

Temperature profiling (representative outlet temperature monitoring)

2.65 Temperature profiling is a useful tool to verify a water distribution system is maintaining temperatures in all parts of the system in normal use, to control adequately any microbial growth, including legionellae. Rationalising the choice of where to monitor complex systems requires considering the layout to identify the principal loops. These are typically relatively few in number and will take hot water to and from parts of the building, eg toilets or other facilities, and will be one above another in a multi-storey building supplied by a vertical flow and return loop (often in a service void known as a riser and sometimes with access doors on each storey). In lower rise large buildings, the principal loops could run horizontally, typically above false ceilings in corridors.

2.66 As it may be impractical to monitor every part of a complex system, some form of rationalisation and prioritisation should be applied. As with cold water systems, any parts of the system not represented by sentinels should be identified, and additional outlets selected for less frequent monitoring to create a temperature profile of the whole system over a defined time.

2.67 HWS which supply outlets to high-risk users and incorporate tertiary loops, eg showers in healthcare premises, should be identified as areas for additional temperature monitoring.

Low storage volume heaters

2.68 Low storage volume heaters (ie no greater than 15 litres) such as instantaneous units and POU heaters, may be generally regarded as lower risk.

Info box 2.2: Low-risk systems

An example of a low-risk situation:

- in a small building without people especially 'at risk' from legionella bacteria;
- where daily water usage is inevitable and sufficient to turn over the entire system;
- where cold water comes directly from a wholesome mains supply (no stored water tanks);
- where hot water is fed from instantaneous heaters or low storage volume water heaters (supplying outlets at 50 °C);
- where the only outlets are toilets and hand washbasins (no showers).

2.69 Low storage volume heaters serving hot water outlets should be able to achieve a peak temperature of 50–60 °C and where the thermostat is set at these temperatures for this purpose, staff and other users should be informed not to adjust the heater. A unit which is not capable of achieving this, eg a preset thermostat, should only be used where there is a very high turnover or an alternative control measure is in place.

2.70 Low storage volume heaters, which includes electric showers, often have spray nozzle outlets and these should be inspected, cleaned and descaled as part of the showerhead and hose cleaning regime.

2.71 If these units are not regularly used or set to supply warm water, the risk from legionella is likely to increase dramatically and may increase further, where the units are supplied from a cold water storage tank. The risk assessment should take into account the usage of the units, the susceptibility of those using the units and include a suitable monitoring regime where the risk is considered significant.

Table 2.1: Checklist for hot and cold water systems

Service	Action to take	Frequency
Calorifiers	Inspect calorifier internally by removing the inspection hatch or using a boroscope and clean by draining the vessel. The frequency of inspection and cleaning should be subject to the findings and increased or decreased based on conditions recorded	Annually, or as indicated by the rate of fouling
	Where there is no inspection hatch, purge any debris in the base of the calorifier to a suitable drain Collect the initial flush from the base of hot water heaters to inspect clarity, quantity of debris, and temperature	Annually, but may be increased as indicated by the risk assessment or result of inspection findings
	Check calorifier flow temperatures (thermostat settings should modulate as close to 60 °C as practicable without going below 60 °C) Check calorifier return temperatures (not below 50 °C, in healthcare premises not below 55 °C)	Monthly
Hot water services	For non-circulating systems: take temperatures at sentinel points (nearest outlet, furthest outlet and long branches to outlets) to confirm they are at a minimum of 50 °C within one minute (55 °C in healthcare premises)	Monthly
	For circulating systems: take temperatures at return legs of principal loops (sentinel points) to confirm they are at a minimum of 50 °C (55 °C in healthcare premises). Temperature measurements may be taken on the surface of metallic pipework	Monthly
	For circulating systems: take temperatures at return legs of subordinate loops, temperature measurements can be taken on the surface of pipes, but where this is not practicable, the temperature of water from the last outlet on each loop may be measured and this should be greater than 50 °C within one minute of running (55 °C in healthcare premises). If the temperature rise is slow, it should be confirmed that the outlet is on a long leg and not that the flow and return has failed in that local area	Quarterly (ideally on a rolling monthly rota)
	All HWS systems: take temperatures at a representative selection of other points (intermediate outlets of single pipe systems and tertiary loops in circulating systems) to confirm they are at a minimum of 50 °C (55 °C in healthcare premises) to create a temperature profile of the whole system over a defined time period	Representative selection of other sentinel outlets considered on a rotational basis to ensure the whole system is reaching satisfactory temperatures for legionella control
POU water heaters (no greater than 15 litres)	Check water temperatures to confirm the heater operates at 50–60 °C (55 °C in healthcare premises) or check the installation has a high turnover	Monthly–six monthly, or as indicated by the risk assessment