions property the Compliance Manager is to immediately notify the following persons:

10.1.1 The Director of Property and Development

10.1.2 Assistant Director of Property Services

10.1.3 Corporate Health & Safety Manager

10.1.4 Nominated Contractor

10.1.5 The Head of Fire and Compliance and Compliance Manager are to take control to control the outbreak and is re- sponsible for appointing a person to take control and to coordinate activities with the HSE and other relevant bodies. Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013, the Health and Safety Manager or designated representative must report any cases of legionellosis in an employee upon receipt of a diagnosis, who has worked on cooling towers or hot and cold water systems that are likely to be contaminated with legionella

10.1.6 All other persons are to follow instructions of theHead of Fire and Compliance, Compliance manager or their designated representative. No person is to make contact with the press, post online either on social or digital media or make any interviews unless authorised by the PR and Communications Manager

11. Risk Assessment

11.1 The Compliance Manager or appointed deputy is to work with the Local Authority Environmental Health Team to produce a risk assessment for any private water distribution network managed by Housing Solutions.

11.2 The results of any risk assessment will be recorded in a register. The out- come of the risk assessment will determine the type and frequency of sampling and analysis required.

12. Sampling and analysis

12.1 The Compliance Manager will implement any sampling and analysis re- quired as the result of any risk assessment. Any difficulties in implementing this will be

immediately reported to the Assistant Director of property Services who will inform the Director of Property and Development

13. Audit

13.1 The Water Hygiene Safety Management procedures will be audited as per the following table:

Audit Type	Frequency	Responsible Person
Property check*	Quarterly	Compliance Manager
External audit carried out by external auditors	Bi-annually	Director of Property and Development

*To ensure that all properties that require a risk assessment are recorded on the master database with a date for re-inspection.

13.2 The Director for Property and Development must record the findings of an audit. The system should be amended to incorporate the findings of an audit.

13.3 The Compliance Manager is to ensure that proper records are maintained and available on demand for inspection by internal auditors.

13.4 Audits are to be conducted using the current edition of Control of Legionella bacteria in water systems: Audit Checklists. ISBN 0-7176-2198-7

14. Records

14.1 The Compliance Manager is to ensure that all records are to be kept for five years from the date of the last entry.

14.2 LRA and monitoring records including inspection and re-inspection dates of all properties that have a written scheme of control for water hygiene will be held on a shared spreadsheet accessible via a secure portal.

15. Performance indicators

15.1 The Compliance Manager will be responsible for reporting the following key performance indicators through the monthly compliance report to the Senior and Executive management teams

15.1.1 All sites have a valid water hygiene risk assessments –target 100%

15.1.2 All remedial actions for risk assessments conducted

16. Complaints

16.1 All customer complaints relating to Water Hygiene and Hot Water safety will be logged as per the company's complaints policy and procedures.

17. Additional information and links:

17.1 Health and Safety Executive website:
http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/index.htm

17.2 Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) website:
http://www.phls.org.uk/topics_az/legionella/menu.htm