

WATER COOLER AND VENDING MACHINE MANAGEMENT

Trust Standard Procedure

Water Cooler & Vending Machine Management

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Please note:

If you require a copy of this procedure in an alternative format (for example Large Print, Easy Read) or would like any assistance in relation to the content of this policy, please contact the Human Resources (HR) team on 01803 656680.

Water Cooler & Vending Machine Management

1.0 Purpose and Application

Water coolers and vending machines are a potential source of hospital acquired infection and/or injury.

This procedure will enable the Trust to comply with all relevant legislation and guidance, in particular the HTM 04-01: The Control of Legionella Hygiene, "Safe" hot water, cold water and drinking water system, the Approved Code of Practice L8 – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems and the & Health and Social Care Act (2008) Hygiene Code.

2.0 Responsibilities

The Trust will ensure that its statutory duty to comply with the Food Safety Act 1990 and Regulations is applied to the supply of chilled water via water coolers.

2.1 Director of Infection Prevention Control (DIPC)

It is the responsibility of the DIPC to provide professional guidance with the purchase and use of water coolers and agree any changes to method practices.

2.2 Estates & Facilities Management (EFM)

It is the responsibility of the EFM to ensure water coolers are installed in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and comply with HTM 04-01 Controlling Legionella.

2.3 Infection Prevention Lead Nurse

The Infection Prevention Lead Nurse will provide guidance as to:

- When it is appropriate to use Water Coolers
- The cleaning process

2.4 Ward Sister/Department Managers

Ward Sisters/managers are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the policy within their specific area of responsibility, ensuring that:

- Risk assessments in relation to safe water cooler and vending machine management are carried out, recorded and reviewed regularly
- Ensuring that safe water cooler and vending machine management procedures and safe working practices resulting from them are produced, documented and implemented for their area.

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- Ensuring that arrangements with regard to safe water cooler and vending machine management are included in local induction, where appropriate, and regular refresher training for all staff
- Ensuring that arrangements with regard to are included in induction and regular refresher training for their staff
- Undertaking regular monitoring and recording their findings
- Report any faults or concerns of the water coolers and/or vending machines to the Estates and Facilities Fault Helpline immediately

2.5 Facilities Supervisors

It is the responsibility of the Facilities Supervisors to ensure water coolers are cleaned as part of the departments cleaning schedule.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Water Coolers

A water cooler or water dispenser is a device that cools and dispenses water. They are generally broken up into two categories: bottle-less and bottled water coolers. Bottle-less water coolers are connected to a mains water supply, while bottled water coolers require delivery of water in larger bottles from a supplier.

3.2 Vending Machines

A vending machine is a machine that dispenses items such as snacks, beverages, cologne, and consumer products to customers automatically, after the customer inserts currency or credit into the machine.

4.0 Procedures

4.1 Purchase or Lease of Water Coolers

Coolers should be mains fed pressure coolers that do not require sanitisation, opposed to non-pressure coolers and bottled coolers.

EFM must be consulted prior to purchase to discuss installation and Portable Appliance Testing (PAT). Estates must keep an inventory of water coolers in the Trust.

All water coolers must be purchased or leased via the Trusts procurement departments to ensure they include suitable maintenance contracts through liaison with EFM.

A programme of any required planned maintenance must be agreed prior to purchasing/lease with EFM. A record of maintenance must be kept.

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4.2 Siting of Water Coolers

As per Trust Water Safety Policy, the coolers must be connected to the potable water system well upstream of the final draw off point via a double check valve to prevent backflow and be upstream of a regularly used outlet with the minimum of intervening pipe-run, that is, less than 3 m. The supply should not be softened.

The connection hose should be as short as practicable. The supply hose should be restrained to prevent it coming into contact with hot water pipe work or heated surfaces.

Water coolers must be sited in non-clinical areas, preferably ward kitchens. Where it is impossible to site water coolers in non-clinical areas, the Infection Control Support Department must be contacted for advice and approval.

Additionally, it should be established that the usage is sufficient to avoid deterioration in water quality, for example that the inlet water temperature does not exceed 20°C. The equipment should be positioned so that the warm air exhaust does not impinge directly on taps or hoses supplying cold water.

4.3 General guidelines

Coolers should be located:

- Away from heat sources and direct sunlight
- Where they will not cause an obstruction
- Away from young children or elderly patients if they also supply hot water
- Manual handling risks must be assessed

4.4 Location and use of water coolers in high risk areas

Under no circumstances should a water cooler be situated in:

- Intensive care units
- Neonatal units
- Oncology units
- Transplant units
- Surgical wards
- Operating theatres

4.5 Medium risk areas

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Subject to consultation with the Infection Prevention and Control Team (IPCT) and EFM, coolers may be placed in:

- General wards and day rooms
- Hospices
- Medicine of the Elderly wards

4.6 Low risk areas

Coolers may be placed in the following areas without IPCT consultation but must include consultation with estates prior to purchase/installation:

- Offices and administration areas
- Outpatient areas
- Public areas and waiting rooms

4.7 Operation of water coolers

Water coolers should never be switched off.

If the water cooler is left unused for a period of time (for example, over the weekend), the tap should be run for 20-30 seconds prior to being used for drinking.

Disposable drinking cups should be kept wrapped and stored in a clean dry place until placed in the cup dispenser.

4.8 Cleaning of Water Cooler Machines

It is the responsibility of the Ward Manager or Head of Department to ensure that water coolers are cleaned appropriately and that the following is maintained:

- Always provide and use single-use disposable cups
- The water cooler is fitted with a cup filler and not a drinking nozzle or outlet
- Hand washing always takes place before use

Freestanding machines may have drip trays which should be emptied regularly throughout the day and kept clean and dry at all times

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The exterior of the cooler, including the dispensing taps, must be cleaned **at least once a week** by a designated person using a disposable cloth with general purpose detergent or preparations recommended or provided by the company.

If the cooler is fitted with a drip tray, this should be **emptied daily** and **cleaned weekly** using a disposable cloth with general purpose detergent or preparations recommended or provided by the company.

4.9 Purchase or Lease of Vending Machines

The following applies:

There is a contract in place for the provision of all vending machines across the Trust. The Facilities Department will arrange all installation as part of the contract and ensure Estates are consulted as part of the process.

- Estates must be consulted prior to purchase to discuss installation and PAT testing.
- All vending machines must be purchased or leased via the Facilities Department contract.
- A programme of any required planned maintenance must be agreed prior to purchasing/lease with EFM. A record of maintenance must be kept.
- EFM must keep an inventory of vending machines in the Trust.

4.10 Siting of Vending Machines

When siting vending machines they should be:

- Protected to prevent them coming into contact with hot water pipe work or heated surfaces.
- Preferably be sited in non-clinical areas. Where it is impossible to site in non-clinical areas, the Infection Control Support Department must be contacted for advice and approval.
- All vending machines must be secured to the wall to prevent rocking or tipping of the machine, or possible tampering and/or theft.

4.11 Cleaning of Vending Machines

It is the responsibility of the Ward Manager or Head of Department to ensure that vending machines are cleaned appropriately.

Freestanding machines may have drip trays which should be emptied regularly throughout the day and kept clean and dry at all times.

4.12 Disposal of Water Coolers and Vending Machines

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Any leased vending machines or coolers are the responsibility of the company whom leased from to dispose of.

Where urgent disposal is required please consult the Environmental Services department for further guidance, as costs will need to be reimbursed from the lease company and this will need written agreement prior to removal.

5.0 References

- Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974
- Approved Code of Practice L8 – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems
- HTM 04-01 - The Control of Legionella Hygiene, “Safe” hot water, cold water and drinking water system
- Health and Social Care Act (2008) Hygiene Code.