



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Alabama Department of Public Health reports additional case and two suspect cases of *Legionella pneumonia*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health has been notified of an additional case of *Legionella pneumonia* and two additional suspect cases.

This month there have been 13 confirmed cases and 10 suspect cases of *Legionella pneumonia*, and now one death confirmed for *Legionella pneumonia*.

Three individuals in a family visited Florence, Ala., and returned home. One visitor developed respiratory symptoms and was hospitalized. Tests confirmed *Legionella pneumonia* and the patient subsequently died. Of the two other family members, one was hospitalized, tested for *Legionella pneumonia*, released, and results are pending. The other individual presented to a hospital, tests were run, and results are also pending.

Health care workers have not developed problems from assisting patients with *Legionella pneumonia*. *Legionella* bacteria on surfaces does not increase the risk of illness to individuals.

*Legionella pneumonia* is not transmitted from person to person. People get *Legionella pneumonia* when they breathe in a mist or vapor containing the bacteria. Most healthy people exposed to the germ do not become sick. People at higher risk for illness are those who are older than 50, are current or former smokers, have chronic lung problems such as COPD, have weak immune systems from cancer, diabetes or kidney failure, or are on chemotherapy.

*Legionella pneumonia* is caused by a germ that occurs naturally in the environment. The germ grows best in warm water. Some places where the germ can be found include hot tubs, cooling towers, hot water tanks, large plumbing systems, and decorative fountains. An example might be from breathing in droplets sprayed from a hot tub that has not been properly cleaned and disinfected.

All cases have been connected to Florence, Ala.

For additional information, please contact your health care provider or local health department.

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