



# Tenant Information

## A guide to Water Hygiene

### How to contact us

#### Opening Times

The Byker Community Trust office is open Monday to Thursday  
9:00am – 5:00pm and Friday 9:00am - 4:30pm

#### Visit our office

17 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF

Freephone 0800 5335 442

Email [customerservices@bykerct.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@bykerct.co.uk)

Website [www.bykercommunitytrust.org](http://www.bykercommunitytrust.org)



# Water Hygiene

**This leaflet contains information about legionella bacteria, what it is, where it can be found and how to prevent it.**

Byker Community Trust (BCT) has an obligation to ensure our tenants are aware of the possible causes and symptoms of Legionnaires' disease so you can identify any problems easily and report any concerns to us.

## What is Legionnaires' disease?

Legionnaires' disease is a form of pneumonia, caused by Legionella bacteria. There is a very low risk that Legionella bacteria can develop in stored or stagnant water. Legionella bacteria can cause Legionnaires' disease, a serious lung infection which must be treated with a course of antibiotics when contracted. With 400-500 cases reported in the UK each year, the disease is very rare.

Anyone can catch it, but most sufferers tend to be over 50 years old. Anyone with a weak immune system, an underlying condition or those who smoke, are at greater risk. The bacteria won't multiply in temperatures below 20°C and can't survive above 60°C. Stagnant water stored between 20°C and 45°C provides the best breeding conditions for legionella bacteria.

## How do people get it?

Legionnaires' disease comes from breathing in bacteria contained in small droplets of water, like spray from a shower or taps. It isn't spread directly from person to person, and you can't get it from drinking water.

Find out more information, including the symptoms associated with Legionnaires' diseases, by visiting [www.nhs.uk/conditions/legionnaires-disease](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/legionnaires-disease)

# Water Hygiene

## What precautions can I take?

Legionella bacteria can be found in most water systems, but doesn't usually cause any problems. Here's how you can help to keep bacteria numbers low and prevent disease:

- If you have been on holiday or have been away from your home for some time, run your taps/shower heads for a couple of minutes to flush through any stagnant water.
- Flush your toilet a couple of times to circulate fresh water through the cistern.
- It's important to descale your taps and shower heads at least every three months. Any household descaling product available from supermarkets will do this.
- Make sure taps that are not regularly used, such as taps in gardens, are flushed regularly.
- Hot water in tanks must be kept at a minimum of 60°C. Please do not interfere with the thermostat on your hot water tank.
- Report any concerns about low hot water temperatures, low water flow, defective taps, or any unusual substance flowing from your taps to BCT by calling 0800 5335 442 (Option 1).



