

## **Swiftclean Calls for Greater Diligence on Legionella Control as Basildon Hospital Receives Fine**

*Managing Director of Swiftclean calls for improved training for facilities managers as Essex based Basildon Hospital receives a fine for allowing two fatalities to occur from legionella.*

October 4, 2013 (FPRC) -- Managing Director of Swiftclean calls for improved training for facilities managers as Essex based Basildon Hospital receives a fine for allowing two fatalities to occur from legionella.

“What dismays us most, is that after a fatality in 2007, when lessons should have been learned, another death from legionella was allowed to occur in 2010,” says Gary Nicholls, Managing Director of legionella control expert Swiftclean, of the imposition of a fine on Basildon Hospital for failure to prevent an outbreak of legionella. The hospital, which also failed to prevent the fall from a first floor window by an elderly patient, was fined £350,000 for the two offences, including prosecution costs. “What it does demonstrate,” he added, “is the need for expert legionella control services and more training of the facilities management and cleaning teams in the importance of adherence to L8 guidelines.”

The HSE Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L8 is the document which contains recommendations for the control of legionella, and adherence to them ensures that organisations meet their legal obligations under the COSHH Regulations for legionella control. Understanding and applying its recommendations is essential for good water hygiene. “L8 is currently undergoing a review and will change in the near future, so expert advice will be vital, not just to keep organisations legally compliant, but also because at times human lives depend on legionella control best practice,” warns Nicholls.

It is essential to ensure that hot and cold water supplies adhere to strict temperature guidelines; hot water must be delivered at a minimum of 50°C, while cold water must be below 20°C. Water stored in calorifiers must be kept at temperatures above 60°C. Water hygiene also depends on diligent cleaning and flushing routines to prevent stagnant water, including the frequent flushing of infrequently used outlets and regular descaling of shower heads at prescribed intervals. Plumbing changes may also be required to ensure that pipework is as short and direct as possible and to eliminate dead legs in which water can sit immobile.

Expert advice is needed to ensure an effective legionella risk assessment is carried out and adequate legionella control processes are in place. Accurate record keeping is also essential to demonstrate compliance with regulations as organisations and even individuals may face prosecution if negligence can be proved, as the case of Basildon Hospital has shown.

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### **Keywords**

[legionella control](#)

[legionella risk assessment](#)  
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