

Legionella Control

Flushing/Purging Regime for Infrequently Used Outlets



As adopted by Council on 12 November 2024

Minute ref: 9.5., page 85-2024

To be reviewed in November 2025

“The risk from legionella growing in peripheral parts of the domestic water system such as dead legs off the water system may be minimised by regular use of these outlets. When outlets are not in regular use, weekly flushing of these devices for several minutes can significantly reduce the number of legionella bacteria discharged from the outlet. Once started, this procedure must be sustained and logged, as lapses can result in a critical increase in legionella at the outlet.”

(The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems L8)

The number of legionella bacteria in domestic hot and cold water systems are controlled in the main by:

- Designing systems to minimise the risk
- Ensuring systems are kept clean
- Ensuring water in systems does not stagnate and is kept moving
- Controlling the temperature of water in the systems

When buildings or parts of buildings are left unused for any period it is likely that the use of the water system will be significantly reduced by comparison to when the building is fully occupied.

These circumstances will lead to water stagnating in pipe work, creating an environment that is favourable to the growth of legionella bacteria.

In order that Ruskington Parish Council maintains control to reduce the risk of legionella bacteria in its water systems, there is a need to implement a weekly flushing/purging regime as follows:

Flushing

When flushing showerheads and taps that haven't been used in the last seven days or more, it is the first quantity of water that might be contaminated. Once this water has run through the risk of exposure is minimal. Therefore, it is the first 30 seconds to 1 minute when the risk is greater, and it is important that staff minimise the risk of contact with spray from outlets during this first flush through.

Showers

Run water from both hot and cold supplies, or warm if on a single mixer tap, through the showerhead for a minimum of 5 minutes. Showerheads are designed to produce spray and aerosols, therefore, when they have not run for seven days or more, they should be run through a bucket of water so that no spray (atomised legionella) escapes into the atmosphere.

[Showerheads to be removed, cleaned and "de-scaled" every 12th week.](#)

Taps

Run water from both hot and cold supplies, or warm if on a single mixer tap, through tap(s) for a minimum of 5 minutes. The water should be run slowly to avoid spray for 1 minute and can then run faster for a further 4 minutes.

[Taps are to be cleaned and "de-scaled" every 12 weeks.](#)

Toilets

Flush all toilets within Ruskington Parish Council buildings at least once per week.

Purging

Where it is difficult to carry out weekly flushing, the outlet concerned needs to be purged to drain before the outlet is used normally. Therefore, the following procedure should be utilised:

Open the outlet gradually and slowly at first.

It may be necessary to use additional piping to purge drain, if it is envisaged that spray may be produced.

Run the outlet for a minimum of 5 minutes before using the outlet.

It is envisaged that this procedure will only apply to outlets that are in areas difficult to access regularly and that all the accessible outlets will be flushed weekly.

Record Keeping

It is important that the flushing/purging regime is recorded using the log sheet shown at Appendix 1. All completed sheets should be stored at the Parish Office.

Difficulties

If difficulties or problems implementing the system are experienced then the operatives should inform the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Flushing/Purging Regime Log Sheet
Wash Hand Basins, Toilets and Shower Facilities

All taps and showers must be run for a minimum of 5 minutes, once per week, and all toilets must be flushed once per week.

Showerheads are to be removed, cleaned and “de-scaled” every 12th week.

Taps to be cleaned and “de-scaled” every 12th week.

Please complete the log sheet details below.

Location: (e.g. Public Toilets – Church Street)

| Week | Date | Flushed - Yes/No | Operative Signature |
|------|------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | | | |
| 12 | | | |

Example Sheet

Flushing/Purging Regime Log Sheet
Wash Hand Basins, Toilets and Shower Facilities

All taps and showers must be run for a minimum of 5 minutes, once per week, and all toilets must be flushed once per week.

Showerheads are to be removed, cleaned and "de-scaled" every 12th week.

Taps to be cleaned and "de-scaled" every 12th week.

Please complete the log sheet details below.

Location: (e.g. Pavilion/Changing Room – Parkfield Road Playing Fields)

| Week | Date | Flushed - Yes/No | Operative Signature |
|------|------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | | | |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | | | |
| 10 | | | |
| 11 | | | |
| 12 | | | |

Example Sheet

