

12th case of Legionnaires' disease confirmed in Chesterfield County

 wric.com/news/local-news/12th-case-of-legionnaires-disease-confirmed-in-chesterfield-county

By WRIC
Newsroom

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CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, Va. (WRIC) — Virginia health officials say there is a 12th case of Legionnaires' disease in Chesterfield County. This comes after samples taken from several Chesterfield locations found the bacteria that can cause the disease.

The Chesterfield Health District (CHD) said in a July release that there were 10 verified cases, all since the start of May, reported among older adults and people with medical conditions. The CHD's director, Dr. Alexander Samuel, told 8News in early August that the **county's 11th case** was contracted by an elderly person.

As of Sept. 12, **the Virginia Department of Health** said there have been a dozen confirmed cases among older adults and people with certain medical conditions since May 1.

Several Chesterfield schools have **recently tested positive** for Legionella bacteria. The schools' cooling towers have been cleaned and no reports indicate any children have been affected.

Reporter Alex Thorson will have a full report tonight on 8News at 6

There is no confirmed connection between those sick and the legionella bacteria found in at least 7 Chesterfield County schools.

It should be noted, though, the bacteria is airborne and can travel up to two miles. @8NEWS

— Alex Thorson (@Alex8news) September 16, 2019

Legionnaires' disease, which is caused by **Legionella bacteria** that naturally live in lakes and streams, is a type of pneumonia, **according to the CHD**. The bacteria is a concern when it's aerosolized into small droplets in private water systems — like cooling towers, hot tubs, and fountains.

You can find more information about Legionnaires' disease **here**.

Stay with 8News for updates on this developing story.

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Another Chesterfield school tests positive for strain of Legionella, bringing total to 7

 wric.com/news/local-news/chesterfield-county/another-chesterfield-school-tests-positive-for-strain-of-legionella-bringing-total-to-7

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CHESTERFIELD, Va. (WRIC) — A seventh school in Chesterfield County tested positive for a strain of Legionella bacteria, according to the office of County Administrator Joe Casey. Samples from Alberta Smith Elementary School came back positive for the LP2 strain of the bacteria, known as “a less severe” strain.

The school is waiting on the latest test results after the affected cooling tower was “shut down, re-cleaned, and re-tested,” the principal said in a letter to parents earlier this week.

The disclosure of the results for Alberta Smith Elementary’s cooling tower came a day after Leslie Haley, a member of the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, warned **“there may be schools that we don’t know about yet.”**

On Tuesday, Haley told 8News the board of supervisors may take more control over school maintenance in the county due to concerns.

Alberta Smith Elementary Principal Jana Kline informed parents of the cleaning process the school’s towers underwent and the test results in a letter Wednesday.

“After the cleaning, Alberta Smith Elementary did test positive for LP2. This a Legionella bacteria, but not the LP1 strand that causes Legionnaires’ disease and that has been the topic of discussion by the CDC. The affected tower has already been shut down, recleaned, and retested,” Kline shared in the letter. “We are awaiting the new test results now. It’s important to note that the cooling towers in question are outside of the school and that the HVAC system that cools the school is a closed-loop system inside of the school.”

The letter labeled recent news reports on Legionella testing “misleading” and explained that Chesterfield schools have “repeatedly asked media outlets to ensure the accuracy of their reporting.”

Chesterfield Health District Director Alexander Samuel told 8News Wednesday that Legionella pneumophila (LP), one type of bacteria in the Legionella family, has multiple sub-types (LP1-LP15).

“All are of concern and if present require that action be taken,” Dr. Samuel said in an email, “but the LP1 serotype has the most significance world-wide and is the type most commonly associated with causing Legionnaires’ disease.”

While the strain found at Alberta Smith may not typically be associated with causing Legionnaires’ disease, Chesterfield health officials have **confirmed 11 cases** in the county. The cases are not linked with Chesterfield schools and no students or staff members have contracted the disease.

You can learn more about Legionnaires’ disease **here**.

This story is developing. Stay with 8News for updates.

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10 cases of Legionnaire's disease confirmed in Chesterfield

 [nbc12.com/2019/07/25/cases-legionnaires-disease-confirmed-chesterfield](https://www.nbc12.com/2019/07/25/cases-legionnaires-disease-confirmed-chesterfield)

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By [NBC12 Newsroom](#) | July 25, 2019 at 5:22 PM EDT - Updated July 25 at 11:24 PM
CHESTERFIELD, Va. (WWBT) - The Virginia Department of Health is investigating 10 cases of Legionnaire's disease in northeast Chesterfield County.

The cases have been confirmed since May 1 in older adults and people with other medical conditions.

"The risk to residents or visitors to Chesterfield County is very small," Chesterfield Health District Director Dr. Alexander Samuel said in a press release.

As a result, Greenfield Elementary School was closed Thursday and summer programs are being moved to Weaver Elementary beginning July 29.

In a letter to parents, Chesterfield superintendent Merv Daughtery said a water cooling tower near the school is being disinfected. The letter said the tower was tested for the presence of Legionnaire's-causing bacteria, known as Legionella, and a preliminary result is expected in about a week.

The letter said none of the students or teachers at the school have reported any illness linked to the Legionnaire's outbreak.

Samuel said anyone who develops pneumonia-like symptoms such as fever, chills, shortness of breath or muscle aches should seek medical treatment.

Legionnaire's disease caused by bacteria that occurs naturally in lakes and streams.

In the press release, Samuel said Legionnaire's disease is not generally transferred from person-to-person or by drinking water, but can cause a health concern if it becomes aerosolized.

The Chesterfield Health District is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to identify the source of the bacteria responsible for the 10 confirmed cases and is currently aimed at ruling out possible sources.

The Department of Health said most people exposed to the bacteria do not get Legionnaire's disease. People over age 50, smokers, those with chronic lung disease and other chronic health conditions as well as those with weakened immune systems are at increased risk.

Legionnaire's disease is treatable with antibiotics.

The CDC says Legionnaire's disease cases have increases nearly five and a half time since 2000. In 2018, there were 236 cases of Legionnaire's disease in Virginia.

For more information Legionnaire's disease, visit the Virginia Department of Health's [website](#).

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