

Legionella - Guidelines for Customers

- Sampling is the responsibility of the customer and not the laboratory.
- 1 Litre of sample is required by the laboratory for the test.
- Legionella samples can only be submitted to the laboratory on a Monday (between 8:30 – 17:00), Tuesday (between 8:30 – 13:00), Thursday (between 8:30 – 17:00) or Friday (between 8:30 – 13:00) and submission must be agreed with the laboratory prior to arrival.
- Once samples are received by the laboratory they will be processed within 48 hours (preferably 24 hours) in accordance with BS EN ISO 19458:2006 'Water Quality – Sampling for Microbiological Analysis' and BS 7592:2008 'Sampling for Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems – Code of Practice'.
- Samples should be transported to the laboratory at ambient temperature and be protected from heat and sunlight. The samples should be delivered to the laboratory as soon as possible.
- Any information about the sample that the customer requires to appear on the report must be specified on the sample submission form accompanying the sample. This information includes the sample site, sampling technique, the nature of the sample, the kind of water system or plant and the sample point. The person submitting the samples for analysis must complete and sign the sample submission form.
- Legionella testing is carried out according to Laboratory method (66) - 'LEGION' (which is based on the British Standard - 'BS EN ISO 11731:2017 Water Quality – Enumeration of Legionella.') and which has been accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service.
- Once analysis has begun, the test takes a minimum of ten days before a final result can be reported. Examination of the plates and any confirmatory tests required will, however, take place during this period and any positive result obtained will be reported as a preliminary result on an interim report form before the test is finished. The final report will be issued once the test is completed.
- The laboratory is not responsible for advising on or instigating corrective actions following a sample which has been found to contain Legionella.
- A result of "not detected" means that there were no Legionella found in the volume of sample analysed. This does not necessarily mean that no Legionella were present in the sample, as the theoretical limit of detection for this method is 25cfu/L. It must therefore be interpreted as less than 25 Legionella cfu/volume filtered. Where a dilution has been setup the theoretical limit of detection will be increased by the dilution factor. This will be stated on the report where necessary.
- Where a count is not possible due to over growth of non-Legionella organisms this will be stated on the report and a repeat sample will be requested.
- Legionella cfu/volume filtered means number of Legionella colony forming units in the volume of sample analysed. Where less than 1 Litre of sample is filtered, a corrected value (cfu/L) is also reported. This is an estimate and not an accredited result.

- On the test report:
 - 'sg' means serogroup.
 - 'cfu' means colony forming unit.
 - 'GU' means Glycine Vancomycin Polymyxin Cycloheximide (GVPC) Agar inoculated with an untreated portion of the sample was used for the result reported.
 - 'GH' means Glycine Vancomycin Polymyxin Cycloheximide (GVPC) Agar inoculated with a heat treated portion of the sample was used for the result reported.
 - 'BU' means Buffered Charcoal Yeast Extract Agar with Cysteine (BCYE+) inoculated with an untreated portion of the sample was used for the result reported.
 - 'BH' means Buffered Charcoal Yeast Extract Agar with Cysteine (BCYE+) inoculated with a heat treated portion of the sample was used for the result reported.

- It is a legal requirement for employers and those with responsibilities for the control of the premises, under the Health and Safety at Work (General) (Guernsey) Ordinance, 1987, Section 9 and Schedule 2 Part I (9), that some positive Legionella results must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Please note that this relaxes the requirements of Section 9 and Schedule 2 Part I (9), which would otherwise require all positive results to be reported.
 - **Between 0 and 99 CFU/L:** No requirement to report to the HSE; take corrective action (for example cleaning, flushing) and resample.
 - **Between 100 and 999 CFU/L:** Report to the HSE, with a list of remedial actions either taken or to be taken within a specific time frame. An e-mail is acceptable, HSE@gov.gg
 - **1000 CFU/L and above:** Complete a RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) report to the HSE with an IMMEDIATE plan of action and ongoing investigative/remedial action.

- The Laboratory is not responsible for informing the HSE in the event of Legionella species being detected in any sample.

- For further information, guidance and how to report positive results to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), please refer to:
 - Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Local Approved Code of Practice & guidance document Legionnaires' disease: The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems in Guernsey (Legionella ACoP - Guernsey). This is available on the Gov.gg website – (<https://www.gov.gg/legionella>).
 - Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Approved Code of Practice and guidance document Legionnaires' disease: The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems (L8). This is available on the HSE website – (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/index.htm>).

- It is also a legal requirement, under the Public Health Ordinance 1936 as amended, that detection of Legionella species (*Legionella spp.*) is reported to the Medical Officer of Health (*Article IV of Billet d'État No. III of 2014*).
 - The Laboratory will inform the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) in the event of Legionella species being detected in any sample.
 - The laboratory will also inform the regulator, Office of Environmental Health and Pollution Regulation (OEHPR).
 - The information provided to the MOH and the OEHPR will be limited to the following which complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018;
 - Address of premises
 - Date of sampling
 - Highest detected levels of Legionella in the following ranges:
 - ≥ 25 to ≤ 100 cfu
 - ≥ 100 to ≤ 1000 cfu
 - ≥ 1000 cfu
- It is essential that all sample submission sheets have the full address of the property completed at the time of submitting the sample(s) so that the correct details are reported to the MOH and the OEHPR.