



PUBLIC NOTICE | 02 MAY 2026

Legionella Detection at US Naval Hospital Naples Internal Water System NSA Naples Italy Update



Legionella is not considered a consumption risk. Consequently, water at all NSA Naples installations remains fit for human consumption and the base uses proactive indicator monitoring rather than direct Legionella testing in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Legionella bacteria was detected within the internal water system at the U.S. Naval Hospital Naples on April 20, 2026, during a routine test. Mitigation efforts by the hospital are actively underway to address the situation in collaborating with installation and medical experts. There are currently no confirmed cases of illness associated with this incident.

Legionella is primarily a building-level risk, particularly in healthcare facilities that serve vulnerable populations. Hospitals conduct targeted Legionella monitoring due to these higher risks. Current installation-wide tests do not test Legionella, because the bacteria is not considered a consumption risk. This is in line with CDC guidance which advises that a comprehensive Water Management Program focuses on monitoring control limits—specifically water temperature, disinfectant residual (e.g., chlorine)—rather than routine, proactive testing for the Legionella species itself. **Consequently, water at all NSA Naples installations remains fit for human consumption and the base uses proactive indicator monitoring rather than direct Legionella testing.** More information about why Legionella is not considered a consumption risk can be found on the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/causes/index.html>.

No additional precautions are required for the general base population. If you have specific health concerns, please consult your healthcare provider.

The hospital's initial response focused on immediate mitigation and validating the data. Going forward, we are committed to providing transparent, timely, and fully verified updates through official channels until the system is fully cleared.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happened?

On April 20, 2026, Legionella bacteria was identified within the internal water system at U.S. Naval Hospital Naples. The hospital is actively implementing mitigation measures and collaborating with installation and medical experts to address the situation.

Why are we just hearing about this now?

This is an update to our initial public notification released on April 24, 2026. Once the issue was identified, the hospital immediately began mitigation actions. As part of our standard response process, we had to



PUBLIC NOTICE | 02 MAY 2026

Legionella Detection at US Naval Hospital Naples Internal Water System NSA Naples Italy Update



ensure the data was accurate and validated before responsibly sharing it with the community. We remain committed to this standard and will continue to provide verified, responsible updates as the situation progresses.

Are there any current confirmed cases?

No. There are currently no confirmed cases of illness associated with this incident.

What is Legionella?

Legionella bacteria occurs naturally in freshwater environments, like lakes and streams. It becomes a health concern when it grows and spreads in human-made building water systems.

How are people exposed to Legionella?

Exposure typically occurs by inhaling small water droplets (aerosols) from sources such as showers and faucets. It is not typically spread by drinking water or from person to person.

Who is most at risk?

People at higher risk include persons who are at least 50 years old, smokers, or those with underlying medical conditions such as chronic lung disease or immunosuppression. The hospital is taking additional precautions specifically to protect these vulnerable populations.

Is the water safe to drink on base?

Yes. Water at all NSA Naples installations remains fit for human consumption. NSA Naples' latest and previous Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Reports (CCR) for all installations can be found at: <https://cnreurafcnt.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NSA-Naples/Resources/Environmental-Services/>

Why does the hospital conduct Legionella testing while the base does not?

Legionella is primarily a building-level risk, particularly in healthcare facilities that serve vulnerable populations. Hospitals conduct targeted Legionella monitoring due to these higher risks. Current installation-wide tests do not test Legionella, because the bacteria is not considered a consumption risk. This is in line with CDC guidance which advises that a comprehensive Water Management Program focuses on monitoring control limits—specifically water temperature, disinfectant residual (e.g., chlorine)—rather than routine, proactive testing for the Legionella species itself. Consequently, water at all NSA Naples installations remains fit for human consumption and the base uses proactive indicator monitoring rather than direct Legionella testing. More information about why Legionella is not considered a consumption risk can be found on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/causes/index.html>



PUBLIC NOTICE | 02 MAY 2026

Legionella Detection at US Naval Hospital Naples Internal Water System NSA Naples Italy Update



What mitigation measures are being taken by the hospital?

The hospital has implemented standard and aggressive mitigation measures. These include increasing disinfectant levels (hyperchlorination), flushing the system to remove stagnant water, adjusting water temperatures, isolating affected areas, and installing point-of-use filtration where needed. Follow-up testing will be conducted to confirm when the system is fully cleared.

What precautions should I take?

No additional precautions are required for the general base population. If you work in or visit the hospital, simply follow any posted guidance provided by hospital staff. If you have specific health concerns, please consult your healthcare provider.

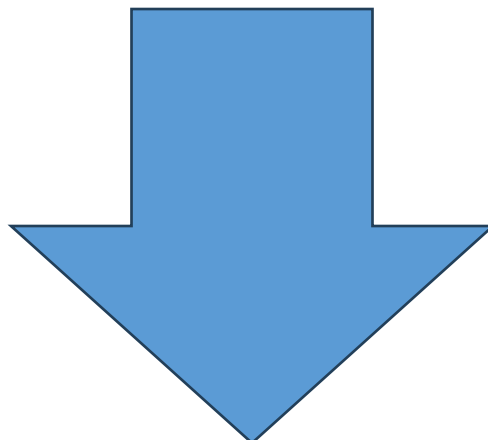
Will there be updates?

Yes. We are committed to transparent and timely communication. Updates will be provided through official NSA Naples communication channels as new information becomes available.

Who can I contact for more information?

For any additional questions, please contact our Life, Health, and Safety team at naples_lhs_questions@us.navy.mil

**SEE NEXT PAGES
BELOW FOR LEGIONELLA FACTSHEET**





NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

IMPROVING READINESS THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

Legionella

What Is It?

Legionella pneumophila (*L. pneumophila*) is the bacterium that is responsible for most cases of Legionnaires' disease (LD) or Legionellosis. *Legionella* bacteria occurs naturally in freshwater environments, like lakes and streams. It becomes a health concern when it grows and spreads in human-made building water systems



There are typically two different forms of *Legionella* infection. LD is the most serious, sometimes lethal form, requiring medical treatment. LD primarily affects the lungs, but it can occasionally cause infections in wounds and in other parts of the body, including the heart. Pontiac Fever is a less severe form of *Legionella* infection. Pontiac Fever is an upper respiratory infection and its symptoms usually clear within two to five days. People can get LD or Pontiac fever when they breathe in mist or accidentally

swallow water into the lungs containing *Legionella*.

Complex water distribution systems (consisting of water heaters, storage tanks, and pipes) in large buildings, including hotels and hospitals, are the most common source for *Legionella* exposure. Other sources include cooling towers, mist machines, humidifiers, whirlpool spas, and hot springs.

How Do People Get Legionnaires' disease?

After *Legionella* grows and multiplies in a building water system, water containing *Legionella* then has to spread in droplets small enough for people to breathe in or accidentally aspirate into the lungs while drinking. People at increased risk of aspiration include those with swallowing difficulties. In general, people do not spread Legionnaires' disease and Pontiac fever to other people.



People at increased risk of getting sick after exposure to the bacteria include, people over the age of 50, current or former smokers, people with chronic lung disease (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or emphysema), people with weak immune systems or who take drugs that weaken the immune system, people with cancer



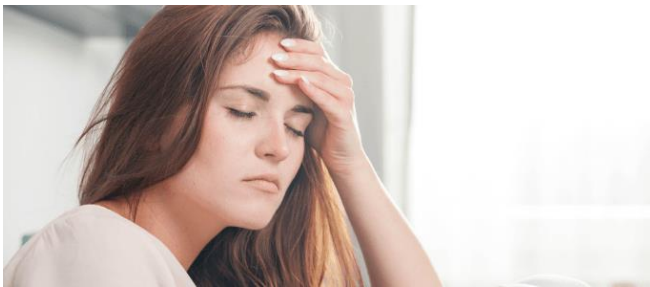
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

IMPROVING READINESS THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

and people with underlying illnesses such as diabetes.

What Are the Symptoms?

The incubation period for LD is most commonly 5 to 6 days from the time of exposure to symptom onset, with a range of 2 to 14 days. Initial symptoms may include feeling tired and weak, along with a cough if the infection is in the lungs. The patient may cough up mucous and develop a fever. Symptoms may also include diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, stomach discomfort, headaches, muscle aches, chest pain and shortness of breath.



What Should I Do If I Have Symptoms?

If you believe you were exposed to *Legionella* AND you develop symptoms listed above, talk to your Healthcare Provider and the local military treatment facility (MTF) Preventive Medicine Department immediately. Let them know if you have recently used a hot tub, spent any nights away from home, or stayed in a hospital in the last two weeks.

About 1 out of every 10 people who get sick with LD will die due to complications from their illness. However, outcomes are better if the patient is treated with appropriate antibiotics near the onset of pneumonia, especially if the patient has no underlying illness that compromises the immune system.

Specialized laboratory tests are necessary to properly diagnose *Legionella*. These tests may

include a specialized culture of the patient's sputum, testing for antibodies in the patient's blood, and a urinary antigen test that detects *Legionella pneumophila* serogroup 1 (the cause of LD in >95% cases), in the patient's urine.

How Can I Reduce the Risk of Getting Infected?

You can reduce your risk of exposure by avoiding public places and water systems that may be prone to *Legionella* contamination as described above and by also minimizing conditions that promote *Legionella* growth in your home. For building managers a building-specific water management plan to control *Legionella* is recommended for all large buildings (e.g. ASHRAE 188. Legionellosis: Risk Management for Building Water Systems). Since 2017, all Medicare certified health care facilities are required to have a water management plan (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services [CMS-17-30]: Requirement to Reduce *Legionella* Risk in Healthcare Facility Water Systems to Prevent Cases and Outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease [LD]). For Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) owned buildings, VHA Directive 1061 establishes policy for the prevention and control of healthcare-associated LD in VHA-owned buildings in which patients, residents, or visitors stay overnight.

Building managers can help prevent *Legionella* problems by maintaining building water systems properly. This may include maintaining water temperatures outside the ideal range for *Legionella* growth (both hot and cold), preventing water stagnation, ensuring adequate disinfection, maintaining devices to prevent scale, corrosion and biofilm, all of which provide a habitat and nutrients for *Legionella* and other opportunistic pathogens. Because higher water temperatures affect disinfectant levels necessary to kill germs like *Legionella*, making sure that hot tubs have



NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

IMPROVING READINESS THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

the right disinfectant and pH levels is essential. Proper cleaning and maintenance of these water sources are critical.

How Does This Apply on Navy and Marine Corps Installations?

Ensuring that consumers of drinking water aboard Navy and Marine Corps installations have access to safe, sanitary drinking water is a multi-disciplinary effort involving experts from several organizations. The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), Navy Installations Command (CNIC), Marine Corps Installations Command (MCICOM) and Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) are the principal shore establishment entities overseeing drinking water systems and programs. These organizations work together with local commands and officials to protect Navy and Marine Corps drinking water systems from contamination and to detect and

swiftly respond to any incidents that might result in contamination of drinking water.

Local installation MTF Preventive Medicine personnel are required to report all incidents of drinking water issues to the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) to ensure proper mitigation efforts are made and communicated to customers. Additional information on drinking water is available at: <https://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/program-and-policy-support/water-sanitation-and-safety/Pages/default.aspx>

Navy Environmental Health personnel may use the *Legionella Response Guidance Manual*, prepared by NMCPHC, as a resource for preventing or responding to a suspected *Legionella* problem at their installation.

For more information on *Legionella* visit:

Learn more: <https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/index.html>

Learn more: https://www.nps.gov/lyjo/learn/news/upload/CDC_Fact-Sheet.pdf

Learn more: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions-Items/Survey-And-Cert-Letter-17-30->

Learn more:

https://www.va.gov/VHApublications/publications.cfm?pub=1&order=asc&orderby=pub_Number

Learn more: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions-Items/Survey-And-Cert-Letter-17-30->

For Environmental Health Personnel: (CAC required for access)

https://esportal.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/pps/Documents/NMCPHC_Legionella_Response_Guidance_Manual_20_Nov_2020_CNIC.pdf