



National Health Service in Scotland  
Management Executive

St. Andrew's House  
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Dear Colleague

**JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE AND  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WORKING GROUP ON  
LEGIONELLOSIS**

FIRST REPORT TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY  
COMMISSION AND CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICERS

**Executive Summary**

1. A copy of the first report of the Joint Health and Safety Executive and Department of Health Working Group on Legionellosis is attached. The report reviews existing and currently proposed arrangements for the control of legionnaires disease. The main emphasis is on the design and maintenance of wet cooling towers and hot water systems and ways of maintaining good standards.

The report's conclusions and recommendations have been accepted by the Health and Safety Commission and the Chief Medical Officers and will be reflected in the revision of the DH Publication "The Control of Legionellae in Health Care Premises - A Code of Practice" which is due to be published early in 1993.

**Background**

2. The Joint Working Group was set up by the Health and Safety Commission and Chief Medical Officers of the United Kingdom in 1989 to review and to make recommendations on measures to control the colonisation of plant and equipment by legionellae and to prevent dispersal of the organism into the environment.

**Action**

3. Health Boards and Trusts are asked to ensure that:

- \* those responsible for water services in buildings are vigilant and pay meticulous attention of their design and maintenance.
- \* those responsible for the maintenance of water systems receive the correct training.
- \* the Approved Code of Practice is brought to the attention of those concerned.

30 December 1992

**Addressees**

For action:  
General Managers,  
Health Boards

General Manager,  
Common Services Agency

General Manager,  
State Hospital

Chief Executives and  
Chief Executive  
Designate, NHS Trusts

For information:  
General Manager,  
Health Education Board  
for Scotland

To be copied to Unit  
General Managers for  
action

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- \* good practice is promoted.
- \* copy this circular to Unit General Managers for action as required.
- 4. Further details are set out in the attached Annex.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrew Matheson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a solid horizontal line that serves as a separator between the signature and the typed name below.

A J MATHESON  
Director of Manpower

**JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
WORKING GROUP ON LEGIONELLOSIS**

1. Since the organism causing legionellosis is so widespread in water, continued vigilance and meticulous attention should be paid to the design and maintenance of water services in all buildings.
2. Co-operation and good working relations, with clear delegation of responsibilities, between those responsible for control of infection, are crucial to the prevention of future outbreaks.
3. The recommendations in the report should be put into practice, particularly those about good management of systems and attention to the training of those responsible for their maintenance.
4. The Approved Code of practice "The Control of Legionellae in Health Care Premises" came into operation in 1989 and a revision of the code is underway. It is due to be published in early 1993 and until that time the current consolidated version continues to apply.
5. The Notification of Cooling Towers and Evaporative Condensers Regulations came into force on 2 November 1992.