

3 Steps to Take Now to Reduce the Risk of Legionella in a Building's Water System

As businesses reopen, owners should check the water safety of their buildings. Hyperion provides water testing to help owners monitor the risk of Legionella.

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With the current focus on limiting the spread of coronavirus as hotels, schools, and businesses reopen, building owners also need to maintain the safety of their building's water

system. Specifically, the potential for Legionella bacteria growth due to low water use for prolonged periods of time is higher than if buildings were in full operation. Legionella is a naturally occurring bacteria in the environment but can be dangerous to humans when it grows in a building's water system. If it spreads in a building's system, Legionella may be transmitted to

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Dr. John Kalns

people by mist or droplets in the air from faucets, fountains, and other water sources. When breathed in, the bacteria can cause Legionnaires' disease which is a dangerous form of pneumonia. By taking the following steps, building owners can reduce the risk of Legionella bacteria growth and confirm the bacteria are not in a building's water system.

Step 1: Learn about the dangers of Legionella bacteria and how prevention of its growth in a building's water system

can help reduce the risk of Legionnaires' disease. All building owners and facility managers should review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) information on the [Legionella home page](#). Healthcare facilities can also review requirements from the Department of Health and Human Services to Reduce Legionella Risk in Healthcare Facility Water Systems at <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions-Items/Survey-And-Cert-Letter-17-30->



Step 2: Develop and follow a water management plan. CDC provides information from conducting a Legionella risk assessment to implementing a water management plan to guidelines directly related to reopening after coronavirus shutdowns. Review all guidance at the CDC's [Water Management Plan webpage](#).

Step 3: Monitor the effectiveness of Legionella risk reduction actions by conducting routine sampling and testing the building's water for Legionella bacteria. The only way to confirm that Legionella bacteria is not present in the water system is to test the water.

"We too often receive requests for analysis of a building's water after there has been a report of someone becoming ill," says Dr. John Kalns, Hyperion Biotechnology's Legionella testing expert. Steps 1 and 2 above offer guidelines to reduce risk while Step 3 is the only way to validate that Legionella bacteria is not growing. Dr. Kalns states, "Proactive water sampling and testing supports building owners in maintaining a safe environment for residents, visitors, and guests. If Legionella is detected during routine sampling, there are approaches that can be taken immediately to help reduce the risk of the bacteria spreading before people become ill with Legionnaires' disease."

About Hyperion

Hyperion Biotechnology is an environmental microbiology laboratory specializing in Legionella water testing. Hyperion holds CDC Environmental Legionella Isolation Techniques Evaluation (CDC ELITE) and Environmental Microbiology Laboratory Accreditation Program (EMLAP) certifications. Additionally, Hyperion has expertise in biomedical research and development with discoveries in salivary biomarkers to objectively measure fatigue levels. Hyperion delivers high-quality research and services for government and commercial customers and maintains a CLIA certified laboratory. Hyperion is a Woman-Owned, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned small business. Visit Hyperion's website for more information.

Janel Callan

Hyperion Biotechnology, Inc.

+1 210-493-7452

info@hyperionbiotechnology.com

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