

NHS WALES Estates and Facilities Alert



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Date: 22 October 2018

Cathays Park, Cardiff

CF10 3NQ

Parc Cathays, Caerdydd

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Vernacare Vortex macerator: potential for contamination of mains water supply

To: Chief Executives, LHBs
Chief Executives, NHS Trusts
NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership - Contractor Services

A list of people who need to have early sight of this information is given in the Alert

The content of Estates and Facilities Alerts is agreed between staff representatives from the four NHS administrations and issued throughout the United Kingdom. The Alert is endorsed by the Welsh Government as being relevant to NHS Wales and is issued by:

Neil Davies, Director, Specialist Estates Services, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

For advice see details on the alert

Contact point in Wales:

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Alerts are available in full text at:

within NHS Wales: <http://howis.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=254&pid=64173>

outside NHS Wales: <http://www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk/publications-and-information>

Estates and Facilities Alert

Reference: EFA/2018/006 Issued: 22 October 2018 Review Date: 22 October 2020



Vernacare Vortex macerator: potential for contamination of mains water supply



Summary

We have been informed that Vernacare Vortex Macerators, supplied under WRAS approval number 1309094, do not comply with the requirements of the UK Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Byelaws in Scotland). A polythene silencer tube fitted to the water tank inlet float valve means that the air gap is not maintained between the water tank contents and the mains water supply thereby creating the potential for contamination of the mains water supply by the tank contents.

Action by Estates team

- Bring this alert to the attention of all appropriate estates managers and staff
- Identify the locations of Vernacare Vortex macerator within your organisation and liaise with Vernacare
- Contact Vernacare to arrange the removal of the silencer tube either during a planned service visit, breakdown call out or in response to customer request – see Contact Details Section (please note that Vernacare will contact and advise all affected customers of the alert via email by 02/11/2018)
- Risk Assess if hospital estates teams should remove the silencer tube themselves following the instructions in Appendix item 2 as Vernacare may take time to deal with all affected sites. Then inform Vernacare that modification completed and fit required label, If the estates team implement this fix then they should contact Vernacare for the labels
- Fix label to front of machine adjacent to the rating label to serve as a visual confirmation mark that the work has been completed (See appendix item 3 for details).

Action by

- Estates Managers

Deadlines for action

Actions underway: Immediate
Actions complete: 29 March 2019

Device details

The identity of each Vortex macerator can be verified via the rating label which is located in the front bottom left hand corner of each machine. The rating label shows the serial number, date of manufacture and electrical specifications of the machine. **(See appendix item 3)**

Affected machines are as follows:-

- Vortex macerator product codes 2030ZA001 & 2030CA001
Serial numbers 7214 – 12927
Manufactured between 30/9/2013 – 4/9/2018
- Vortex Plus macerator product codes 2040ZA001 & 2030CA001
Serial numbers 001 – 1297
Manufactured between 30/3/2015 – 26/6/2018

Problem / background

WRAS approval listing 1309094 expired in September 2018. During recent re-approval testing it was advised that as the product included a silencer tube this compromised the type AB airgap conformance requirement and a non-conformance has now been raised. It has been confirmed that type AB airgap conformance is achieved once the silencer tube/bag is removed from the inlet valve.

Vernacare has identified that 2472 Vortex macerators fitted with the silencer tube are installed in the UK. The known locations of affected machines have been identified – see appendix 1. Customers supplied under listing 1309094 shall be alerted and informed of the plans for the removal of the silencer tube.

It is anticipated removal of the silencer tube will be carried out by a combination of Vernacare field service engineers, facility maintenance teams and third-party contractors. Vernacare shall contact and advise all affected customers of the alert via email by 2/11/2018. The removal of the silencer tube shall take place either during a planned service visit, breakdown call out or in response to customer request. It has been confirmed that removal of the silencer tube makes the Vernacare Vortex compliant with WRAS.

On completion of each silencer tube removal a small label must be affixed to the front of the machine adjacent to the rating label to serve as a visual confirmation mark that the work has been completed. (See appendix item 3 for details).

The silencer tube has been removed from all current stock and is no longer fitted to new production.

Manufacturer contacts

Please contact Vernacare should you require any assistance regarding this notice. The Vernacare technical service team can be contacted via email: (service@vernacare.com) or by telephone: (01204 529494) and quote: "Airgap upgrade"

Distribution

Estates Managers, Risk Managers, Health & Safety

Appendix

- Appendix 1. **No appendix 1**
- Appendix 2. Procedure for silencer tube removal
- Appendix 3. Rating Label position

Enquiries

This alert has been compiled under a partnership arrangement by the organisations below and it has been distributed across the UK. Enquiries should be directed to the appropriate Regional Office quoting the alert reference number.

England

Enquires should quote reference number **Error! Reference source not found.** and be addressed to: -
nhsi.mb-defectsandfailures@nhs.net

Reporting adverse incidents in England

Defects or failures should be reported on this system: <http://efm.hscic.gov.uk/>

The web-based D&F reporting system is managed by the NHS Digital on behalf of NHS Improvement. For further information on this system, including obtaining login details, please contact the efm-information Helpdesk. Tel 0300 303 5678.

Northern Ireland

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Northern Ireland should be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre, CMO Group,
Department of Health
Tel: 028 9052 3868 Email: niaic@health-ni.gov.uk
<http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/niaic>

Reporting adverse incidents in Northern Ireland

Please report directly to NIAIC using the [forms on our website](#).

Scotland

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Scotland should be addressed to:

Incident Reporting and Investigation Centre (IRIC)
Health Facilities Scotland, NHS National Services Scotland
Tel: 0131 275 7575 E-mail: nss.irc@nhs.net

Reporting adverse incidents in Scotland

Use our [online report form](#) or download the [PDF form](#)
Independent facilities which only provide private care should report to the [Care Inspectorate](#).

Wales

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Wales should be addressed to:

Simon Russell, Principal Engineer, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – Specialist Estates Services, 4th Floor, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff CF14 3UB

Tel: 029 2090 4100
E-mail: Simon.Russell@Wales.nhs.uk

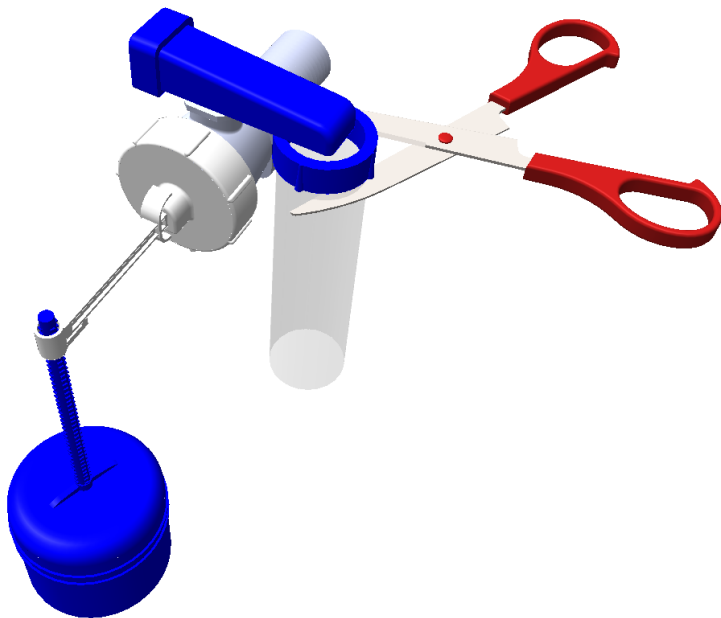
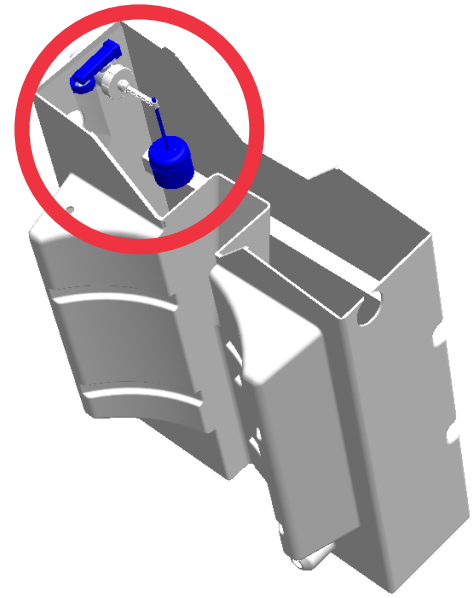
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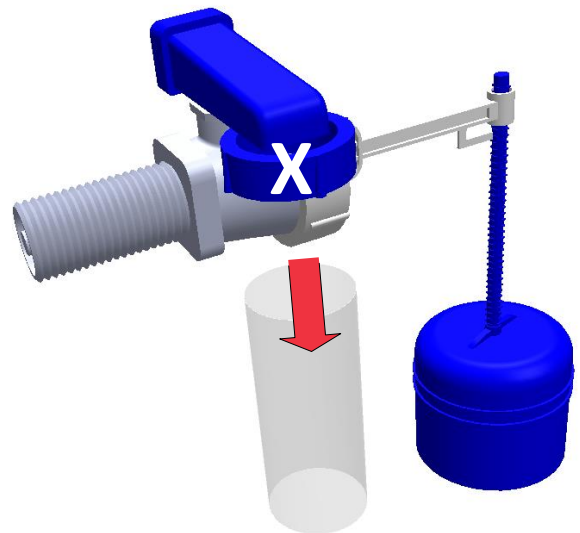
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Addressees may take copies for distribution within their own organisation

1. Locate the float valve on the Vortex, it can be found inside the water tank at the back of the machine. Depending upon the installation layout it may be on either side of the tank.



2a. Use scissors to remove the transparent plastic silencer tube from the valve, cut as high up as possible (just below the blue retaining ring) and take care not to drop it into the tank. Discard the silencer.

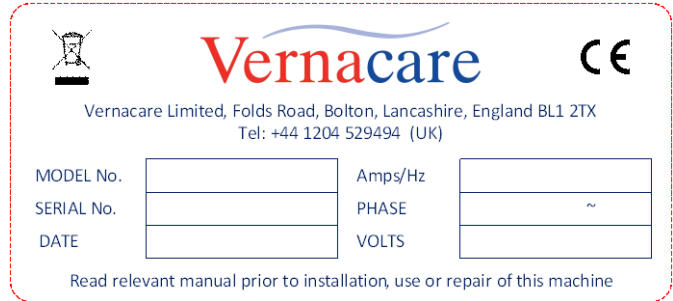
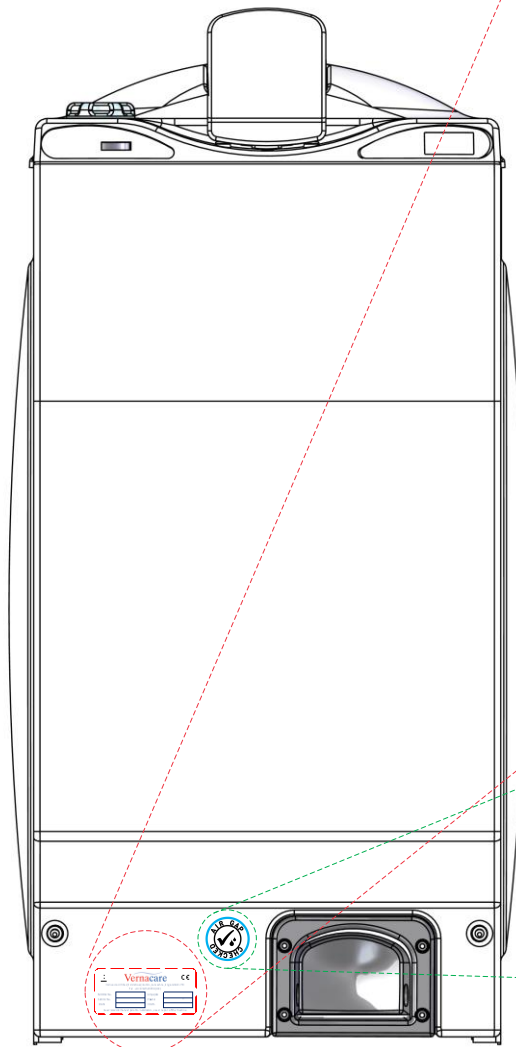
2b. Alternatively the silencer can be removed by holding the retaining ring (X) and pulling the tube free. Take care not to drop the tube and retaining ring into the tank. Discard the silencer.



3. Once the silencer tube has been removed check that the valve is functioning normally.

Model: All Vortex Models

Guide: Vortex Rating Label & 'AIR GAP CHECKED' Label Positions



LOCATION OF THE EXISTING RATING LABEL



LOCATION OF THE 'AIR GAP CHECKED' LABEL