

It's up to five now

<http://www.chemungcounty.com/index.asp?pageID=105&nid=343&CatId=44>

"Public Health Advisory Issued to Flannery Tower Residents"

Friday, August 15, 2008

Elmira- At approximately 4:00 today, the Chemung County Health Department was notified by the NYS Dept. of Health Wadsworth Laboratory that preliminary results of recent testing of water samples from Flannery Towers indicate the presence of legionella bacteria **in the hot water system**. Final test results will not be available until next week.

Therefore, as a precaution, a Public Health Advisory has been issued to the residents of Flannery Towers that the use of hot water has been suspended until further notice. As of tonight the management of the Towers has implemented a procedure to flush the water tank and then to super heat the system in an effort to kill the bacterial contamination.

Bottled water will continue to be provided to all residents for drinking and personal hygiene use.

The Elmira Housing Authority is working closely with the County Health Department in an effort to resolve this issue.

tinyurl: <http://tinyurl.com/6cm4aw>

August 15, 2008

Legionnaires' patient, 75, dies Disease claims woman at Arnot Ogden, and family's lawyer wants answers.

By Jeff Murray

Gannett News Service

One of four residents of the Edward Flannery Apartments senior housing facility in Elmira who contracted Legionnaires' disease has died, and her family has hired a lawyer to seek answers.

Anna Marie Tongate, 75, died Thursday at Arnot Ogden Medical Center, according to attorney Christina Bruner Sonsire of the Ziff, Weiermiller, Hayden and Mustico law firm in Elmira, who was retained by Tongate's family.

Robert Page, Chemung County director of public health, confirmed the death Thursday evening, and said no additional cases of Legionnaires' disease have been confirmed.

Tongate moved to Flannery apartments from Big Flats last March because she had been living alone and wanted to live closer to friends and family while still maintaining her independence, Bruner Sonsire said in a news release.

Tongate is the mother of three children and has eight grandchildren and three great-

grandchildren. The family claims that Tongate and the other residents began displaying severe flulike symptoms last week, yet staff members at Flannery did nothing to address the illnesses. Tongate remained at Flannery until Sunday, when family members recognizing she was seriously ill "rushed her to Arnot Ogden Medical Center's emergency room", the news release said.

"My mother lived at Flannery towers in order to be safe," Kathy Lazeski, Tongate's daughter, said in a prepared statement. "The public deserves to know why this happened. Our hearts go out to all the other families in Elmira suffering through this horrible ordeal."

While the county and state health departments investigate the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease, Bruner Sonsire plans to conduct her own investigation. "The big questions are how did this happen, how did it get into the system and could any steps have been taken to protect the other residents?" she said. "We plan to do all we can to investigate as well, and find some answers, not only for the families but for the community as well."

Legionnaires' disease is a type of pneumonia that is caused by Legionella, a bacterium found primarily in warm water environments. Both the disease and the bacterium were discovered following an outbreak traced to a 1976 American Legion convention in Philadelphia.

State law requires health care professionals to report any diagnosed cases of Legionnaires' disease to local and state health authorities.

Tongate's case has been referred to the Chemung County Medical Examiner's Office, Page said. In the meantime, the health department has taken numerous samples to determine where the contamination originated, but it could take at least a week to get lab results, he said.

[newsday.com/news/local/wire/newyork/ny-bc-ny—legionnaires-upst0815aug15,0,4854442.story](http://www.newsday.com/news/local/wire/newyork/ny-bc-ny—legionnaires-upst0815aug15,0,4854442.story)

tinyurl: <http://tinyurl.com/6dcrm6>

Newsday.com

One of 6 Legionnaires' victims in Elmira dies

August 15, 2008

ELMIRA, N.Y.

State health officials say six residents at an upstate New York senior housing complex have been stricken with Legionnaires' disease and one has died.

The family of 75-year-old Anna Marie Tongate says she died at a hospital in Elmira Thursday, about a week after falling ill.

The state health department says Tongate lived at a complex where five other people have been infected. Tongate's family says the residents began displaying flulike symptoms last week but Tongate wasn't brought to the hospital until Sunday when relatives recognized she was seriously ill.

One person died and 12 others were sickened this summer in a Legionnaires' outbreak at a Syracuse hospital and a nearby nursing home. A Rochester hospital said last week a patient was possibly infected.