**Legionella** are bacteria that can cause a serious lung infection called Legionnaires’ disease. *Legionella* grow naturally in water and can also be found in human-made water sources. People can become infected with *Legionella* when they inhale water droplets that contain the bacteria.

**Respiratory medical equipment** is not a common source of *Legionella* infection. However, equipment that uses water, like a nebulizer, BiPAP, CPAP or humidifier, may spread *Legionella* if it is not properly used, cleaned or maintained.

---

**Keep yourself safe while using respiratory equipment**

Review and follow the equipment manufacturer’s instructions to:

- **Always use the appropriate water source** (usually distilled or sterile)
- **Clean equipment parts and accessories regularly**
- **Replace any broken or damaged parts**

---

The number of people with Legionnaire’s disease in Tennessee and in the United States has increased since 2000. In 2017, over 200 people in Tennessee were diagnosed with Legionnaire’s disease and 21% used respiratory medical equipment during the time they could have become infected.

To learn more about *Legionella*, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/index.html)

---

Please contact the Tennessee Department of Health with questions or concerns: [Legionella.Health@tn.gov](mailto:Legionella.Health@tn.gov)

Tennessee Department of Health Authorization Number 343203. This electronic only publication was produced at no cost. 10-18