



Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs
Erica L. Jeffries, Director



Illinois Department of Public Health
Nirav D. Shah, M.D., J.D., Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 20, 2018

CONTACTS:

Dave Mac Donna 217-524-0629 (IDVA)
Melaney Arnold 217-558-0500 (IDPH)

Legionnaires' Disease Update For Quincy Veterans' Home

QUINCY – The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) are reporting a fourth laboratory-confirmed case of Legionnaires' disease at the Illinois Veterans Home in Quincy (IVHQ). The positive test result was confirmed earlier today. The resident is in stable condition.

Representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) returned to the home in Quincy last week, at the request of IDPH, to provide additional support and guidance. Staff from CDC are working with IVHQ and IDPH staff to:

- Conduct environmental and epidemiological assessments to identify potential exposure sources;
- Augment clinical testing protocols for individuals with respiratory symptoms to include not only testing for *Legionella*, but also influenza and other respiratory viruses;
- Conduct clinical and environmental sample testing at CDC;
- Identify important public health and infection control interventions; and
- Partner in communications with the local hospital to streamline testing.

In addition to infectious disease control and testing protocols, the teams will continue working to trace potential sources of *Legionella* bacteria and conduct additional environmental health testing.

Legionella bacteria occur naturally in the environment. As such, the source is rarely identified in cases of Legionnaires' disease. Approximately 300 cases of Legionnaires' disease are reported across Illinois each year.

The IVHQ completed an extensive renovation of its plumbing systems in response to the 2015 Legionnaires' disease outbreak. Renovations included construction of a water treatment plant capable of providing higher-quality water for the Home's sensitive population. IDVA continues to test and treat its water for harmful bacteria, including *Legionella*. Along with additional chlorine treatments, IVHQ maintains hot water at 150 degrees to prevent the growth of *Legionella*. Hot water is then mixed with cold water to a temperature of 110 degrees, which allows for the maximum control of bacteria while protecting residents from scalding.

###