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**Legionnaires' Disease of Concern to All:
New York State Department of Health Takes Emergency Action**

Legionnaires' disease is a type of pneumonia. It is caused by bacteria (*Legionella*) that grow in warm water. In response to the July 2015 Legionella outbreak in New York City that killed 12 and sickened another 127, the New York State Department of Health instituted an Emergency Regulation, effective August 17, 2015, to protect against outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease associated with cooling towers.

The regulation requires that all owners register their cooling towers with New York State. Additional requirements include regular inspection, annual certification, a maintenance plan, record keeping, the reporting of certain information, sample collection and culture testing. Details on the Regulation and its requirements are posted on the state's Department of Health website and can be seen here:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/legionellosis/docs/cooling_tower_regulations_q_and_a.pdf

Legionella bacteria exists in environments throughout the world, so there is some speculation that measures being taken in New York may be adopted in a similar way by other jurisdictional entities across the U.S.

Cooling towers, the source of the 2015 Legionella outbreak, have garnered the most attention. However, the bacterium has been found in tap water, whirlpool spas, fountains, and grocery produce misters. Any source of a mist, including spas, shower heads, faucet aerators, etc., is a source of potential exposure.

AmTrust recommends that building owners throughout the country arrange staff and resources, or consult qualified contractors, to ensure proper maintenance and integrity in the management of their building's water systems.

Additional information on Legionella can be found at these websites:

- New York State Dept. of Health: <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/legionellosis/>
- CDC - ASHRAE 188-2015 : <http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/health-depts/ashrae-faqs.html>
- OSHA: https://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_iii/otm_iii_7.html

For additional resources and other safety and risk management subjects visit the Loss Control section on our website: <https://www.amtrustgroup.com/small-business-insurance/claims/prevention>

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