



Published on IDPH (<http://www.dph.illinois.gov>)

IDPH Investigating Legionella Possibly Associated with a Chicago Hospital [1]

26th Jul, 2019

Two patients at Rush Oak Park Hospital test positive

SPRINGFIELD - The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is investigating two cases of Legionnaires' disease in individuals who were both patients at Rush Oak Park Hospital, one in May and the other in mid-July. The individuals were patients at the hospital for part of the time when they could have been exposed to the bacteria.

IDPH is working with the Oak Park Department of Public Health and the hospital to collect information and further investigate these cases. IDPH was on-site this week to sample the facility's water. Previous water samples collected by the hospital showed results positive for *Legionella* bacteria.

The hospital has reported to public health officials that it routinely conducts water testing and has already taken steps to reduce any potential exposure, such as adding disinfectant to the water, flushing pipes, and installing point-of-use filters. The facility is also conducting surveillance to identify other potential cases and to ensure appropriate testing and clinical management of patients.

Legionella bacteria occur naturally in the environment. Water containing *Legionella* can be aerosolized through cooling towers, showers, hot tubs, and decorative fountains, and can cause Legionnaires' disease, a serious lung infection (pneumonia) when inhaled. Legionnaires' disease is not passed from person to person. Outbreaks are most commonly associated with buildings or structures that have complex water systems like hotels, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and cruise ships. The bacteria can become a health concern when they grow and spread in human-made water systems, like hot tubs, cooling towers, hot water tanks, large plumbing systems, and decorative fountains. Most healthy people do not get Legionnaires' disease after being exposed to *Legionella* bacteria.

More information about Legionnaires' disease can be found on the [IDPH website](#) [2] and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [website](#) [3].

Resources / Related Reading:

default

Source URL: <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/news/idph-investigating-legionella-possibly-associated-chicago-hospital-1>

Links

[1] <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/news/idph-investigating-legionella-possibly-associated-chicago-hospital-1>

[2] <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/legionellosis>

[3] <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/index.html>