

Please read this
important information

Legionella: your fact sheet

‘Legionella’ is the name given to a group of bacteria that is found in almost all water sources including rivers and lakes. It can also be found in soil, compost and mains water and can potentially thrive in domestic water systems.

Is Legionella harmful?

Legionella can be harmful if the conditions are right for the bacteria to multiply and if you inhale water droplets from a contaminated water system. Generally legionella bacteria exists naturally in low numbers in all water supplied to the home. With normal regular use this causes no problems. The risk occurs where bacteria can increase and multiply to dangerous levels.

Main risk areas in the home are shower heads, taps and even washing machine or dishwasher pipes. Legionella bacteria is more likely to grow between 20°C and 45°C and where there is sludge, scale and rust for the bacteria to feed on.

What can I do?

- Ensure all taps and showers are used at least once a week. If they are not used regularly or if you have been on holiday run all your taps for a few minutes before using the water. You’ll also need to run the water in your shower. Make sure the water doesn’t spray or splash too much as this can create water droplets.
- Keep taps and shower heads clean and free from lime scale, mould or algae growth. Brush the scale off with a nylon brush and wipe with a diluted bleach solution. You can also buy de-scaling solution from hardware shops.
- Keep hot water on your boiler or hot water cylinders set to 60°C or greater. Just beware of scalding!
- Report any rust or unusual deposits flowing from water outlets to us by phoning 01395 517458 or emailing repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Further Information

The Health and Safety Executive is the government body responsible for water hygiene and legionnaires disease. Further advice can be found at hse.gov.uk/legionnaires.

Please read this
important information

Asbestos: your fact sheet

Properties built during a certain period are likely to contain asbestos, even if there is asbestos in your home it is not usually a serious problem. Asbestos only become dangerous when it gets damaged over time or is disturbed during work on your home. When damaged, asbestos releases fibers that can cause serious lung disease.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring toxic mineral known for its remarkable strength and resistance to heat. Manufacturers have added asbestos to thousands of products to help with insulation and fireproofing. It was widely used from 1930 to the mid 1980s but particularly from the 1960s onwards.

It is most commonly found in construction materials used to build many older homes and public buildings although banned now, such as cement, textured paint, and spray on insulation, ceiling and floor tiles. So houses and flats built or refurbished prior to 2000 may contain asbestos. However identical properties may not contain the same materials. Different contractors may have used different materials at different times. About 5.5 million buildings in the UK contain asbestos in some form.

What should you do if you think there is asbestos in your home?

Do not touch it. If the material is in good condition and will not be disturbed the best option is usually to leave it in place. If you have any concerns contact the Property and Asset team at East Devon District Council on 01395 517458.

What are the health risks?

Because asbestos has been so widely used, there is low level of asbestos fibers in the air everywhere. Yet the risk to the public from asbestos in the home is low.

Home improvements can result in brief but high levels of exposure. If you think a material might contain asbestos contact East Devon District Council.





How do we manage asbestos in tenanted properties or blocks of flats?

We are in the process of obtaining in depth information about presence of asbestos within our properties. We have an asbestos plan at eastdevon.gov.uk – search for ‘asbestos management plan’.

These management inspections involve visual inspection of the property or block and sampling of suspect materials. Before we do any work in an area of your home or block that has or may have asbestos, we will arrange for an additional detailed survey. This ‘refurbishment survey’ entails sampling material by opening up the area – for example, removing a bath panel to inspect any hidden materials. Once the results are received we will determine what action if any is needed. Asbestos only becomes dangerous if damaged or disturbed.

Tenant responsibilities

If you wish you carry out any home improvements you must apply for written approval from East Devon District Council before you start the works in accordance with your tenancy agreement. You will be advised if an asbestos report will need to be carried out.

If you personally carry out the works, or enable and permit others to carry out work without our prior written approval you will be fully liable for any costs of dealing with any asbestos incidents.

For more information

East Devon District Council:
eastdevon.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive:
hse.gov.uk

Repairs

East Devon District Council
repairs team
01395 517458
repairs@eastdevon.gov.uk
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Emergency repairs

Phone: 01395 516854
5pm to 8.30am every day

Asbestos information for owner/ occupier homes or privately rented accommodation

East Devon District Council
private sector housing team
01395 516551
housingservices@eastdevon.gov.uk
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Queries about fly-tipped asbestos

East Devon District Council
environmental health team
01395 517457
environmentalhealth@eastdevon.gov.uk
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday