

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor  
Nancy Wyman  
Lt. Governor

Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.  
Commissioner

### Drinking Water Section

DWS Circular Letter #2016-18

TO: Public Water Systems

FROM:  Lori Mathieu, Public Health Section Chief, Drinking Water Section

DATE: June 17, 2016

RE: Legionnaires' Disease Prevention and Water Systems

Legionnaires' disease is a severe lung infection (pneumonia) caused by the bacterium *Legionella*. During 2000-2014, a 286% increase has been observed for cases within the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has conducted a recent study to determine the causes for increased outbreaks and target measures for prevention. This study can be found using the following link: [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6522e1.htm?s\\_cid=mm6522e1\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6522e1.htm?s_cid=mm6522e1_w).

Based on this study, facilities that are most likely susceptible to the spread of legionella include hotels, long-term care facilities, and hospitals. With these findings, the CDC has put together a guidance toolkit to aid facility owners in creating a water system management plan. The plan will guide facility owners in identifying water system components for which legionella control measures are needed, assessing how much risk these hazards pose, and applying control measures to reduce hazardous conditions. The toolkit can be accessed using the following link:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/toolkit.pdf>

We are sharing these findings with our public water systems so that you as the water provider can be knowledgeable about prevention and control measures for Legionnaires' disease when facility owners reach out to you for guidance.



Phone: (860) 509-8000 • Fax: (860) 509-7184  
410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 340308  
Hartford, Connecticut 06134-0308  
[www.ct.gov/dph](http://www.ct.gov/dph)

*Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer*

Public water systems can minimize the presence and growth of *Legionella* bacteria through routine measures such as:

- 1) Identify all cooling towers, boiler systems, heat exchangers and other areas where water can stagnate during your cross connection survey and ensure that the appropriate backflow prevention device is in use and is in good working order.
- 2) If you chlorinate your system then make sure that measurable chlorine residual is detected at the extremities of the distribution system without risking higher levels of trihalomethanes.
- 3) Flush your distribution system periodically and sufficiently to maintain it free from excessive accumulation of sediment, organic growths, products of corrosion and erosion, and other extraneous matter.
- 4) Inspect your atmospheric storage tanks as required, and ensure that adequate circulation is provided to prevent biofilms and the regrowth of coliform bacteria.
- 5) Eliminate dead-ends and loop lines as feasible to reduce stagnation time within the distribution system.

Any questions regarding this circular letter please contact Michael Hage of the Drinking Water Section at 860-509-7333.

Cc: Deputy Commissioner Yvonne Addo, DPH  
Matthew Cartter, MD, MPH, State Epidemiologist, DPH  
Local Health Directors