

## Hotel Guest Dies After Contracting Legionnaire's Disease at The EPIC Hotel

Where: 270 Biscayne Blvd Way, Miami, FL, United States, 33131

December 13, 2009 at 6:51 PM | by juliana | 0 Comments

One guest has died and two others are still ill after contracting Legionnaire's Disease at The EPIC Hotel in Miami earlier this fall. The EPIC, a Kimpton Hotel, has currently stopped accepting new guests and have relocated current guests to different hotels.

Sadly, it looks as if the hotel was only trying to improve its drinking water but ended up harming its guests instead. The Miami Herald reports:

An investigation this week by county and state officials revealed that the hotel had installed a water filter powerful enough to remove chlorine from its city-supplied water, a move that encouraged bacterial growth.

“What's ironic is the hotel installed a special filtration system to enhance the quality of their drinking water,” said Dr. Vincent Conte, the county's top epidemiologist.

Not much is known about the guest who died the bacteria infection, except that it was a foreigner who stayed at the hotel this fall.

EPIC has released a more in-depth statement to us about the situation detailing what they are doing to ensure the health and safety of its guests in the future.

The EPIC Hotel has voluntarily partnered with the Miami-Dade Health Department to notify guests and staff of the possible presence of bacteria in its water system, and to engage in water remediation efforts.

Though not currently accepting guests, the hotel remains in operation and is focused on minimizing guest inconvenience. Simultaneously, the hotel is working toward a quick and thorough resolution of the matter.

The EPIC Hotel has taken the following precautionary measures under the guidance and direction of the health department to provide for the health and safety of its guests and staff. Steps taken thus far are as follows:

- Immediate notification and communication of precautionary measures to guests and staff
- Relocation of guests to area hotels to maximize guest care and minimize inconvenience
- Efforts underway to notify future guests booked during this time, to make alternative arrangements
- Worked together with the health department to conduct a thorough inspection of the hotel's water system
- Proceeded with all remedial procedures in conjunction with the health department to restore full system operations

EPIC is working towards a quick and thorough resolution to the water issue, and looks forward to welcoming its guests back as soon as possible.

Currently, there is no update on the EPIC Hotel's website and room rates are still being advertised as starting at \$160 a night. UPDATE: Website has been updated here.

We'll keep you updated when the hotel reopens again.

This is a terrible tragedy, especially since the EPIC is fairly new hotel having opened just last February. Usually Legionnaire's disease is found in hotel's with poor ventilation systems or water supply which shouldn't be the case in a new hotel. And the disease cannot be spread from person-to-person contact but rather the contaminated water must enter a person's lungs.

The fact that EPIC was trying to improve it's water filtration system and instead made it susceptible to bacteria is just all the more sad.