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## Department of Health

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### **“Chemung County Health Department Investigating an Increased Number of Legionellosis Cases”**

August 30, 2019

The Chemung County Health Department has been investigating an increased number of Legionellosis illness cases in Chemung County. The Health Department has been working with the New York State Department of Health during this investigation. This investigation may take several weeks and it is important to know the following about Legionellosis;

- Legionellosis is caused by infection with Legionella bacteria. Multiple possible sources are being investigated such as cooling towers, water tanks, large plumbing systems and fountains. Most of the time, results are negative for Legionella bacteria.
- Legionella is typically transmitted by breathing in tiny water droplets present in the air contaminated with the bacteria, not by drinking the water nor by being in contact with someone who is ill with Legionella. Public water systems are not commonly found to be sources of Legionella outbreaks.
- Most healthy individuals do not become infected with Legionella bacteria when exposed. People at higher risk of getting sick are those with a history of chronic disease, smoking, chronic lung disease, cancer or weakened immune systems.
- There is no need for the public to modify their activities in light of this increase in cases. However, persons with respiratory illness should contact their primary care physician or seek health care.

If you have any question regarding Legionella, please call the Health Department at (607) 737-2028.

View a Legionellosis Fact Sheet at: [http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/legionellosis/fact\\_sheet.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/legionellosis/fact_sheet.htm)