



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATEMENT FROM HEALTH COMMISSIONER DR. MARY T. BASSETT ON LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE

A Health Department investigation into a recently diagnosed case of Legionnaires' Disease identified a small cluster of Legionnaires' cases at the Melrose Houses in the South Bronx. As part of its routine assessment of such clusters, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in close coordination with NYCHA, yesterday and today tested the water distribution system in the buildings of Melrose Houses. The water in one of the buildings tested positive on a preliminary test for the presence of Legionella pneumophila bacteria; two other buildings have tested negative and test results are outstanding at five other buildings in the complex. Out of an abundance of caution, and in consultation with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Health Department has recommended remediation in this building. NYCHA will shut off hot water at the building that tested positive, and will install water filters in every apartment unit that eliminate the bacteria. Hot water service will be restored as soon as filters installed. This plan will apply to any building that preliminarily tests positive. Long-term plans for disinfection are also being developed.

Legionnaires' disease is not contagious and is easily treatable with antibiotics. Adults with flu-like symptoms, such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, should seek immediate medical attention.

Background Information

There have been four cases of Legionnaires' at the Melrose Houses in the South Bronx over the past 6 months: one occurring earlier in the year, two during the recently ended South Bronx outbreak, and this most recent case. Only one patient is currently being hospitalized; the other three previous patients have been treated and released. Test results at Melrose House are as follows:

PRELIMINARY POSITIVE

- 681 COURTLANDT AVENUE

NEGATIVE

- 304 EAST 156TH STREET
- 700 MORRIS AVENUE

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