



EXETER HOMES TRUST BULLETIN

MAY 2024

Compassion, Companionship and Community

HOARDING

Hoarded homes are a fire risk. The number of possessions can also lead to exit routes becoming blocked, making safe evacuation more difficult. Fires spread faster, especially if doors cannot be closed and where there are flammable items such as newspapers or cardboard lying around.

If someone wants to get rid of items, professional help is available. There is a register of professional de-clutterers who can work with people to support them to remove excess belongings.

Incontinence pads and pants help people live at home with more dignity. However, these products are often supplied in large quantities. They can be bulky and difficult to store, can catch fire and will add fuel to a developing fire.

- Always store incontinence products away from heat sources such as heaters, candles, chargers or anywhere else that they are likely to be subject to heat or flame.
- Try not to store the supplies all in one place – ideally not next to the person's bed or chair.

Exeter Homes Trust is Member number 316 of Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue's Home visit scheme. These visits are planned to resume shortly.

Source: Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue
www.dsfire.gov.uk/safety/home/hoarding

A hoarding disorder is where someone acquires an excessive number of items and stores them in a chaotic manner, usually resulting in unmanageable amounts of clutter.

Hoarding is considered a significant problem if:

- the amount of clutter interferes with everyday living – for example, the person is unable to use or access rooms
- the clutter is causing significant distress or negatively affecting the quality of life of the person or their family – for example, they become upset if someone tries to clear the clutter and their relationship suffers

Hoarding disorders are challenging to treat because many people who hoard frequently do not see it as a problem, or have little awareness of how it's affecting their life or others. The clutter can pose a health risk to them or anyone who lives in or visits their house. For example, it can:

- make cleaning very difficult, leading to unhygienic conditions
- be a fire risk and block exits in the event of fire
- cause trips and falls
- fall over or collapse on people, if in large piles

The hoarding could also be a sign of an underlying condition, such as OCD, other types of anxiety, depression and dementia.

Source: NHS
www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/hoarding-disorder/

PREVENTING LEGIONELLA



What is Legionella?

Legionella bacteria are common and widespread, being found throughout the world in water sources. In the UK, low numbers of bacteria are present in nutrient rich, moist and stagnant environments such as rivers, streams, ponds and even soil.

The bacteria can move in to water systems found in buildings, commonly in public places such as leisure centres, hospitals and offices. Importantly, legionella can also thrive our homes when conditions are favourable for example, in domestic hot and cold-water systems, humidifiers and spa pools.

Why is it harmful?

The bacteria become harmful when they are transmitted in airborne droplets of water known as an aerosol and inhaled in to our lungs. Inhalation of the bacteria can cause Legionnaire's disease which is a form of pneumonia. If not treated, this can become a serious disease and can cause death.

What can I do help reduce the risk in my home?

It is quite rare to contract Legionnaires disease in your own home, but it does sometimes happen.

The bacteria multiply when water temperatures are

in a certain range, therefore to minimise the risk of exposure to the bacteria in your home regulating the temperature of the water is vital. Hot water should be hot, being stored in your tank above 60 degrees centigrade and the cold water cold, below 25 degrees centigrade. Usage of water should be regular so that water is not stored for long periods. This keeps the concentration of any bacteria to a minimum.

Showers can present a particular risk if not used regularly. Bacteria can build up in the shower head and when the shower is used the aerosol of water and steam can release bacteria in to the air which can be inhaled. For this reason, shower heads should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

Pre-letting checks and Livery Dole Flats Heat Network and Culverland Road

Exeter Homes Trust disinfects shower heads prior to letting, when thereafter the Resident takes responsibility for their own Almshouse. At Livery Dole Flats, which has a heat network serving 15 Almshouses, a professional firm checks, analyses and reports on the water systems. Culverland Road has proprietary Mitsubishi Air Source Heat Pump systems which have integral devices to obviate Legionella.

IMPORTANT NOTE

As a Resident of Exeter Homes Trust, if you encounter an emergency situation or what you perceive to be an unlawful incident in or around your home or Almshouse estate, please phone 999 in the first instance.

Exeter Homes Trust does not provide support or extra care services.



Registered Charity No.201530



PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR ALMSHOUSE KEYS WITH YOU. A CALLOUT FOR THE LOCKSMITH IS COSTLY.