



IDPH posts CDC Legionnaires' Disease report

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has posted the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report addressing the Legionnaires' disease cases at the Illinois Veterans Home in Quincy (IVHQ). CDC generated the report after a visit in December 2017 by environmental health and infectious disease specialists to IVHQ. IDPH requested on-site technical assistance from the CDC after confirming Legionnaires' disease cases and this report addresses the complexities and persistence of *Legionella* and how the State of Illinois has taken appropriate action.

The CDC describes the State's response and efforts to help protect the health and safety of veterans and IVHQ staff and visitors, noting:

- Since 2015, IDPH and IVHQ staff have committed considerable time, effort, and resources to implementing a water management program that has reduced both the number of Legionnaires' disease cases associated with IVHQ and the amount of detectable *Legionella* in the water systems.
- The IVHQ water management team continues to follow a comprehensive water management plan and implements appropriate contingency responses when cases are identified by modifying the program, as necessary and appropriate.
- IVHQ and public health staff continue efforts to identify cases rapidly through disease surveillance and will strengthen coordination among care providers.
- Complete eradication of *Legionella* in any large, complex building water system may not be possible. Therefore, some risk for Legionnaires' disease may remain in spite of a fully operational and optimized water management plan, especially for susceptible individuals exposed to building water that contains *Legionella*.

The incidence of Legionnaires' disease has been rising in the US. In Illinois alone there were 300 reported cases in 2017 involving a wide range of private and public health facilities.

