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Dear Health Care Facility Licensee:

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) would like to remind health care facilities about the importance of infection prevention and the need for proactive practices to reduce risks to patients, staff, and the public in health care facilities. A variety of environmental factors associated with warmer temperatures can increase the risk of bacterial infections, especially for water-related diseases like Legionnaires' disease. Since 2000, there has been over a fourfold increase in *Legionella* infections nationwide.

IDPH requests that your facility review and update its water management plan (WMP). In June 2017, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released Survey and Certification Letter 17-30, *Requirement to Reduce Legionella Risk in Healthcare Facility Water Systems to Prevent Cases and Outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease*. This Letter required health care facilities to develop, implement, and adhere to a WMP.¹ In 2017, CDC updated its guidance on *Developing a Water Management Program to Reduce Legionella Growth and Spread in Buildings*.² These materials can assist your facility in developing and implementing a WMP. Maintaining proper water quality is key to preventing amplification of *Legionella* and the incidence of legionellosis.

A WMP consists of the following:

- Establishment of a water quality management team;
- A description or survey of the facility's water systems;
- Identification of sources of water aerosols capable of introducing *Legionella*, including faucets, showers, evaporative cooling equipment, humidification units, decorative fountains or sprinkler systems;
- A description of measures to control growth of *Legionella*;
- A plan describing intervention strategies to be taken when test results are positive or when there is an illness associated with *Legionella*.

Enclosed is a one-page overview on *Legionella* in water systems. Below are additional resources regarding *Legionella*'s prevalence, clinical symptoms, and *Legionella* control:

- Illinois Department of Public Health:
<http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/legionellosis>

¹ <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Downloads/Survey-and-Cert-Letter-17-30.pdf>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/toolkit.pdf>

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control:
<http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/index.html>
- American Society for Heating, Refrigerating and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 188:
<https://www.ashrae.org/standards-research--technology/standards--guidelines/other-ashrae-standards-referenced-in-code>

Best wishes for a safe and healthy summer.

Very truly yours,

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(Enclosures)