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### News Release

February 15, 2019

### Contact information

# State health officials investigating four Legionnaires' cases associated with Crookston hotel

## Early evidence suggests source may be spa; people with undiagnosed symptoms should consult with their health care provider

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is investigating four recent cases of Legionnaires' disease associated with a Crookston area hotel.

Four people who became ill between Jan. 22 and Jan. 27 all reported spending some time at the Crookston Inn and Convention Center prior to their illnesses. None of the ill people were overnight guests at the hotel, but all visited the hotel for various occasions.

MDH investigators are working with the hotel to determine what the source of the *Legionella* bacteria may be. At this time, early evidence and past experience suggests the source of the infections is the hotel's spa. Spas are often found to be the source of Legionnaires' outbreaks due to their temperature and ability to aerosolize the *Legionella* bacteria in small water droplets.

Hotel management has temporarily closed the spa and pool area to guests. MDH staff are working with hotel staff to clean and decontaminate the spa and pool facility. The hotel is notifying guests for whom they have contact information who were at the hotel between Jan. 14 and Feb. 13 that they may have been exposed to *Legionella*.

MDH investigators said it's possible other cases with links to the hotel could still emerge. "If you spent time at the hotel between Jan. 14 and Feb. 13 and are ill with undiagnosed pneumonia or you develop symptoms in the two weeks following your visit, please see a health care provider to be evaluated for possible Legionnaire's disease," said Kris Ehresmann, director of the infectious disease division at MDH.

MDH has asked health care providers in the Crookston area to watch for any additional patients with symptoms that may indicate Legionnaires' disease. Legionnaires' disease is a bacterial pneumonia that can be severe, so prompt diagnosis and antibiotic treatment is important. Symptoms include fever, fatigue, headache, muscle aches, chills, shortness of breath, loss of appetite and coughing. The disease is spread by inhaling the fine spray from water sources containing *Legionella* bacteria. It is not spread from person to person. In 2018, Minnesota had more than 150 cases reported around the state.

Most people exposed to *Legionella* bacteria do not develop Legionnaires' disease. People over the age of 50, smokers or those with certain medical conditions including weakened immune systems, diabetes, chronic lung disease or other chronic health conditions are at increased risk. If you have concerns about possible exposure, please contact your health care provider.

**-MDH-**

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***Media inquiries:***

**Doug Schultz**

**MDH Communications**

**651-201-4993**

**[doug.schultz@state.mn.us](mailto:doug.schultz@state.mn.us) (mailto:doug.schultz@state.mn.us)** (mailto:doug.schultz@state.mn.us)

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