CMS Mandates Reduction in *Legionella* Risk

In June of 2017, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced a mandate requiring all certified Medicare and Medicaid facilities to reduce the risk of growth and spread of *Legionella* bacteria and other opportunistic waterborne pathogens. Facilities must develop water management plans to consider the ASHRAE 188P (formally American Society of Heating, Refrigerating & Air Conditioning Engineers) industry standard and include controls measures such as environmental testing for pathogens. These standards are designed to not only reduce the risk of *Legionella*, but HPC and *Pseudomonas*, as well. Any facility that does not comply with the mandate will risk a citation for non-compliance and would be in violation of the CMS Conditions of Participation.

*Legionella pneumophila* is the most common *Legionella* species in building water and is the primary cause of Legionnaires’ disease. This disease is a severe, often deadly, form of pneumonia. Each year it is estimated that 10,000 to 18,000 people are infected in the United States. The risk of infection in healthcare facilities is high and the potential of an outbreak is real. Routine testing for *L. pneumophila* is the best way to protect your patients and your facility and comply with the mandate.

*Legionella* is naturally found in freshwater environments, like lakes & streams. It becomes a health concern when it grows and spreads in building water systems. Some areas of potential contamination are:

- Medical devices
- Hot water tanks & heaters
- Cooling towers (large air conditioning units)
- Large plumbing systems
- Spas & therapy pools
- Showers & faucets

**McCoy & McCoy Laboratories, Inc. (MMLI)** is a nationally recognized water testing laboratory and has provided compliance testing for the water and wastewater industries since 1952. Our laboratory utilizes the IDEXX Legiolert™ testing protocol, which provides timely and accurate culture test data. While traditional culture methods take up to 14 days, our test results only take 7 days for confirmed, quantified results.

Additional services available are:
- Water Management Plan Development
- On-site sample acquisition
- Sampling Kits
- Access to our team of water experts

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