

- **Clean and/or replace all water filters per manufacturer's instructions.** All whole-house (e.g., water softeners) and point-of-use filters (e.g., built-in refrigerator filters) must be properly maintained.

- **Drain garden hoses and winterize hose bibs.** Detach and drain the hose, shut the water valve off inside the home, and drain the pipe when not in use for the season.

- **Follow manufacturer's instructions for maintaining your hot tub.** Ensure disinfectant levels (e.g., chlorine) and maintenance activities (e.g., cleaning, scrubbing, replacing the filter and water) are followed. For more information, be sure to review the **CDC's recommendations for residential hot tub owners at [cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/residential/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/residential/index.html).**

- **Operate and maintain your indoor and outdoor decorative fountains according to manufacturer's instructions to limit your exposure to *Legionella*.** Household members at increased risk for Legionnaires' disease should avoid exposure to decorative fountains. If manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and maintenance are not available, minimum cleaning frequency recommendations can be found on the CDC's website at **[cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/Control-Toolkit-Decorative.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/Control-Toolkit-Decorative.pdf).**

- **Remove, shorten, or regularly flush existing dead legs.** Plumbing renovations can lead to the creation of dead legs, a section of capped pipe that contains water but has no flow (or is infrequently used). For future renovations, ensure your plumber avoids creating dead legs. ■

How To Reach TWW

- TWW's regular business hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. TWW is closed on federal and municipal holidays.
- For account-related questions, call **1-866-TWW-BLUE**.
- For water emergencies, such as service leaks, water main breaks, and damaged fire hydrants, call **(609) 989-3222**.
- To reach TWW's **Office of Communications and Community Relations** to get your questions answered about lead service lines, *Legionella*, our operations, and capital work, call **(609) 989-3033**.

We are at your service.



W. Reed Gusciora
Mayor

Sean Semple
Acting Director

How to decrease
risks of *Legionella*
exposure.

What you need to know.

A TWW H2Open Education Resource

***Legionella* is a type of bacteria found naturally in freshwater environments, like lakes and streams. It can become a health concern when it grows and spreads in human-made building water systems.**

According to the **New Jersey Department of Health**, individuals, particularly those at high risk, can follow recommended steps to decrease the risk of ***Legionella*** exposure and best practices to limit the growth of ***Legionella*** in household water systems and devices:

- **Avoid high-risk activities.** If you are at an increased risk for Legionnaires' disease, consider avoiding hot tubs, decorative fountains, power washing, or similar activities, which may generate increased amounts of aerosols or mist. A conversation with your health care provider may help you assess your individual level of risk based on underlying health conditions and co-morbidities. Your health care provider may recommend that you consider installing specialty biological 0.2-micron filters on your showerhead if you are severely immunocompromised.
- **Maintain in-home medical equipment.** If using medical equipment that requires water for use or cleaning such as non-steam generating humidifiers, CPAP or BiPAP machines, nasal irrigation devices such as Neti Pots, and attachments for nebulizers, follow manufacturer's instructions for use and maintenance. This often includes using sterile water instead of tap water in the device.
- **Clean and/or replace your showerheads and faucet aerators (screens) per manufacturer's instructions at all times.** This is particularly important if you haven't cleaned your showerheads or faucet aerators recently. Cleaning might require you to remove the showerhead and hose and soak in a solution (such as white vinegar or a bleach solution) to remove buildup. If using chemicals, follow instructions found on the back of the bottle for safe use.
- **Keep your water heater set to a minimum of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.** This temperature will reduce *Legionella* growth and avoid potential for scalding (hot water burns). Setting the heater to a higher temperature may better control *Legionella* growth, especially if you have household members at increased risk for Legionnaires' disease.



However, if the temperature is set to greater than **120 degrees Fahrenheit**, make sure you take extra precautions to mix cold and hot water at the faucet and shower to avoid scalding. If you have household members at increased risk of scalding, such as young children or older adults, you may consider installing a thermostatic mixing valve.

A mixing valve allows your water to be stored at a higher temperature within your water heater to help kill bacteria while eliminating concerns with water being too hot at sinks or showers. If you decide to install a mixing valve, be sure to follow manufacturer's instructions for routine cleaning and maintenance to avoid bacteria growth within the valve. Consider consulting with a licensed plumbing professional and ensure you are following your local codes and ordinances for home plumbing repairs.

- **After cleaning showerheads and faucet aerators and increasing the temperature of the water heater, thoroughly flush the water at each tap (e.g., sink, showerhead) for 20 minutes.** Try to minimize exposure to splashing and mist generation, for example, by leaving the room while the water is running to flush the line.
- **Conduct routine flushing.** Sinks and shower taps that are not used often can increase the risk of *Legionella* growth in other areas of the home. Let your faucets and showers run for at least three minutes when they have been out of use for more than a week. Minimize exposure to splashing and mist generation, for example, by leaving the room while the water is running to flush the line. Additionally, you may consider flushing your water following any water disruption to your home, such as low pressure or discoloration, resulting from a water main break or nearby hydrant flushing.
- **Follow manufacturer's instructions for maintaining your water heater and expansion tank, including periodic flushing, draining, and removal of sediment.** If manufacturer's instructions are unavailable, seek advice from a licensed professional.

TWW is executing a *Legionella* mitigation plan with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. For updates on this work, visit trentonwaterworks.org/legionella and follow us on Facebook. Questions? Call (609) 989-3033.

