

Deep Water Blue

consultancy risk assessment chemicals  
dosing and control equipment  
water sampling cleaning and chlorination  
test kits plant monitoring servicing  
cooling heating steam process waste  
razor sharp service ideas attention to detail



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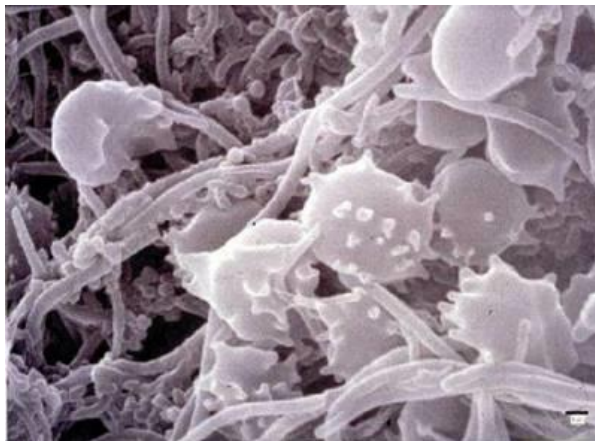
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## The impact of Covid-19 on Legionella Control

The current situation regarding Covid-19 remains fluid with advice and measures being updated on an ongoing basis. As the focus remains on the control of the virus the current lifting of measures has allowed for an increase in people being able to return to the workplace. Attention, of course, will remain on the success of the current control strategy with the very real possibility of the previous lockdown restrictions being re-established should control be compromised.

With manufacturing sites coming back into service along with office and supporting functions attention needs to be focused on the management of water systems in a variety of working environments. These will also include those locations where work has been continuing as it is likely that these will have been restricted compared to normal operation and some additional control measures will have already had to have been implemented.

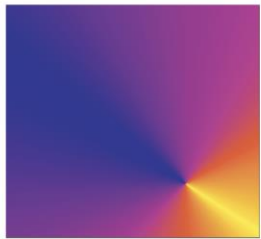


As water treatment specialists, our role here is to help assist our customers in making the correct decisions for their systems. This starts with reviewing the way that the system is being used and how that will change going forward. Choosing the correct method of managing the system will help to minimize the possibility of bacterial growth, biofilm formation and so reduce any risk along with the possibility of under deposit corrosion.

One of the initial challenges was the uncertainty as to how long this lockdown and the consequent business downturn would last, and although there has been some relaxing of restrictions, not all businesses will be in a position to reopen. In this scenario, they will still need to review their shut-down methods and any monitoring required at this time. When looking at more domestic systems mothballing of a building or area may be suitable, as long as a comprehensive management programme can be implemented including flushing and the management of any disinfectant in use.

You may already have found yourself in this situation and had to make a decision swiftly regarding the systems on your site. Simply turning the system off, whether it be a cooling tower or domestic system and then hoping, or even assuming, that you can just turn the systems back on when needed, is a recipe for disaster. There is guidance available for the management of your systems in the L8 Legionnaires' disease The control of legionella bacteria in water systems Approved Code of Practice and guidance and the HSG274 Legionnaires' disease Technical guidance series of documents along with TM13 Minimising the Risk of Legionnaires Disease.





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As part of your written scheme of control for legionella you should already have in place site-specific shut-down and start-up procedures for your water systems, however, the current situation has highlighted that many schemes do not include this or the measures are unworkable or unsuitable. These should be reviewed to ensure that any future emergency shutdown includes safe decommissioning and recommissioning of the water systems.

There are already documented procedures in place for the treatment of cooling tower of systems which are offline for varying lengths of time. Monitoring is still required as chemical treatment reserves, particularly biocides, will need to be monitored to ensure that the necessary system protection is in place. Should your cooling tower system be out of operation for a month or longer then draining is recommended.

It is vital to remember in this situation how wide-ranging the systems covered under the regulations regarding legionella are. As well as the obvious cooling towers, it is also important to consider domestic hot and cold systems along with the 'other' category which can cover anything which contains water. These should have previously undergone risk assessment, but some may have originally been overlooked or the system changed/amended since the original risk assessment was carried out.



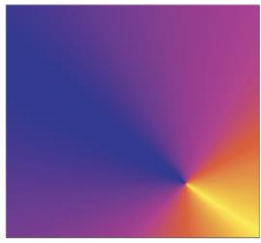
Once the decision has been made to bring the systems back into service it is critical that these are managed correctly and most plans will advise for some sort of disinfection process and validation sampling as the system comes back into service to ensure that it is safe. Again, as part of your control scheme, you should have measures in place for site-specific start-up procedures for your systems. Although these are most typically thought of for cooling systems, they also need to be considered for any other risk systems and buildings which have been mothballed. Ongoing management needs to be considered for systems which may have reduced usage, for domestic systems, this may mean increasing the register of little-used outlets as offices are running at reduced numbers. Should a building have to reopen before it can safely be



recommissioned then consideration should be given to supplementary measures to control the risk such as point of use sterilising grade filters.

The slow re-establishment of services will likely not allow for all systems to be brought back into service in full and as such will require a staggered approach to recommissioning. Any dead legs will have to be identified and action to be taken to ensure that contamination





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between out of service sections of the system and the newly commissioned parts of the systems is not allowed to take place.

Strict adherence to the guidelines along with any site-specific procedures should allow for the safe recommissioning of systems to resume operation while being compliant with regards to the relevant legislation

If you need any help, please get in touch with us at Deep Water Blue Ltd.-The Water Treatment Specialists-Tel-08704602980 or mail to [info@deepwaterblue.co.uk](mailto:info@deepwaterblue.co.uk)

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