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Tuesday, 28 May, 2019

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A 30th person has shown symptoms of Legionellosis — also known as the Legionnaires' disease — in Evergem (near Ghent, East Flanders), announced today the Flemish Agency for Health.

The man complained of signs of a Legionella infection on Wednesday (22 May) and was hospitalized but is not in intensive care.

On 13 and 15 May, two people died in Ghent in two different hospitals after contracting the Legionnaires' disease in Evergem, where the precise source of contamination has not yet been identified.

18 people are currently in hospital for the same reason, of which four in intensive care though their life is not threatened.

The Legionella Pneumophila bacterium, developing in some people the disease that can be fatal for frail subjects, was detected in the cooling towers of five companies located along the canal in the area suspected of being the source of contamination. On two of these sites, the concentration of this type of Legionella is considered high.

Samples from these five companies are currently subject to genetic analysis in a specialized laboratory.

The genetic profile of the bacteria must then be compared with the detected patients. The comparison may possibly give an indication as to the exact source of the recent wave of this illness. Results are expected around 3 June, but the companies have ensured since the disinfection of their sites.

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EAST FLANDERS



Legionella detected at several plants near Port of Ghent

Legionella has been found at five businesses near the port of Ghent. The legionella is of the same strain as that which killed two locals.

Mon 20 May 16:19

Legionella of a different strain was found at two other businesses in the same area. The investigation by the Flemish care and health agency focused on cooling towers. Legionella was found at seven businesses out of 17 investigated.

At three businesses a high level of the bacteria was recorded. It's the strain linked to the present outbreak. At the two other companies relatively low levels were found.

All the companies launched a disinfection of their facilities after samples were taken. The procedure will be repeated. Two new patients take the total of people affected by the outbreak to 23. Two people have already died. Nine patients were able to leave hospital while four are in intensive care, though there are no fears for their lives. Eight other patients are hospitalised.

(/)

FRIDAY, 17 MAY 2019

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One dead in Ghent legionella outbreak

Tuesday, 14 May 2019 08:24



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One person has died from legionella Evergem, near Ghent, after health authorities declared an outbreak of the bacteria in the region which accelerated at the weekend.

The patient died in Ghent's University Hospital on Monday evening, The Flanders Agency for Care and Health announced in a statement.

The agency has currently identified at least 16 cases after it was reported that eleven infected people had been admitted to the hospital late last week.

The most recently reported cases (<http://brusselstimes.com/belgium/health/15548/more-people-with-legionella-infections-in-hospital-in-ghent-area>) have prompted authorities to warn that the source of the infection, which has not yet been identified, may still be active.

Related News: Legionella in Ghent: 11 people in hospital, 3 in intensive care (/belgium/health/15504/legionella-in-ghent-11-people-in-hospital,-3-in-intensive-care-evergem)

Seven out of the 16 cases originated in Evergem or in bordering towns, leading authorities to say that there are strong indications that the source of the infection is in Evergem's vicinity.

The legionella bacteria develops primarily in warm and stagnant water and can lead to Legionnaires' disease or Pontiac fever.

The Flanders Agency for Care and Health said in a statement (<https://www.zorg-en-gezondheid.be/legionellabesmettingen-in-regio-evergem-16-bevestigde-pati%C3%ABnten-brononderzoek-loopt>) that they are examining water samples from 17 companies in order to identify the source of contamination.

A spokesperson for the agency said that legionella symptoms can take up to 17 days to appear, but that most people manifested symptoms within ten days.

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