

# Preventing Legionnaires' Disease

## Tips for Homeowners to maintain healthy household water

*Legionella* bacteria can grow in many parts of a water system that are continually wet, and certain devices can then spread water containing the bacteria. Examples of areas where *Legionella* can grow and spread include: water storage tanks, water filters, faucets, aerators, showerheads, hoses, pipes, hot tubs, and humidifiers.

**Home air conditioners are NOT at risk because they do not use water to cool the air**

### Tips for a healthy home:



Run faucets and showers for 3 minutes when they have not been used for more than a week



Remove, shorten, and/or regularly flush existing dead legs (a section of pipe with low use)



Follow manufacturer instructions and clean/replace water filters in your home



If you are at risk for Legionnaires' disease avoid high risk activities (ex: power washing)



Clean or replace shower heads and faucet screens when buildup is visible, follow manufacturer instructions



**A hot water tank set to a temperature of 140°F is best for controlling *Legionella*.** The **minimum temperature should be 120°F.** If the temperature on the tank is higher than 120°F a mixing valve must be installed to prevent burns.

**Drain and flush hot water tank per manufacturer instructions, consider hiring a professional.**



Follow manufacturer instructions for medical devices and humidifiers



Follow manufacturer instructions to maintain proper chemical levels in your hot tub



Turn off and drain garden hoses when not in use for the season

**Sources:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
NJ Department of Health (NJDOH): [www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)



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