

**CITY OF BALTIMORE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Baltimore City Health Department Confirms Outbreak of Legionnaire's disease at Stadium Place Apartment Community

**BALTIMORE, MD** (October 15, 2009) — The Baltimore City Health Department and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene are investigating five medically confirmed *Legionella* cases, including one death, at Stadium Place, a senior apartment community.

To protect the privacy of the residents and the residents' families, personal details about the cases, including name, age and gender, will not be released.

Legionnaires' disease is caused by a type of bacteria called *Legionella*, which is found naturally in the environment, usually in water, but normally does not cause disease. People most at risk of getting sick from the bacteria are older people (usually 65 years of age or older), as well as people who are smokers, or those who have a chronic lung disease (like emphysema). Signs of the disease are similar to pneumonia and can include a high fever, chills, chest pain and a cough. Some people may also suffer from muscle aches and headaches. *Legionella* infection is not transmitted person-to-person. It can be treated with commonly used antibiotics.

In 2008, 31 cases of Legionnaires' disease were reported to the Baltimore City Health Department. There have been 25 cases reported through today. Each year, between 8,000 and 18,000 people are hospitalized with Legionnaires' disease in the United States.

People get Legionnaires' disease when they breathe in a mist or small droplets of water in the air that has been contaminated. Other outbreaks have been linked to aerosol sources in the community, which are ubiquitous.

The Baltimore City Health Department and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene have released these recommendations to residents:

- Individuals who are currently ill with fever, cough, and shortness of breath should seek attention by a physician. If there are no other obvious causes of the disease, the physician should consider the diagnosis of *Legionella* pneumonia and conduct laboratory testing.
- Individuals who are not currently ill do not need to seek medical attention and do not need testing for *Legionella* infection.

The Baltimore City Health Department and Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene are meeting with residents and have been working closely with Stadium Place management, who has been following published recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in responding to this situation.

For more information on *legionella*, see  
[http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/patient\\_facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/legionella/patient_facts.htm)

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