

Four people dead from Legionnaires' disease in New York

August 3 2015

Four people have died from Legionnaires' disease in New York since mid-July and another 55 are currently hospitalized, city health officials said Monday.

In total, 71 people in the city have caught the form of pneumonia, spread by bacteria discovered in the cooling towers of several buildings in the south Bronx neighborhood.

Authorities have inspected 22 buildings and tested 17 cooling towers, of which five—including that of Lincoln Hospital and one hotel—were found to harbor the Legionella bacteria. Those five have been disinfected, city officials said.

The four who have died were older and had pre-existing medical conditions, the said, adding that Legionnaires' disease is not contagious and can be treated with antibiotics.

"New York City's drinking water supply and other water features, like fountains and pools, are safe throughout New York City and are unaffected by Legionella," City Hall said.

Leaflets were distributed over the weekend to inform Bronx residents and invite them to a public meeting on the outbreak.

The disease, a serious pulmonary infection, is spread by bacteria that thrive in warm water, such as that found in hot water pipes, air-

conditioning systems and industrial ponds.

Infections result from inhaling airborne droplets of contaminated water and the incubation period lasts between two and ten days. Symptoms include fever, coughing and phlegm containing traces of blood.

The [disease](#) takes its name from its first outbreak, in 1976, at a Philadelphia hotel where a meeting of the American Legion society was being held.

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Citation: Four people dead from Legionnaires' disease in New York (2015, August 3) retrieved 31 March 2023 from

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