

**VA North Texas Health Care System (VANTHCS)
Results of Routine Water Testing for *Legionella*
June 2015**

Background

In August 2014, VHA implemented Directive 1061, "Prevention of HealthCare-Associated Legionella Disease and Scald Injury from Potable Water Distribution Systems." A component of this directive mandates all VA Health Care Systems conduct routine water testing for Legionella.

Legionella bacteria are found naturally in the environment and grow best in warm water such as that in cooling towers and large plumbing systems.

During a recent sampling in June 2015 of 24 water samples, three (3) water faucet samples from the VA North Texas Health Care System facility at Bonham tested positive for Legionella pneumophila.

Remediation Steps

Upon receipt of the results, VA North Texas began immediate remediation steps. The three (3) positive areas were deactivated and removed from service as a precaution in accordance with VHA/CDC guidelines. Repeat sampling was conducted of the identified faucets along with additional samples from the same area for environmental validation of our process. During this sampling, five (5) water faucet samples tested positive, two of which had previously tested positive.

Plans are being made to conduct a hyper chlorination flush of the entire CLC and additional water testing will be conducted per VHA Directive 1061. Heightened clinical awareness is also in place. The hyper chlorination flush occurred on July 13, 2015 with additional water resampling. The results are expected the week of July 20-24.

Moving Forward

VA North Texas will continue routine water testing quarterly to ensure proper monitoring. VA North Texas remains committed to delivering high quality care our Veterans have earned, and it is our priority to maintain a safe, healing environment for all who pass through our doors.

Key Facts:

- No hospital acquired cases of Legionnaires' Disease (LD) have been identified at Bonham.
- Patient and employee safety is of the utmost importance. VA North Texas immediately placed staff in affected areas on heightened awareness for LD symptoms and active surveillance of all pneumonia cases to identify any potential Legionella cases.
- Clinical care at Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center will continue uninterrupted.