



Policy Brief from the Office of Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner

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Symptoms: Flu-like with muscle aches, headache, tiredness and dry cough followed by high fever, chills and occasionally diarrhea.

Source: New York State
Department of Health

200-300

•Number of cases reported in New York City each year (New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene).

100

•Less than 100 cases are reported in upstate New York each year. (NYS Department of Health)

How we can combat future Legionnaires' outbreaks

This past summer, hundreds of families were impacted by Legionnaires' disease in the South Bronx. Specifically, over 130 cases and 16 deaths were reported due to the disease in our community. And thanks to the response of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the New York State Department of Health, this major incident's impact was reduced. These added processes helped to improve cooling towers testing and other water distribution systems for the Legionella bacteria.

However, more support is needed for City and State health agencies to protect our community as well as fuel enforcement and testing. The gravity of this major public health episode warrants additional attention from all levels of New York government so that we can protect those that are at high risk for Legionnaire's disease, including people who are middle-aged or older – especially cigarette smokers, and people with chronic lung disease or weakened immune systems.

Legislation:

Assembly Bill A.8363: An act providing funding in cities having populations of one million or more for combating Legionnaires' disease; the purpose of the bill is to provide an appropriation of up to \$50 million to cities with a population of one million to enable them to combat Legionnaires' disease.

Message from Assemblywoman Joyner:

My thoughts and prayers go out to the families who have their loved ones due to the Legionnaire's Disease. Taking steps to protect the well-being of our communities by instituting measures that can prevent the Legionella bacteria from resurfacing is the right course of action. That is why I am proposing legislation that will allocate up to \$50 million in funding to various City agencies. My bill will help ensure that resources and measures are in place so that future generations do not have to worry about this preventable disease.