

Safety Moment

Getting the right water temperatures in taps and shower heads is crucial to prevent the formation of legionella bacteria. This bacteria can be present in water droplets that, when inhaled, can cause legionnaires disease. The prime temperature range for bacteria to grow is between 20°C and 45°C.

Similarly hot water should not be too hot so as not to discourage handwashing. Building owners are responsible for regularly testing water temperatures to make sure that the correct temperatures are being maintained.

Water Temperature

Hot water should be hot enough, but not too hot

Hot Water



50°C+



<1 min

Cold Water



<20°C



<2 mins

- 1 Unless you are responsible for your building's maintenance there is no responsibility to regularly test the water temperature. However if you are concerned, follow steps 2 and 3.
- 2 To test hot water - hold a temperature probe in the hot water flow for 1 minute and note temperature, it should be a minimum of 50°C.
- 3 To test cold water - hold a temperature probe in the cold water flow for 2 minutes and note temperature, it should be a less than 20°C.
- 4 If you are concerned that the temperature is not correct then escalate to your client or whomever is responsible for maintaining the building.
- 5 If you believe the temperatures are incorrect, report as a Near Miss on AIR2.