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Standard 188

Legionellosis: Risk Management for Building Water Systems

Purpose

To establish minimum legionellosis risk management requirements for building water systems.

Significance

While Legionnaire's Disease, a severe form of pneumonia, has been known for many years, recent outbreaks have increased awareness of the disease, its causes and prevention strategies. According to the World Health Organization, since many countries lack appropriate methods of diagnosing the infection or sufficient surveillance systems to detect it, the rate of occurrence is unknown. In Europe, Australia and the United States, there are about 10-15 cases detected per million population annually, with more than 10% of cases in the U.S. being fatal. In Canada, the average number of reported cases of Legionnaires' disease is generally less than 100 per year. However the actual number of cases is thought to be much higher, as many people with pneumonia may not be tested for infection with Legionella.

Scope

- Provides minimum legionellosis risk management requirements for the design, construction, commissioning, operation, maintenance, repair, replacement and expansion of new and existing buildings and their associated potable and nonpotable water systems and components.
- Applies to human-occupied commercial, institutional, multi-unit-residential and industrial buildings, excluding single-family residential buildings. Intended for use by owners and managers of human-occupied buildings, excluding single-family residential buildings. This standard is also intended for those involved in design, construction, installation, commissioning, operation, maintenance and service of centralized building water systems and components.



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Government Use of Standard 188

- In August 2015, New York City Council adopted legislation that requires adherence to part of Standard 188. The legislation addresses registration and inspection of cooling towers. It requires owners to create and file a plan to maintain equipment in compliance with Sections 5, 6 and 7.2 of the standard. This followed an outbreak due to legionellosis that left at least 16 confirmed dead and more than 138 cases of infection.
- In July 2016, New York State adopted into law Title 10, Part 4, Protection Against Legionella. This law requires the development of a water management plan in accordance with Section 7.2 of Standard 188.
- In July 2017, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that Medicare certified healthcare facilities must develop and maintain water management policies and procedures in accordance with Standard 188
- In June 2017, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated a previously released toolkit, based upon ASHRAE Standard 188, that provides a checklist to building owners and managers to determine if a water management program is necessary and then to identify where Legionella could grow and spread in a building in order to minimize the risk of contamination.

Additional Benefits

- Written in code-enforceable language, allowing for easier adoption by code-writing organizations.
- Revised through addenda using a continuous maintenance process that includes public review of each proposed addendum.