



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cluster Of Legionnaires' Disease Identified

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), working closely with the McHenry County Health Department, has confirmed three cases of Legionnaires' disease at McHenry Villa, an independent senior living community.

“Legionnaires' disease does not spread from person to person,” said IDPH Director Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D. “IDPH is investigating possible sources, identifying individuals who may have been exposed, and recommending remediation and prevention measures.”

Public health officials confirmed the third case today. McHenry Villa is notifying residents, the residents' identified contact, and staff. All three cases had outside exposures, and two of the cases had potential exposures at Centegra Hospital-McHenry. Public health officials will continue to investigate any other potential sources.

Separately, the Warren Barr South Loop nursing home in Chicago is reporting a third Legionnaires' disease case. The most recent case became ill in October. This resident is thought to have been exposed before the facility implemented public health recommendations to switch to bottled water while environmental assessments are being completed.

Legionnaires' disease is a serious lung infection (pneumonia) that people can get by breathing in small droplets of water containing *Legionella* bacteria. Outbreaks are most commonly associated with buildings or structures that have complex water systems, like hotels, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and cruise ships. The bacterium can become a health concern when it grows and spreads in human-made water systems, like hot tubs, cooling towers, hot water tanks, large plumbing systems, and decorative fountains.

Most healthy people do not get Legionnaires' disease after being exposed to *Legionella* bacteria. People at increased risk of Legionnaires' disease are those 50 years of age or older, or those who have certain risk factors, such as being a current or former smoker, having a chronic disease, or having a weakened immune system.

More information about Legionnaires' disease can be found on the [IDPH website](#) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [website](#).

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