

## Legionnaires' disease outbreak in the South Bronx officially over: NYC health commissioner



[Susan Watts/New York Daily News](#)

**“I’m happy to announce that the outbreak is over,” Health Commissioner Mary Bassett told a Manhattan news conference.**

The South Bronx outbreak of Legionnaires’ disease that killed a dozen New Yorkers and sickened another 127 is officially history.

City Health Commissioner Mary Bassett made the announcement Thursday after revealing a cooling tower atop the Opera House Hotel was responsible for releasing the lethal bacteria last month.

“I’m happy to announce that the outbreak is over,” Bassett told a Manhattan news conference.



Janice Haney Carr/AP

**Twelve New Yorkers died and 127 others were sickened by the lethal bacteria's outbreak.**

The first case in the South Bronx health crisis was reported July 12, and a dozen people were killed and another 127 sickened by the airborne Legionella bacteria. The hotel's tower was linked to the specific bacterial strain disease that infected local residents.

Bassett, while noting there were no new cases reported since Aug. 3 and the disease has a two-week incubation period, warned there was still an outside chance of additional victims.

City health officials, in connection with the federal Centers for Disease Control and the state's Wadsworth Center Laboratory, identified 14 South Bronx sites that were positive for the Legionella bacteria.

"All cooling towers in the affected area have been disinfected, and all cooling towers across the City are being evaluated and disinfected if necessary," said Bassett.

"We eliminated the danger posed by the Opera House Hotel's cooling tower as soon as it tested positive for disease-causing Legionella," she said. "We want to make it clear that we cannot eliminate Legionnaires' from our city, just like we can't eliminate Legionella from the air," she said.

[James Keivom/New York Daily News](#)

City health officials, in connection with the federal Centers for Disease Control and the state's Wadsworth Center Laboratory, identified 14 South Bronx sites that were positive for the Legionella Bacteria, including the Opera House hotel.

Mayor de Blasio signed legislation Tuesday to regulate cooling towers and prevent another deadly outbreak of the disease.

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