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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE OUTBREAK CONFIRMED IN SHELBY COUNTY *Local hotel ordered to close*

MEMPHIS — The Shelby County Health Department (SCHD) has received laboratory confirmation of five individuals diagnosed with Legionnaires Disease. Based upon current findings, SCHD has closed the La Quinta Inn located at 2979 Millbranch Road, 38116.

An investigation is currently ongoing, and SCHD officials are working with the establishment to identify sources of transmission, to remediate to prevent future transmission and to educate staff and patrons on the disease including signs and symptoms.

Legionnaires Disease is caused by a type of bacteria called Legionella which is found naturally in the environment, usually in water. It is contracted when individuals breathe in a mist or vapor (small droplets of water in the air) containing the bacteria.

Many exposed to Legionnaires do not become ill, but symptoms can be similar to forms of pneumonia including cough, shortness of breath, high fever, muscle aches and headaches which can last between two and 14 days after exposure. Antibiotics are usually prescribed to treat the symptoms.

The key to preventing Legionnaires Disease is maintenance of the water systems in which Legionella bacteria grow, including drinking water systems, hot tubs, decorative fountains and cooling towers. Persons at increased risk of infection, including the elderly, smokers, individuals with suppressed or compromised immune systems, may choose to avoid high-risk exposures, such as being in or near a hot tub.

Individuals who had reservations at the La Quinta Inn, located at 2979 Millbranch Road and have experienced any of the aforementioned signs or symptoms, should contact the SCHD Investigation Hotline at (901) 222-9299.

Mission

To promote, protect and improve the health and environment of all Shelby County residents.

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