



Webinar Q&A

What's New in British Water Quality Standards – Dr Susanne Lee

1. What do you think is causing the continuing rise in legionella cases?

This is a complex question. There are many reasons including: better ascertainment and reporting of cases, the possible effect of climate change increasing source and storage water temperatures. There has also been evidence of the knock on effects of COVID-19 in the last couple of years, as people have not been looking after the water systems during lockdown. Economically, the cost of managing water systems has also increased so with reduced income and increased overheads especially during COVID it is possible not as much attention has been given to keeping water safe.

2. Would you ever agree with building operators taking their own water samples?

I would agree with this if they have been trained to do so, it also depends on the reasons as to why they are taking their own samples. For example, during commissioning and before handover sampling should be independent.

3. Can the usual management methods for *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* be applied to the MRP *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*?

There is little evidence that *P.aeruginosa* changes its already inherent resistance to biocides cleaning and heat. even sensitive strains may require higher concentrations of biocides. Organic biocides are not recommended as they can, be used as a nutrient source especially if not made up correctly. . use oxidising biocides and prevention is better than cure.

4. What common things are often missed out of risk assessments?

Missing things on Risk assessments is often it is down to the fact people are fixed on checklists, we have had experience of risk assessments missing out whole buildings within healthcare premises! . You need to make sure you have got the information as to what you need to include and the scope of the RA prior to going on site. There is often a lack of knowledge, understanding and not enough time spent on the pre-assessment documentation review. It is in both risk assessment standards that you should look at previous results and risk assessments before attending site and there is not enough time spent on this.

5. How should the hand wash be positioned given you are adding nutrients? It appears it is away from the tap itself however the hand wash can still land on the sink back ledge or within the sink itself depending on layout. Would it be recommended to be away from the sink so spillage would land on the floor presenting a slip hazard or fit possible drip drains to the units?

This needs to be assessed individually on the ward / unit with all potential hazards and associated risks taken into account both that of allowing nutrient deposition and the potential for slips trips and falls taking account of the susceptibility and vulnerability of the population at risk.