

Background

Watercare were approached by a local Contractor working for the RNLI in the North East. Initially our brief was to bring the former divisional base at Thornaby back into safe operation.



Watercare carried out a Legionella Risk Assessment and set up monthly monitoring. Watercare also oversaw the service and maintenance of the gas appliances and air conditioning. Once completed it became apparent to the local maintenance manager that other sites in the North East required considerable investigation to bring them up to the same standard.

The Difficulty

Watercare was asked to carry out Legionella Risk Assessments of the Lifeboat Stations and Life Guard Stations where no Legionella protection was in place.



The difficulty was threefold, many of the buildings are little used and in difficult locations and many of the staff are volunteers making communications a challenge. Watercare contacted all the staff and arranged individual visits so we did not tie up valuable RNLI time.

What we found

We found that the local facilities manager had been right to be concerned, historically the stations had been given little maintenance regarding water based systems and little or no compliance with current legionella prevention regulations, we also found that many of the hot water services were no longer suitable for the uses they now had.



We found workshop sinks with small spray handwash water heaters, showers with mould on and little used old sites.

Solutions

Watercare were instructed to find solutions to the problems, external showers were renewed and converted for access to cleaning, small old spray water heaters were removed and larger water heaters fitted so boat mechanics and crew could wash in hot water. Water tanks were chlorinated and pipework altered to comply with the water regulations.



Monitoring has been put in place where required and quarterly shower disinfection has been introduced. The volunteer staff were also advised that

whilst the job they do is dangerous, coming back and having a shower could be too !!

Summary

The area maintenance manager had the foresight to see the dangers of non compliance with Acop L8, the risk to the charity and the problems with the water systems. Watercare have now produced risk assessments for all the lifeboat stations and life guard stations in the North East area, disinfected and renewed showers heads, and installed suitable new water heaters where required. Monitoring and shower cleaning have now been introduced where required. Ongoing procedures have been put in place.

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