



Legionellosis Prevention

Cooling Towers & Hot Tubs

Did you know that cooling towers and hot tubs are devices that are at an elevated risk of spreading legionellosis? Legionellosis refers to two illnesses (**Legionnaires' disease** and **Pontiac fever**) that develop from exposure to *legionella* bacteria. Please see below, to learn how you can prevent the growth and spread of *legionella* within cooling towers and hot tubs.

Cooling Towers



Can spread *legionella* for miles!

- ▶ Operate at the lowest possible water temperature (77–113°F, 25–45°C)
- ▶ Monitor residual disinfectant and pH (frequency dependent on stability of the values)
- ▶ Clean, startup/shutdown, according to manufacturer recommendations
- ▶ Conduct an offline disinfection annually
- ▶ Flush dead legs/low-flow sections weekly
- ▶ Develop and follow a clear communication chain for identifying and reporting operational concerns
- ▶ Prioritize recordkeeping
- ▶ Consider automating anti-corrosion and anti-scale disinfectant addition
- ▶ Consider implementing **routine legionella testing**

Hot Tubs



- ▶ Maintain free chlorine (3–10ppm) or bromine (4–8ppm) levels, by testing at least twice a day
- ▶ Maintain pH levels (7.2–7.8), by testing at least twice a day
- ▶ Obtain and maintain a **DC Pool Operator Certification**
- ▶ Clean surfaces to remove any slime or biofilm, as necessary
- ▶ Maintain filtration systems according to manufacturer recommendations
- ▶ Post and enforce bather load limits
- ▶ Develop and follow a clear communication chain for identifying and reporting operational concerns
- ▶ Prioritize recordkeeping
- ▶ Consider implementing **routine legionella testing**

DC Health is available to answer any questions.

Please report all waterborne illnesses (community.hygiene@dc.gov) and individuals diagnosed with legionellosis (legionella.epi@dc.gov) to DC Health.