

HSENI launch inspection campaign focusing on the management of Legionella bacteria

In May 2025 the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) announced the launch of an inspection campaign focusing on the management of Legionella bacteria in hot and cold-water systems across public sector employers.

Ineffective management of Legionella bacteria in water systems can lead to outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease, a potentially fatal form of pneumonia.

During the year-long campaign, which is supported by the Public Health Authority (PHA), Inspectors from HSENI's Public Sector team will visit employers that provide facilities for vulnerable people and the general public, including health care, education, and public buildings such as leisure centres.

The inspection visits, scheduled to last until March 2026, are part of HSENI's wider occupational health campaign aimed at raising awareness on workplace ill health conditions, the impact they can have, and the need for appropriate controls.

Speaking about the campaign, HSENI Principal Inspector (Public Sector) Kyle Carrick said:
"Legionnaires' disease is a serious type of pneumonia caused by inhaling small droplets or aerosols of water suspended in the air that contain the bacteria.

"Some people are more at risk of Legionnaires' disease such as smokers, people with impaired immune systems, and people with some chronic diseases.

"Our campaign will focus on those buildings and facilities where there is a risk of Legionella bacterial growth and transmission, including leisure centres, hospitals, schools and care homes," Kyle explained.

The campaign, which is being supported by the PHA, will also provide an opportunity for HSENI to offer advice across all industry sectors.

Dr Bharat Pankhania, Locum Consultant in Health Protection, at Public Health Agency said:
"Supporting our partners in the HSENI to ensure our public places are safe from potential Legionella infections is an important preventative measure. It is an important step in keeping our communities safe from this infection."

Where significant risks are found during inspections, enforcement action may be taken to ensure that the risks are properly managed.

Further online resources including dedicated webpages and a downloadable poster are available to remind employers of the steps they should take to ensure the risks from Legionella bacteria are managed in their respective buildings.

More information is available at <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/topics/legionella>.