

Legionella Glossary of Terms

Aerosols-Very small droplets (less than 5 micrometers) that are dispersed into the air

ASHRAE-American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

Biofilm-An assemblage of microbial cells that is irreversibly associated (not removed by gentle rinsing) with a surface and enclosed in a matrix of primarily polysaccharide material; can be disrupted by changes in pressure, flow and sediment

Bulk water sampling-Collection of facility water in 1-liter samples, if possible, which are placed in sterile, screw-top bottles; usually in conjunction with swab samples from predetermined sites in the water system as part of the overall sampling plan

Copper-silver ionization-A long-term control method which uses electrolytically generated copper and silver ion concentrations in the hot water system to eradicate Legionella bacteria in the water

Dead leg-Piping that is a “one way” system allowing for areas of water stagnation

ELITE certified lab-Laboratories that have demonstrated proficiency in tests of their Legionella isolation techniques against standardized samples and are listed among CDC ELITE Members

Environmental management actions-Know your water, map your facility, and create a Water Safety Plan

Hyperchlorination-A temporary control method that uses the addition of chlorine to a level of 2mg/L through the water system with a minimum dwell time of 2 hours, followed by flushing

Immunocompromised-Persons whose immune mechanisms are deficient due to certain illnesses, therapies or medications

Legionella growth factors-Temperature, stagnation and sediment

Point of use 0.2 micron filter-A device that can be installed on facility water lines, faucets and showers which has filter pores small enough to completely remove potentially harmful organisms from water

Primary disinfection-treatment performed at the municipal water supply

Retrospective surveillance-A six month “look back” to identify additional cases in a facility following the identification of a single, definite healthcare-associated case of Legionnaires’ disease

Superheating-A temporary control method that can reduce or eliminate bacteria by raising and maintaining water heater temperature to a minimum of 71°C (160°F) while progressively flushing each outlet of the water system

Urinary antigen testing-Rapid same day clinical test which 100% specific for *L. pneumophila* serogroup 1, which accounts for 80% of cases; does not allow for molecular comparison to environmental isolates

Water maintenance indicators-Temperature, pH and chlorine levels