Message Content

NJLINCS Health Alert Network
Public Health Advisory
Distributed by the New Jersey Department of Health

Subject: Maintaining and Reopening Building Water Systems Impacted by Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation – Minimizing Legionella and Opportunistic Bacteria Growth
Date: 6/4/2020; 11:54:47
Message#: 104104-6-4-2020-PHAD
Contact Info: Kathleen Ross, NJDOH
Phone: 609-826-5964; Email: kathleen.ross@doh.nj.gov
Lauren Conner, NJDOH
Phone: 609-826-5964; Email: lauren.conner@doh.nj.gov
Attachments: None

Key Points or Updates:

Many buildings may be temporarily shut down or have reduced operations in normal water use due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Periods of little to no water usage may lead to conditions in building water systems which can promote the growth of Legionella and other opportunistic bacteria within weeks or months. To prevent Legionella growth, building water systems must be actively managed and maintained now to prevent future legionellosis outbreaks once buildings reopen or resume normal operations.

For building owners and managers whose building water systems are impacted by a prolonged shut down or reduced operation and would like to properly maintain their building water systems, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) developed the guidance document, Maintaining and Reopening Building Water Systems Impacted by Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation: Minimizing Legionella and Opportunistic Bacteria Growth. This guidance document is available on the NJDOH website at: https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/legion.shtml.

NJDOH requests that local health departments further distribute this guidance to building owners and managers in their jurisdiction. Consider working with local business associations or water utility companies to identify buildings that may be at increased risk. For questions, contact the Legionella team at PreventLD@doh.nj.gov.

Contact Information:

Kathleen Ross, Infectious Disease Epidemiologist, NJDOH, Kathleen.ross@doh.nj.gov
Rebecca Greeley, Infectious Disease Team Lead, NJDOH, Rebecca.greeley@doh.nj.gov
Lauren Conner, Epidemiologist, NJDOH, Lauren.conner@doh.nj.gov

---