

Why Adhere to Water Safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act covers any risk to people arising from work activities. Sections 2-3 specifically require that all reasonable precautions are taken to protect the health and safety of the employees and the general public. Section 4 states the importance of premises and plant being safe and without risk.

The Health & Safety Executive and other water regulatory bodies have taken steps to ensure water safety and have published ACoP L8 & HSG 274 Part 1-3 technical guidance. The Code of Practice is “approved” under the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1998 and as such this document and its guidelines have attained legal status, are legally enforceable and indeed have already been the basis of successful prosecutions.

More specifically, the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994 (COSHH) which relate to Legionella and other potentially harmful bacteria in water systems (and also water that is hot enough to be a scald risk) requires the undertaking of Legionella Risk assessments and the adoption of appropriate precautions. There should be no doubt as to the enforceability, not only where cases of these risks being present occur, but also where systems are poorly managed and maintained.

In addition to the above the following guidelines have also been issued and are now generally being accepted as standards:

1. HTM 04-01: The Department of Health guidelines – generally being adopted as additional standards for water safety in healthcare properties.
2. HTM 01-05: The Department of Health guidelines for water safety in dentistry.
3. DO8: Guidelines for the use of thermostatic mixer valves