

## LEGIONELLOSIS - SWITZERLAND (AARGAU)

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From: Hans-Jakob Scharer <[hans-jakob.schaerer@fibl.org](mailto:hans-jakob.schaerer@fibl.org)>

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<<http://www.nfz.ch/detail.cfm?ObjectID=F32B5EC0-1422-0CEF-702B57892B6FFB46>>

Due to an error in a temporary heating system for the hot water supply in 3 multifamily residences in Rheinfelden, Switzerland, up to 30 persons became ill with Pontiac fever, a milder form of legionellosis.

Regional health officials were informed on 14 Jul 2006 about the occurrence of the disease. According to the head of the official lab, one person was definitely diagnosed with legionellosis. The reason for the spread of the disease was a problem with a circulating pump for the hot water system. Infection probably occurred by breathing steam while taking a shower. According to the health official, a cluster of legionellosis is seldom seen in the region.

The regional official lab has the mandate for decontamination of the hot water supply system in the multifamily residences. Water samples from the apartments will be taken on 18 Aug 2006 to assure complete decontamination. Health officials will be convinced that legionellosis is under control then.

Hans-Jakob Scharer

Phytopathology

Research Institute of Organic Agriculture Frick, Switzerland <[hans-jakob.schaerer@fibl.org](mailto:hans-jakob.schaerer@fibl.org)>

[ProMED thanks Dr. Scharer for the contribution and his translation from the original German.

Pontiac fever, originally described as a self-limited upper respiratory illness without pneumonia, was subsequently shown to be caused by the Legionella bacterium after the organism was described.

Aargau is one of the more northerly cantons of Switzerland, bordering on Germany. It comprises the lower course of the river Aare, which is why the canton is called Aargau (meaning Aare district). A map of Switzerland highlighting the canton can be found at: <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aargau>>. - Mod.LL]