

## **Legionnaires' Disease Kills MontCo. Woman**

- Patient Resided At Abramson Center For Jewish Life

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**HORSHAM, PA (AP)** New cases of Legionnaires' disease have been reported at a Horsham nursing home that had an outbreak of the disease almost two years ago that affected a dozen people and caused two deaths, Montgomery County health authorities said Friday.

A 92-year-old woman at the Madlyn and Leonard Abramson Center for Jewish Life hospitalized April 28 for unrelated health problems tested positive for the bacteria-caused respiratory infection, and it was listed as one of the causes of her May 3 death, county Health Director Dr. Joseph M. DiMino said.

County and state health officials, representatives from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Abramson officials then began looking for possible sources and closely monitoring the health of residents, authorities said.

As a result, the bacteria was detected June 2 in a 101-year-old male resident who was running a high fever but had no apparent respiratory problem, officials said. He was treated with antibiotics and would be all right, DiMino said.

Since then, a 52-year-old housekeeping employee hospitalized May 27 for pneumonia also tested positive but is scheduled to return to work next week, he said. In addition, some water tests have been positive for the bacterium, officials said.

DiMino recommended that the very young, the very old and those who have compromised immune systems refrain from visiting the home as a precaution, but he praised the nursing home for how it has handled the situation.

"They were doing everything right," DiMino said. "Legionella is everywhere and with the wet spring we have had it ... even worse. There is not much more that they can do."

The Abramson Center plans to hyperchlorinate its water supply early next week and install a new system that will maintain a low level of chlorine in the water, DiMino said.

Legionnaires' disease, which is found worldwide and does not spread from person to person, was first recognized after an outbreak at an American Legion convention in 1976 in Philadelphia, where it made 182 people sick.

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