



# Shaping Tomorrow's Global Built Environment Today

1255 23<sup>rd</sup> Street NW, Suite 825 ▪ Tel 202.833.1830 ▪ [www.ashrae.org](http://www.ashrae.org)

Bill McQuade  
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026

Phone: (240) 761-5453  
Email: [bmcquade@baltimoreaircoil.com](mailto:bmcquade@baltimoreaircoil.com)

February 24, 2026

The Honorable Gary Palmer  
Chair, Subcommittee on Environment  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2323 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Tonko  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Environment  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2323 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Subcommittee on Environment Hearing: “From Source to Tap: A Hearing to Examine Challenges and Opportunities for Safe, Reliable, and Affordable Drinking Water.”

Dear Chair Palmer, Ranking Member Tonko, and Members of the House Subcommittee on Environment:

Thank you for addressing water quality and water safety issues in this hearing. As the Subcommittee may consider legislation on these issues, ASHRAE would like to share our relevant standards and guidelines on water system safety, and recommend that the Subcommittee reference these standards in any legislation regarding requirements for building water systems.

ASHRAE, founded in 1894, is a nonprofit professional and technical society of more than 54,000 members who focus on building systems, energy efficiency, indoor air quality, water system safety, refrigeration, and resiliency within the built environment. Through research, standards development, publishing, certification and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today.

Managing building water systems to minimize the risk of contamination from waterborne bacteria is an essential part of a comprehensive approach to water safety. Several of ASHRAE's industry-leading standards are directly focused on mitigating the risks of waterborne diseases, in particular Legionnaires' Disease.

Legionnaires' disease is a serious form of pneumonia caused by Legionella bacteria. It is a serious respiratory infection, for which those with weakened immune systems or chronic respiratory conditions are at increased risk. The CDC estimates that every year, there are between 8,000 and 18,000 cases of Legionnaires' Disease in the United States. More than 10% of those cases are fatal. This bacteria growth is commonly found in water systems where water is not adequately monitored or treated. Also, after periods of heavy rains and flooding, there is an increased risk of Legionnaires' disease due to potential contamination of water sources and disruptions to water systems.

Although the disease has been recognized for decades, recent outbreaks have highlighted the need for consistent water management practices across water distribution systems and facilities of all sizes. A true “source-to-tap” approach is essential—one that requires water treatment providers to ensure adequate filtration to remove organics, maintain sufficient disinfectant residuals through delivery to the building, notify at-risk populations of planned and unplanned service disruptions, and transparently report cases of waterborne disease. Building

owners, in turn, should develop and implement water management plans consistent with ASHRAE Standard 188-2012, ASHRAE Guideline 12-2023, and ASHRAE Standard 514, which apply to commercial, institutional, multi-unit residential, and industrial buildings, as described below.

- ASHRAE Standard 188-2021, [\*Legionellosis: Risk Management for Building Water Systems\*](#), provides risk management requirements for Legionella bacteria to mitigate the risk of contracting Legionnaires' Disease in both new and existing buildings, and the buildings' associated water systems and components.
  - ASHRAE Guideline 12-2023, *Managing the Risk of Legionellosis Associated with Building Water Systems*, is a supplement to this standard and provides detailed guidance for building owners and operators to develop the necessary elements of an effective water management plan.
- ASHRAE Standard 514-2023, *Risk Management for Building Water Systems*, establishes requirements to reduce the risks to human health from physical, chemical, and microbial hazards in building water systems. These hazards can include disinfectants, disinfection byproducts, corrosion products, and chemicals that leach from pipes.

Establishing consistent requirements would help to prevent future outbreaks such as the Summer 2025 Legionnaires' Disease outbreak in Harlem, New York City, in which over 100 people were infected and 7 people died.

Again, thank you for your attention to water system safety and disease mitigation, which is an important part of ASHRAE's vision of creating a healthy and sustainable built environment for all. To prevent waterborne infections, we need a "source-to-tap" approach—one that manages both the water source and distribution system, as well as the buildings and homes that use it.

As the committee continues to examine this topic or advance related legislation, we hope you can utilize ASHRAE's standards and resources. We are happy to meet with you or your staff to discuss this further. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff contact [GovAffairs@ashrae.org](mailto:GovAffairs@ashrae.org).

Sincerely,



Bill McQuade  
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026