

**L**egionella controller ProEconomy, has seen its business grow from strength to strength, through beating Legionella and solving the problems of Legionella contamination

However, founders, Nick and Birgitta Bedford, were surprised to read an article in the last issue of *Hospital Bulletin*, entitled "Ionisation - the cost of buying cheap", that included an illustration of part of ProEconomy's Orca system.

They say the article was not only misleading to those with limited knowledge of copper and silver ionisation but also damaging to the whole industry.

Nick and Birgitta feel, therefore, that without getting into 'a mud-slinging match', it is best to promote the merits of the Orca system without deriding other ionisation systems.

"As the article rightly points out, getting the right advice is important," says Nick Bedford. "However, making the right decision is difficult and a wrong decision can have a lasting and costly legacy."

**Making the right decision**

So how can you be sure you are making the right decision when you are looking to control Legionella? This can only ultimately be established once you have taken the plunge with



the method and company you have decided upon. There are, however, ways to safeguard your decision.

"My advice, if I were asked," says Nick, "is to inspect the accounts of companies, investigate their credentials, speak to their clients, view their installations, and, if possible, check the water analysis certificates."

The Approved Code of Practice (L8), since 2001, recognises copper and silver ionisation as an effective method to control Legionella

# 12 years of success in beating Legionella



but the systems need to be managed properly - exactly what ProEconomy means by 'giving peace of mind'.

After 12 years of profitable business, working with many varied organisations, but often with hospital estates departments,

ProEconomy has come to understand the needs and restraints of potential clients.

ProEconomy offers qualified advice on microbiological and chemical issues, ensuring optimum efficacy of its Orca system and guarantees that Legionella is controlled.

The company spends a great deal of time and money on research and development. In August 2004 ProEconomy installed a prototype system, known as the Barracuda, (that took two years to develop) to control Legionella in cooling tower water. The results are impressive - with no Legionella bacteria found within three weeks of installation.

"Six months later we still have great results with no Legionella detected," reports Nick. "However, the client realises that this is a prototype and the true test will be over the

summer months - time will tell."

Two years ago, Birgitta Bedford completed a masters degree at Cranfield University and is now studying for a PhD in Legionella control covering not only copper and silver ionisation but other methods including chlorine dioxide. It was Birgitta who achieved European approval after six months of intensive study before submitting her application that consisted of over 200 reference works on copper and silver

ionisation.

**PVC pipework**

There is another issue raised within last month's article, says Birgitta, which is grossly misinforming: "A statement was made regarding 'Many of these systems do not have the power available... '...unsuitable for ... dynamic water pressures'.

"After thorough research and testing of various materials, we chose the best and safest system for the job. The use of multiple electrode chambers gives control of the release of the copper and silver ions. You do not want to under dose neither do you want to overdose. The clear 'plastic' (this is actually PVC) electrode chambers show us immediately not only the condition of the electrodes but also the actual release of copper and silver, showing us that the Orca system is working properly.

"The use of widely employed PVC pipework is also a safety consideration, allowing for a double-insulated principle to the electronics. The suggestion that PVC pipework is somehow unsuitable for high-pressure usage seems somewhat ridiculous when it is the material of choice for underground piping on new-

build sites."

ProEconomy's client base speaks volumes, with installation at prestigious locations such as the headquarters of HSBC, Great Ormond Street Hospital, Medway Hospital, the very large site of the European Space Agency and Delft University, to name just a few - all of whom have not only installed one of the company's Orca systems, but subsequently installed more after seeing how successful their first installations were.

Recent installations of the Orca system have included Bristol Royal Infirmary, Barrow Hospital and yet another system for the new headquarters for Mercer HRC, opposite the Tower of London, the new K2 building.

"We sell between 35 and 50 systems per year," concludes Nick. "Our systems are WRAS approved and EMC tested.

"We own our office complex, that includes a training centre and separate workshop. We own our vehicles including four service vans. All our staff are fully trained in Legionella control. As a company we have much to be proud of and we have nothing to hide."

Call ProEconomy on: 01525 854111.



**Client choice:** leading hospitals and the headquarters of HSBC, above, have installed ProEconomy's Orca system



**Celebrating success:** ProEconomy founders Nick and Birgitta Bedford

**ENQUIRY NO. 406**



## The total solution for Legionella control. The Orca system from ProEconomy

The Orca system uses the technology of silver and copper ionisation to kill and control Legionella bacteria. It is the safest and most effective method of Legionella control while remaining environmentally friendly. Silver and Copper Ionisation also destroys biofilm, which is what the Legionella sits in.



ProEconomy identify risk areas and tailor make the Orca system to suit your specific needs. They maintain the system and monitor your water quality regularly. Having done this now for more than 11 years at over 150 sites throughout the UK, you can rely on ProEconomy's knowledge, experience and professionalism for total peace of mind.

Visit [www.proeconomy.com](http://www.proeconomy.com) or contact us for a free risk assessment and survey on 01525 854111.

**L**egionella is receiving a great deal of attention throughout Europe and is becoming a primary concern of UK healthcare administrators today.

A trust's water systems are most at risk of being contaminated due to old pipes, infrequently used outlets, lack of system detail, inadequate controls, money constraints and any other excuse that can be given, and yet patients are most vulnerable of becoming infected.

Every diagnosed case of Legionnaires' disease is taken as evidence of failure of existing controls and is catastrophic for an NHS trust. Suddenly, once a case is diagnosed, money is no longer a problem and the Legionella sources are always found.

However, the difficulties of making a reliable diagnosis of Legionnaires' disease often mean that cases are not recognised. Most trusts do not test their water for the presence of Legionella as they believe that when they look for it, they may well find it! Which in turn would lead to having to spend money!

Yet legal liability lies with the trust, which in case of a fatal case leads to incalculable costs.

### HTM and ACoP

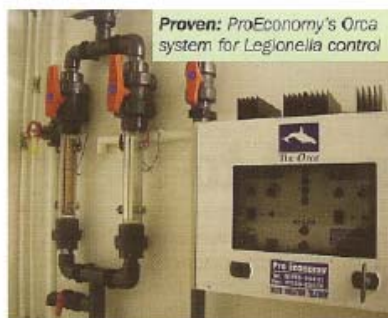
Trusts tend to rely on guidelines such as the ACoP (L8) or the

# Legionella and NHS trusts - plausible or implausible denial?

*Outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease continue to attract media attention*

HTM 2027, believing that if they follow these they are covered. These guidelines are, however, often impractical, inadequate, and expensive to implement, and finding failure in the controls continues to be easy when a case of

advocated temperatures but these techniques also do not attack and remove biofilm, which is where the bacteria hide and feed. If you do not remove the Legionella's feeding ground you will not be able to control it."



Legionnaires' disease is reported.

So what can be done? "To protect themselves trusts have to be proactive and look for Legionella," says Birgitta Bedford a director of ProEconomy, who is doing a PhD in Legionella control. "Trusts should not rely on temperature regimes and temperature checks or dosing with chemicals. Not only is it often impossible to maintain the

### Being proactive

The Orca system is a proven solution to Legionella control. Systems are controlling Legionella successfully since 1993 in hospitals, homes for the elderly and office buildings, over 200 sites at present. "The key to our success is that we not only install the Orca system which kills Legionella and removes biofilm, we also actively look for Legionella and when we find it we survey to isolate the source," adds Birgitta.

After controlling Legionella in the Bristol Royal Infirmary, the United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust decided to install Orca systems in another two sites this month.

After solving contamination problems at Northampton

General Hospital three more Orca systems were ordered again this month.

With concerns about the inadequacy of the current guidelines and the fact that they never looked for Legionella, the Wealdon District Council installed an Orca system in one of its homes for the elderly within the last six weeks.

Being concerned about poor water usage due to ward closures and after the success of the Orca system installed at Alexandra Hospital, the Alexandra Healthcare NHS Trust installed Orca systems in Kidderminster Hospital last May. "We managed to identify the source of the contamination and are controlling it, we did not have to engineer the problem out, saving the trust a lot of money," explains Birgitta.

For details call ProEconomy on: 01525 854111, e-mail: [enquiries@proeconomy.com](mailto:enquiries@proeconomy.com) or visit: [www.proeconomy.com](http://www.proeconomy.com)



Installation: hos and care homes, as Granthill House protected

**ENQUIRY NO. 900**