Introduction

Provide a brief description on the risks of Legionellosis and water borne disease to your resident population.

Example: *Legionellosis is a condition caused by the presence of the bacterium Legionella, which can reside in facility water distribution systems. Legionella can cause a severe respiratory disease called Legionnaires’ disease which can affect vulnerable populations, such as the elderly or immunocompromised. Legionella and other water-borne pathogens, such as Pseudomonas aeruginosa, spread through droplets of water and through contaminated devices using facility water, such as ice machines or showers.*

*Facilities can control the growth and spread of water-borne pathogens through a water management program. This policy addresses our facility’s water management program elements in line with accepted ASHRAE Standard 188, state, and local regulations.*

Water Management Program Team

Describe the members of your water management team. Be sure to make sure those with authority to oversee systems and expertise in standards, facility design, infectious disease and quality management are listed. Additionally, you can list the role of the program team here.

Example: *The RB Health Facility’s Water Management Program is overseen by the Water Management Team. The team consists of internal and external partners that play a role in the water management system for our facility. The water management team consists of the following representatives:*

- Infection Preventionist
- Facility Building Manager/ Facilities Director
- Medical Director
- Facility Administrator
- Risk Manager/Regulatory Manager
- Contractual Microbiologist
- Consultant Industrial Hygienist
- Local Water Department Representative
- Water Maintenance Contractor Representative
Building Water System

Provide a text description of your system. List where the water enters, where cold water is distributed, where hot water is produced, and how the water is distributed to the point of use. Also describe how hot, cold and tempered waste water is discarded.

If able, also provide a diagram of your building’s water process to identify the flow of water from the municipal water source to the point of use and return to the municipal sewer or wastewater system. Please see the CDC Legionella Toolkit for helpful examples of process flow diagrams if you building maintenance does not currently have one.

Example: Water enters RB Health Facility through a 4-inch main from municipal water under the front entrance. Cold water is distributed directly to the lobby, unit ice machines, shower heads and faucets on all floors. Internal plumbing consists of 2-inch CPVC piping. Backflow prevention is present between the cold-water distribution and municipal source. Cold water is heated by two 100-gallon water heaters that supply a 500 gallon holding tank. Hot water is distributed is distributed to all floors from the storage tank and is tempered/mixed with cold water at the fixture to ensure scald prevention. All water (hot, cold and tempered) is discarded through the sanitary sewer line at the main street juncture.

NOTE: This description is just an example and each facility will need to write out in text their own description. It is not intended to be general or applicable to any specific building.

Areas of Risk

List any areas where there is a risk of stagnation, temperature becoming ideal for growth, devices with standing water, decorative fountains, etc. Also identify any general areas of high risk such as areas with medical procedures, high-risk populations (i.e. oncology, transplant or other vulnerable patients), or hydrotherapy rooms.

Example: RB Health Facility has two hydrotherapy rooms with devices that use facility water. Additionally, our dental procedure room also performs medical procedures with water irrigation that may increase risk of water misting. We also have a courtyard water fountain, fed directly from municipal water supply, where stagnated water may provide an area of ideal temperature for pathogen growth. Since residents use the courtyard, this area also may need monitoring.

Surveillance Process

Describe the process for identifying potential cases or breaches of control measures that would cause concern. This will depend on your program’s local needs and assessment by water system experts. CDC guidelines for environmental sampling and surveillance should be followed.
Example: RB Health Facility conducts weekly review of all culture results for cases of identified Legionella. All cases of healthcare-associated pneumonia are reviewed for involvement of Pseudomonas species or Legionella.

OR

RB Health Facility conducts weekly environmental surveillance cultures of XYZ locations. Sampling results are reviewed by the Infection Control Officer.

Control Measures and Monitoring Plan

List any chemical or physical control measures that are required and any monitoring that will take place.

Example: All positive results of Legionella are reported to local health department and the positive device is removed from service until cleaned by our contracted water management company. Areas of the water system found above control limits will be flushed and services by the contracted water management company.

Review Process

Describe how often the surveillance and monitoring reports are reviewed. Also list how often the policy is revised.

Example: The Infection Control Officer reviews surveillance reports monthly with the Quality Improvement/Infection Prevention Committee and with the Water Management Program Team. The Water Management Team reviews the facility water system and program design annually and makes appropriate changes based on applicable rules, regulations and standards. The Water Management Program is approved annually by the Quality Improvement/Infection Prevention Committee.

References

List Standards used and References, such as applicable state and local laws related to environmental and water management systems.

Assistance

For questions or concerns please contact Robin A. Bleier at RB Health Partners, Inc. 727.786.3032 robin@rbhealthpartners.com.