

Legionnaires' Disease

Appendix III:B-1. Sample Letter from Employer to Employees

DATE:

MEMO TO: ALL EMPLOYEES

FROM: MANAGEMENT OFFICIAL

SUBJECT: Legionnaires' Disease

On _____, we were notified that one of the employees of our company had contracted legionellosis, commonly referred to as Legionnaires' disease. The employee is assigned to _____ on _____ shift.

We want to share with you some general information concerning the disease. In addition, we want to tell you what we are currently doing here at _____ to ensure all necessary steps are taken to address health concerns.

Legionellosis, or Legionnaire's disease, is a type of pneumonia caused by Legionnaires' disease bacteria (LDB). Legionnaires' disease is not contagious, and you cannot catch it from another person. The bacteria are common and grow in water. People often receive low-level exposure in the environment without getting sick. Legionellosis usually occurs only when someone who is already susceptible receives concentrated exposure to the bacteria. Persons who are heavy smokers, elderly, or whose ability to resist infection is reduced are more likely to contract Legionnaires' disease than healthy nonsmokers. According to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, there are between 10,000 and 50,000 cases of Legionnaires' disease every year in the U.S. We are cooperating fully with local health officials who are investigating this matter. Most cases of legionellosis are isolated and are not associated with an outbreak. To date, _____ case(s) of the disease has/have occurred among employees in this facility.

To identify any other cases, we will review sick-leave records for the period _____ to _____. Employees who took more than three consecutive days of sick leave will be identified, and we will attempt to determine if any in that group experienced pneumonia-like symptoms (fever, shortness of breath, cough). Those who used three or more consecutive days of sick leave during this period can expect to be contacted by a representative of our company for an interview. If you experienced a pneumonia-like illness in the past two months but used fewer than three consecutive days of sick leave, contact _____ to arrange an interview.

To assure that you are being protected during the interim, we are also instituting a medical surveillance program to identify any new or old cases. Part of this surveillance will be to ask you a few questions about your illness when you call in sick to your supervisor. In addition, we are offering counseling and employee information services. If you would like to take advantage of these services or want more information, contact your manager. For the present, please pay attention to the following important points:

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NOW:

1. If you are not sick, there is no need for you to see a doctor.
2. If you are now sick with a cough and fever:
 - A. See your private doctor or contact _____ to arrange to see a _____ physician.
 - B. Tell the physician that you work in a building that may be involved in a Legionnaires' disease outbreak.
 - C. If you see a physician, notify _____ so that your illness can be tracked.

If you have any concerns or questions about this investigation, please ask your manager. Your health and safety are of great concern to us, and we will be grateful for your cooperation in this matter. As further information develops we will keep you informed.

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