

From: Wilson, Caitlin@DGS on behalf of Lasso, Ana@DGS
Cc: Lasso, Ana@DGS; Osborn, Jennifer@DGS; Hassan, Monica@DGS; Lissade, Herby@DGS; Wilson, Caitlin@DGS
Subject: Keeping you informed
Date: Thursday, August 31, 2023 09:20:16
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

This message is intended for departments and agencies that have staff in DGS-managed state buildings

Dear Colleagues,

As a preventive measure in 2022, the Department of General Services (DGS) Facilities Management Division (FMD) began testing sample sites of DGS' building portfolio throughout the state for presence of the [Legionella](#) bacteria.

More specifically, FMD partnered with Millennium Environment Consulting Associates to fully educate the FMD team on all possible Legionella strains and potential health impacts, remediation strategies, etc. After the sample testing, FMD began the initial remediation process for sample sites (water flushing, stringent cleaning at known sites, and closing off the few known high-level contaminated areas until flushing and cleaning occurred).

To be clear, it is not uncommon to find Legionella bacteria in office buildings. In a [study](#) of U.S. office buildings, researchers found Legionella present in 35% of office building taps tested. It is worth noting that most healthy people exposed to Legionella bacteria do not get sick. Some people may experience mild symptoms if exposed to the bacteria, and when some people (usually those at [higher risk for disease](#)) do become infected and get Legionnaires' Disease, it primarily causes cough, fever and shortness of breath. As with other forms of pneumonia, other symptoms can present as well, so it is important to consult with a health care provider if experiencing any symptoms. Most people with Legionnaires' Disease do fully recover with antibiotic treatment. Legionella or Legionnaires' Disease are not usually associated with long-term symptoms.

While we have focused on immediately addressing the occurrence of the bacteria, it is worth noting that we appear to have arrived at this health discussion crossroads due to decreased occupancy levels and water usage during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Common industry practice and treatments advise increased water usage and flushing of the water lines to maintain healthy levels of the bacteria.

By way of review, in April 2023, DGS received a report of an individual associated with the San Diego Mission Valley building having a possible case of Legionnaires' disease. DGS coordinated with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and immediately shifted focus to that building to ensure the safety of our tenants. Due to HIPAA constraints, we were unable to verify whether this person's illness was in fact related to the San Diego Mission Valley Building. Out of an abundance of caution, DGS volunteered to close the building temporarily while conducting a series of on-site testing and remediation efforts (see [website](#) for more additional information on Mission Valley building testing and remediation efforts.) Our goal has been and continues to be, maintaining the safety of our tenants, members of the public and staff.

Accordingly, this email is to notify you that DGS has secured a contract to test all DGS-owned buildings for Legionella and other water-borne bacteria, and is currently working on an additional contract to create water management plans (WMPs). We anticipate testing to begin within the next few months and the development of WMPs will begin once the contract is executed in the coming months. Buildings that were originally tested as part of the sample group and had an original positive result will be prioritized in this new round of testing.

As the WMPs are created and testing is done, information will be shared via the Statewide Tenant Workgroup and the General Services Workgroup. If you need to update your representative for either group, please reach out to the following contacts:

Statewide Tenant Workgroup: Herby.Lissade@dgs.ca.gov
General Services Workgroup: Caitlin.Wilson@dgs.ca.gov

We thank you for your understanding and patience as we move forward in this new realm, and as we work toward ensuring the safety of our tenants and employees in coordination with CDPH.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me.

Ana M. Lasso
Director, Department of General Services
State of California



