



TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE

66 MAIN STREET, WEST ORANGE, N.J. 07052

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Susan Anderson
Communications Director
Public Information Officer

Tel: (973) 325-4133
Email: sanderson@westorange.org
publicinfo@westorange.org

ROBERT D. PARISI
Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Orange investigates case of Legionnaire's Disease

WEST ORANGE, N.J (Office of Public Information) July 26, 2018 -- A long-time township employee was recently hospitalized with a case of Legionnaire's Disease. As a result, the township immediately engaged a certified outside environmental company to test water sources for two buildings where the employee had worked to determine if either had potentially unsafe levels of legionella bacteria.

The illness took place approximately two weeks ago. Today, those test results determined that five of the 10 samples in the municipal building have elevated levels of the bacteria. The potable water supply has been disconnected and remedial steps are being implemented on an immediate basis. It is not proven that the employee actually contracted the illness from any municipal building. Another municipal building where the same employee worked was also tested and results were negative. Regardless, the township is moving forward to test its other buildings.

"We are pleased that the employee is making a recovery and are implementing all remedial steps to eliminate the bacteria in question," said John K. Sayers, Business Administrator.

Mayor Robert D. Parisi stated: "The Township is giving this health issue the importance and attention it demands. We have been assured by outside consultants and experts that by shutting down the potable water supply, installing filters which are being delivered today, replacing the hot water heater which has already been disconnected and making plumbing repairs that the conditions will be remedied and safe. We will insure that all prescribed remedies are in place as quickly as possible."



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Legionnaire's disease is a severe form of pneumonia, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It's caused by the bacterium, Legionella pneumophila and found in potable and nonpotable water systems.

For questions or more information, contact the West Orange Health Department at 973-325-4120 or email healthdept@westorange.org.



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