



Tips

Legionella Risk in Building Water Systems

Legionella is a naturally occurring bacterium found in freshwater environments that can grow and spread in building water systems. When inhaled through aerosolized water droplets, it can cause Legionnaires' disease, a severe form of pneumonia, or Pontiac fever, a milder illness.

- Conditions that promote growth include stagnant water, temperatures between 45° F and 113° F, scale, sediment, and inadequate disinfectant levels.
- Exposure occurs by inhaling contaminated water droplets. Symptoms of Legionnaires' disease include:
 - Cough, shortness of breath
 - Fever, chills
 - Muscle aches, headaches
- Legionnaires' disease can be serious, especially for older adults, smokers, or those with weakened immune systems.
- A good preventative measure is to implement and follow a written Water Management Program (WMP) consistent with ASHRAE Standard 188 and CDC guidance.

