

Information from the Health Department Groß-Gerau on the subject of drinking water

"Water for human consumption must be of such a quality that its consumption or use is not likely to cause harm to human health, in particular through pathogens." (Infection Protection Act)

The drinking water provided by water suppliers in Germany is of very good quality, inexpensive and ecological.

Drinking water from the tap is suitable for drinking for all people without restriction.

But:

Drinking water is a perishable food. It is not sterile.

If the water stands in the pipes for a long time, microorganisms (e.g. bacteria) can multiply and there are interactions with the pipe material and the fittings. Therefore, the water in the pipes must be replaced regularly.

The best-known potentially pathogenic microorganisms in drinking water installations are Legionella and Pseudomonas aeruginosa.

Legionella proliferate at temperatures between 25°C and 55°C, with optimal growth taking place at 45°C. At 40°C, the legionella numbers double within 4 hours. Above 60°C, no proliferation of legionella or death is to be expected. At 70°C they die within a few seconds.

When showering or when aerosols are otherwise formed, legionella can make people ill by causing Pontiac fever or legionellosis. Pontiac fever is comparable to a mild flu-like infection, while legionellosis is a severe form of pneumonia that is fatal in about 10 % of cases.

For this reason, the technical regulations for large-scale water heating systems require a temperature of at least 55°C in all parts of the hot water distribution system (at least 60°C at the tank outlet).

55°C should also be maintained in other drinking water heaters.

What does this mean for me?

In the morning, let the water run out of the tap for about 1 to 2 minutes until it is really cold. You can use this water as flower water.

Only then drink the water or make your coffee or tea with it.

Use the hot and cold water daily at all taps.

The water in the entire system must be changed regularly every 3 days, also at the bathtub or in the guest WC.

If you are *absent for more than a week*, it is in your interest to ask someone to flush the water pipes regularly. Or close the main tap and then flush later the entire installation very thoroughly (cold and warm).

If a shower has not been used for a long time, first rinse the pipe thoroughly with cold and hot water for 2 to 3 minutes. To do this, place the shower head on the floor of the shower to avoid aerosol formation.

What happens if I do not do this?

Then the water quality in the pipe automatically deteriorates. You are no longer using the drinking water installation as intended and risk making yourself or others ill as a result of your behaviour.

Current topic: Saving energy

Health protection takes precedence over energy saving.

It is therefore not permissible to reduce the temperatures in the hot water system below 60°C or 55°C for energy-saving reasons. This endangers your health and promotes the growth of legionella and other bacteria. Temporarily lowering and raising the temperature again as part of the so-called legionella circuit is also not permitted.

If the domestic installation is free of legionella and remains so through proper use, you do not need to pay for expensive follow-up measures.

You can save energy by taking shorter showers, turning off the tap in between and not pre-washing the dishes.

Not using a tumble dryer also saves energy.

For further information, please contact the water hygiene department of the public health department.

The best way to reach us is by phone at 06152/989393 during the opening hours of the district office or by e-mail at [**Wasserhygiene@kreisgg.de**](mailto:Wasserhygiene@kreisgg.de).