

Legionnaires' disease

What's being done?

New state regulations to protect public health are now in effect



Registration

All existing cooling towers must be registered with the New York State Department of Health (DOH) by Sept. 16, 2015. New cooling towers must be registered prior to operation. Registration is free and can be completed electronically at ct.doh.ny.gov.



Testing

All owners of cooling towers must collect samples and obtain culture testing by Sept. 16, 2015, unless testing occurred within 30 days prior to Aug. 17, 2015. Culture testing is then required every 90 days or in accordance with a maintenance plan. Immediate disinfection is required if testing demonstrates the need. Owners are required to clean and disinfect all cooling towers when shut down for over five days.



Inspections

All cooling towers must be inspected by Sept. 16, 2015, and every 90 days thereafter. Inspections must be performed by a licensed NYS professional engineer, certified industrial hygienist, certified water technologist or an environmental consultant in accordance with current standard industry protocols. All findings, deficiencies and corrective actions will be reported to the owner and DOH. Cooling towers must be certified as complying with the new regulations by Nov. 1, 2016, and annually thereafter.



Maintenance plan

All owners of cooling towers are required to implement a maintenance program and plan by March 1, 2016. The plan must include a schedule for routine culture sampling and procedures for emergency testing and disinfection to destroy Legionella bacteria. Owners are required to keep a copy of the plan on the premises and make it immediately available upon request.



Hospitals

All general hospitals and residential health care facilities must adopt a Legionella sampling plan for its potable water distribution system, report test results to DOH and take necessary responsive actions.

Legionnaires' disease is a severe form of pneumonia that can be fatal if left untreated. People contract the disease by inhaling mist or vapor from water systems that are contaminated with Legionella bacteria. Legionella is naturally found in the environment and thrives in warm water. The disease is not spread person to person and is usually successfully treated with antibiotics.

Source: NYS Department of Health

Questions or concerns

NYS Dept. of Health
Public Health Duty Officer Helpline

1-866-881-2809

NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene
New York City

3-1-1

Outside the five boroughs **212-NEW-YORK**

TTY **212-504-4115**

Assemblyman
Mike Miller

83-91 Woodhaven Boulevard
Woodhaven, NY 11421
718-805-0950 • millermg@assembly.state.ny.us