

Hot Tubs and Spa Pools

Introduction

Spa-pool/hot tubs are a recognised source of diseases caused by infectious agents including the organism that causes legionnaires' disease. There have been a number of outbreaks linked to spa pools in leisure centres, hotels, holiday homes, on cruise ships and on display.

Leisure time is increasing which results in more people enjoying the use of spas and hot tubs. In the UK hot tubs sales are growing at more than 20% per year, consequently more businesses and individuals are entering the commercial renting market and need to be aware of the legislation involved in their safe operation and attendant risks. This boom brings with it a heightened risk of hot tub rash & Legionnaires Disease therefore new revised detailed guidance has been issued by the HSE.

HSE Guidance

HSG282 "*the control of Legionella and other infectious agents in spa pool systems*" was published in 2017 and provides guidance for those who manage or operate spa-pool systems and explains how to manage and control the risks from legionella and other infectious agents.

There is specific advice on hot tubs used as part of a business activity, for example in holiday park rental units, hotel bedrooms and hot tubs on display or at exhibitions. The guidance includes advice on effective ways to safely manage them.

What should I have in place to safely use a hot tub?

- An up-to-date Legionella risk assessment.
- Certified hot tub water hygiene training.
- Logbook to record all checks and COSHH data sheets for all chemicals.
- Monthly bacteriological water sample results taken from a UKAS accredited lab.
- Suitable hot tub safety information and pool safety operating procedures.
- A hot tub in-line chemical feeder i.e., frog, or chemical feeder incorporated within the hot tub filter that chlorine/bromine slow dissolve tables can be added.

What hot tub safety information should my guests receive?

HSG282 does not set out exactly what information guests should receive, as a guideline the below information has been suggested by supplier plus members **Solway Water**

Management: -

- Hot tub safety information prior to guests arriving, the more time the better, as they may need to seek medical advice prior to using the hot tub, i.e., if they have high blood pressure, pregnant etc.
- Safety information during check in, you may want to issue a disclaimer to confirm they have read and understood the safety information.
- If feasible provide a demonstration on how to use the hot tub correctly, this simple step can make a significant difference on your water quality.
- Safety information in the welcome pack.
- Safety information displayed adjacent or near to the hot tub.

- Signs showing how to open and closes you hot tub lid correctly
- Locate the emergency hot tub isolation switch an display a sign above it, included this information in the welcome pack and show guests during check in.

How do I look after my hot tub?

A hot tub used in a business setting i.e., being rented out on a holiday cottage, glamping pod, holiday park or hotel room.

Twice Daily:

- Check water clarity.
- Check the surround of the hot tub is tidy, any evidence of hot tub abuse or excessive alcohol should be record or photographs taken to keep as evidence.
- Determine pH, Total Alkalinity, Chlorine/Bromine Levels.

Weekly and/or between each new guest:

- Drain the hot tub completely and clean, especially around head rests and water features/fountains as they are a high fouling area.
- Remove a inspect a percentage of the water jets as hair can get stuck within them.
- Refill with fresh water, then balance water as you would normally do.
- Clean hot tub filters remove debris from between the filter pleats first, steep for 24 hrs in filter cleaner, then allow to dry.

Monthly:

- Hoses used to fill up hot tubs should also be steeped in a filter cleaner every month to kill any bacteria that has colonised the pipe work.
- Monthly bacteriological water samples for E. coli, Pseudomonas, Coliforms, TVC and every 3 months for Legionella, tested at a UKAS accredited lab. Monthly sampling confirms that your checks are working effectively, protects your guests and protects your business if anything every goes wrong.

Remember it is equally important that all of the above information is recorded as this provides and audit trail if anything ever goes wrong and ends up going to court.

How do I look after my Spa Pool?

Typically, spa pools are found in a hotels, leisure centres and gyms, these are fixed type and cannot be moved like a hot tub.

Daily:

- Check water clarity daily at opening and every two hours thereafter.
- Check automatic dosing systems daily at opening.
- Check chemical reservoir level daily at opening.
- Determine pH value and residual disinfectant concentration at opening and every two hours thereafter.

At the end of the day after closing the spa pool:

- Clean waterline, overflow channels and grills.
- Clean spa pool surround.
- Backwash sand filter (daily to weekly based on the risk assessment).

- Inspect assessable pipework and jets and clean as necessary, check strainers, clean and remove all debris if needed.

To be done at every drain and refill

- Drain and clean whole system (including balance tanks every 6 months).
- Clean strainers.
- Refill with fresh water and balance water.

Monthly:

- Hoses used to fill up hot tubs should also be steep in a filter cleaner every month to kill any bacteria that has colonised the pipe work.
- Monthly bacteriological water samples for E. coli, Pseudomonas, Coliforms, TVC and every 3 months for Legionella, tested at a UKAS accredited lab.

Remember it is equally important that all of the above actions are recorded as this provides an audit trail and evidence of compliance should anything ever go wrong.

For any further advice or help with risk assessments, monthly bacteriological testing, certified hot tub training, hot tub safety information signage then contact Solway Water Management:-

www.solwaywatermanagement.co.uk

For further reading refer to:- - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/spa-pools.htm>

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