

Interpretation of Legionella Culture Results

There are no federal action levels for *Legionella*, however some states, agencies, and organizations have published interpretive guidelines for *Legionella* quantitative culture results. The tables below were modified from *Legionella 2019: A Position Statement and Guidance Document* published by the Association of Water Technologies; the full text and additional resources may be accessed [here](#). It is ultimately the responsibility of a qualified professional to select actions that are appropriate for the situation being evaluated.

Legionella Control Programs: Potable Water

Regulatory Authority	Test Frequency	Legionella Concentration (CFU/mL)	Remediation
NY City	No data		No data
NY State*	Every 90 days first year, annually thereafter	<30% positive results of sites tested	Maintain water management plan (WMP).
		≥30% positive results of sites tested	Immediate short-term control levels. Retest. Persistent ≥30% results - institute long-term control levels.
AIHA	2x/year	1-9	Continue monitoring and review WMP.
		10-100	Identify infection source and online disinfection.
		>100	Identify infection source and offline disinfection.

* Regulation addresses covered facilities (general hospitals and residential healthcare facilities)

Legionella Control Programs: Cooling Towers & Evaporative Condensers

Regulatory Authority	Test Frequency	Legionella Concentration (CFU/mL)	Remediation
NY City	At system startup and every 90 days thereafter	<10	Maintain water chemistry and biocide levels.
		≥10 - <100	Online disinfection within 24 hours. Retest.
		≥100 - <1000	Online disinfection within 24 hours. Retest. Review WMP.
		≥1000	Online disinfection within 24 hours. Offline disinfection within 48 hours. Retest. Notify DOH within 24 hours of results.
NY State	At system startup and every 90 days thereafter	<20	Maintain water chemistry and biocide levels.
		≥20 - <1000	Online disinfection immediately. Retest. Review WMP.
		≥1000	Online disinfection immediately. Retest. Review WMP. Any retest >1000 offline disinfection immediately.
AIHA	Monthly	10-99	Review WMP and retest until <10 CFU/mL.
		100-1000	Review WMP and conduct an online disinfection until consistently <10 CFU/mL.
		≥1000	Review WMP and conduct an offline disinfection until consistently <10 CFU/mL.

- NY City: *Chapter 8 (Cooling Towers)* of Title 24 of the Rules of the City of New York (2015)
- NY State: *Protection Against Legionella* (2016)
- AIHA: American Industrial Hygiene Association. *Recognition and Control of Legionella in Building Water Systems* (2015)