

Showerheads and Hoses

Cleaning or Replacement

Since the conception of the first guide to Legionella control in HSG70 in 1992 the thought process to this very day is to clean and descale shower heads and hoses. For a long time since prosecutions going back to 2002 have proven shower head cleaning is practically impossible in order to declare a shower head or hose is clean. A study carried out by Dr T Makin proved that indeed shower head cleaning was not effective in 99% of cases and 100% useless after being in operation only one week after cleaning having then shown signs of infection. The number of different organisms present in shower heads is quite frightening and to those people who are susceptible this is a real problem.

In domestic water systems there are several very important aspects that must be dealt with as a priority. First and foremost is stagnation. With regards to production of Legionella bacteria in water, 50% of all poor legionella control issues are down to stagnant water and by addressing this, a vast improvement in Legionella control and reduction in numbers can be achieved. With regards to dissemination of Legionella by far the most effective way of getting it airborne to infect individuals is by the use of spray taps and showers.

This brings me to the focal part of this article. Do we carry on cleaning and descaling shower heads and hoses or do we simply replace? I have been within the industry starting at the bottom having dealt with over 2500 persons in my training classes as a tutor and maintaining over 5000 clients over two successive legionella control businesses and in all this experience coupled with knowledge gained from individuals and research the time has come to stop the art of cleaning shower heads and hoses and simply replace.

Technology has come a long way since 1992 and although HSG 274 does not mention the option of replacement the last two years has seen a significant shift to this. Some health authorities whether NHS or private have opted to buy extremely cheap shower heads that are not WRAS approved which in itself is breaking the law in fitting these in a commercial environment. Hoses in this case have mostly been ignored. In hard water areas this event has been carried out monthly (**HSG 274 recommends quarterly or more often subject to a risk assessment**). Of course we also have other considerations to make in this current climate such as water usage, hot water wastage, recycling and so the list goes on.

The introduction of colour coded shower heads that are disposable was brought in recently adding silver technology but as popularity increased and multinational businesses gobble up the distributors, the cost has risen. But on the plus side we see now the obvious solution to total replacement of the whole shower head and hose (on a quarterly basis) maintaining the colour coding concept whilst controlling recycled waste and reducing water consumption and wastage of hot water. This development came about due to popular demand by estates officers and RP's in the NHS. For the short space of time that these showers are





in operation they are further protected by the addition of silver impregnated into the plastic. All of this product now is WRAS approved and can be bought in bulk at a cost far cheaper than the cost of cleaning.

So what are the benefits of replacement showers and hoses? This list is not definitive but as an Authorised Engineer for some NHS establishments providing advice and direction to Water Safety Groups and writing Water Safety Plans for the same this list is almost common sense.



Quarterly replacement with brand new L8 showers and hoses

- The use of Biomaster Antimicrobial Technology in shower heads minimises the risk of bacterial build up of harmful organisms such as MRSA, E.coli and Legionella 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, forming part of infection control protocols. (<https://www.addmaster.co.uk/biomaster/industries/healthcare>)
- Colour coded for self-policing of change over quarterly
- Reduction of water usage (8 Litres per min at 2.5 bars)
- Reduction of hot water usage compared with standard showers without compromise of shower experience
- WRAS Approved (Head WRAS approval 1611068, Hose WRAS approval 1607047)
- Free delivery
- Free pick up for recycle disposal
- LOW COST.
- No chemicals, Risk Assessments or COSHH required for cleaning as cleaning is not involved.

Conclusion

It now becomes basic common sense to fit these L8 Showers in order to give the best protection against legionella and other water born bacteria at a cost that is affordable and cheaper in some instances and to ensure that healthcare is truly a better place than before. All AE's should now consider this option in there appraisal and advice within WSG's and WSP's.

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For more information go to:

<http://www.eplusglobal.co.uk/products/anti-bacterial-replacement-shower-heads-and-hoses/>