



Property Management

Scalding risks associated with hot water

Scope:	This policy applies to Circle 33 Housing Trust, EPIC Trust, Mole Valley Housing Association, Old Ford Housing Association, Roddons Housing Association, Russet Homes, South Anglia Housing, and Wherry Housing Association
Effective Date:	November 2008
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Signed Off :	Group Policy Forum, 20 th November 2008
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Policy Owned by:	Policy and Planning
KLOE:	Stock Investment and Asset Management
QAF (Supported Housing):	n/a
Statute:	The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
Regulatory Code:	3.4

Scalding associated with hot water

1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies to all general needs and supported housing owned or managed by:
- Circle 33 Housing Trust
 - EPIC Trust
 - Mole Valley Housing Association
 - Old Ford Housing Association
 - Roddons Housing Association
 - Russet Homes
 - South Anglia Housing
 - Wherry Housing Association
- 1.2 It sets out what Circle Anglia will do to mitigate risks associated with hot water scalding.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 As owners and managers of property we have a duty of care to ensure that residents and visitors can use the relevant buildings and facilities safely. This extends to ensuring that residents and visitors are safe from risks associated with hot water scalding.
- 2.2 Circle Anglia is committed to minimising the risk of scalding from hot water. We do this by:
- Providing information for residents about the risks associated with hot water systems, for example through the [Using Water Safely leaflet](#)
 - Responding to repairs requests and notification of problems promptly and in accordance with our [day-to-day repairs service standards](#)
 - Carrying out planned improvement programmes on heating systems
 - Including within cyclical maintenance programmes such as gas or electrical servicing additional elements to ensure safety of hot water installations, and setting up specific programmes if necessary
 - Carrying out risk assessments as appropriate in supported or sheltered housing to consider particular safety requirements

3 Policy

- 3.1 The reason for storing and distributing water at high temperatures is to prevent the proliferation of legionella bacteria. Circle Anglia's [Water Treatment policy](#) covers this topic.
- 3.2 Hot water can however cause a health and safety risk. The main areas of concern are:
- **Faulty hot water systems** – where uncontrolled water temperatures within a storage tank cause it to collapse, spilling extremely hot water
 - **High surface temperatures** – where there is a risk of burns through contact with a surface forming part of the hot water system
 - **High temperature hot water outlets** – where hot water in taps and other outlets is too hot and there is a risk of scalding
- 3.3 The control of delivered hot water temperatures coupled with the control of stored and distribution hot water temperature is the key to safe hot water provision. The optimum arrangement is to store water at above 60°C, distribute water at 55-60°C, and deliver water at temperatures between 35-46°C.
- 3.4 There are various legislative documents relevant to this area which we will comply with:
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999
- 3.5 In addition we have taken into account the recommendations of the following:
- NHS Estates Health Guidance Note
 - HSE Safety Alert May 2008
 - Thermostatic Mixing Valve Association (TMVA)s Recommended Code of Practice for Safe Water Temperatures
 - Buildcert Product Certification

Faulty hot water systems

- 3.6 There is a rare but potentially serious scalding risk from domestic hot water systems which include a fixed all-electric or part-electric immersion heater in conjunction with a plastic cold water storage cistern or 'tank' located in the roof space.

3.7 The risk is greatest when cisterns are located above bedrooms. This is most likely in houses built between 1945 and 1975. Often these homes have, or used to have, a back boiler. If the cylinder is located in a bedroom it is probable that the cistern may be directly above it.

3.8 We will counter this risk through a three fold approach:

- **Responsive Repairs:** responding to reports of problems from residents in line with our customer service standards
- **Cyclical Maintenance:** including relevant checks into our existing cyclical maintenance programmes where possible, and establishing additional programmes where necessary
- **Planned programmes:** targeting properties at highest risk, and aligning with ongoing decent homes work

3.9 An overheating immersion cylinder will normally show warning signs so serious incidents are likely to be extremely rare. We will publicise to our residents and staff warning signs indicating possible thermostat failure and overheating of the water in the cylinder, including:

- Excessive noise from the hot water cylinder
- Abnormally high hot water temperatures
- Steam rising from the feed cistern/tank

High surface temperatures

3.10 Individuals who cannot move away from a heat source (i.e. hot water pipes, radiators or other forms of space heating devices) quickly enough can sustain serious burns. This often occurs because they have fallen and are physically unable to move due to their mobility or are trapped by the furniture arrangement. Incidents often occur in areas where there is not a regular flow of staff or others to raise the alarm, e.g. in bedrooms (especially during the night), bathrooms, and some lounges.

3.11 We will carry out risk assessments on all sheltered and supported housing, and consider the options available for mitigating the risks. Individual RSLs will be responsible for implementing planned programmes in response to these assessments.

3.12 The resident leaflet about using water safely will also mention the risks to young children associated with the pipes leading to and from radiators.

High temperature hot water outlets

- 3.13 Hot bath water is responsible for the highest number of fatal and severe scald injuries in the home. Vulnerable people such as the elderly, very young children or those unable to discern adequately the true water temperature should be viewed as a high risk.
- 3.14 There is currently no legal requirement to limit the delivery temperature of general needs domestic hot water at the point of use. In general needs properties the primary responsibility for safety is on the resident. We will publicise recommendations for safety from scalding through our [Using Water Safely leaflet](#).
- 3.15 In Supported and Sheltered Housing stock we will install Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMVs) to control the temperature of water from outlets. We will identify any Supported and Sheltered Housing stock without TMVs and carry out planned programmes (where possible tying in with existing programmes such as Decent Homes) to install the appropriate valves.
- 3.16 Where TMVs are installed they will meet all industry standards, as set out in the procedure below. Where possible we will use valves with an override facility on baths and showers, unless risk assessments dictate otherwise.
- 3.17 We will identify all existing TMVs within our stock (including general needs) and ensure that they receive an annual safety check, where possible in conjunction with other cyclical programmes.

New build and refurbishments

- 3.18 The Housing Corporation has recognised the need for an effective solution to the hazard of scalding within social housing. The revised Scheme Development Standards, issued in April 2003, included a new recommendation for general needs housing under item 1.2.1.33a – that hot water taps to baths should have a thermostatically controlled supply.
- 3.19 Under item 1.2.1.59, housing for the elderly, the statement is classed as an 'essential' item and has a broader application which indicates that all hot water taps should have a thermostatically controlled supply.
- 3.20 Circle Anglia will comply with these standards for all new developments and refurbishments.

4 Equality and Diversity

- 4.1 It is essential to recognise that customers of all races, ages, religions, gender, sexual orientation and disability should be treated equally and fairly.
- 4.2 Children, older people and more vulnerable people are most susceptible to scalding associated with hot water. We will actively work to reduce the risks these groups face.
- 4.3 All customers will have access to this document upon request or from our website www.circleanglia.org/customers
- 4.4 This document can be translated or provided in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, large print, audio) upon request.
- 4.5 Equality and Diversity training is mandatory for all staff.

5 Publicising the Policy

- 5.1 Circle Anglia will publicise this policy through:
 - Resident Newsletter
 - Resident Website
 - CIRANO
 - Staff Briefings and
 - Training

Glossary

Term	Definition
Thermostatic Mixing Valves (TMVs)	A hot and cold water mixing device which automatically adjusts for variations in the temperature and/or pressure of the incoming supplies, to maintain a selected temperature at the outlet
Condensing combination boilers	A modern form of gas boiler which activates on demand usually within a pressurised system. With this form of boiler there is no need for water storage tanks, hot water cylinders etc. It achieves enhanced efficiency by incorporating an additional heat exchanger. This uses the heat in the exhaust gases from the boiler to preheat the water as it enters the boiler, and so recapturing energy that would otherwise be lost.
Buildcert	Buildcert provide independent certification of plumbing products to national and international standards.
TMV2 and TMV3	Buildcert certify two types of TMV. TMV3s are manufactured to meet the highest specifications required by the NHS Estates D08 standard for mixing valves for use within health care premises in the United Kingdom. TMV2s are for the domestic market, in partnership with the Child Accident Prevention Trust.
BS and BS EN	British Standards (the EN refers to European Standards that have been adopted in Britain). The British Standards Institute allocates and administers standards and specifications for products.
Thermostatic Mixing Valve Association (TMVA)	The TMVA's main aims concern the safe provision of hot water at point-of-use. They provide technical and commercial guidance for building users and installers.
D08	This refers to the specifications and standards set out in the NHS Estates Model Engineering Specification D08.

Related Documents

Document	Link
Connected Policies:	Electrical Safety Gas Safety (Heating Installations) Health and Safety Water Treatment
Forms and Letters:	
Leaflets:	Using Water Safely
Other:	

Version history

Version no.	1	Date effective:	November 2008
Full / partial review?	n/a		
Brief summary of changes:	n/a		
Staff consultation (teams):	Property teams at all RSLs Central Asset Management Team Health and Safety Risk Management Heads of Continuous Improvement Support Initiatives		
Resident consultation:	Mole Valley Operations Working group Mole Valley Policy Forum Roddons editorial group (leaflet) Russet Residents' Panel Russet Tenant Repairs User Group (chaired by the relevant portfolio holder)		
Signed off by:	Group Policy Forum, 20 th November 2008		
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