Why test for *Legionella pneumophila* to prevent Legionnaires’ disease?

1. *Legionella pneumophila* is the primary cause of Legionnaires’ disease.

   ![Bar chart showing clinical causes of Legionnaires’ disease.](chart1.png)

   - *L. pneumophila*, 99%
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   **Case study**
   Veterans Health Administration Directive 1061 requires quarterly testing of building water distributions systems for *Legionella pneumophila* in all Veterans Administration healthcare facilities. If *L. pneumophila* is not found, the quarterly environmental validation cycle is complete.4

2. *Legionella pneumophila* is the most common *Legionella* species in building water.

   *Legionella* species found in 771 *Legionella*-positive samples from 233 building water systems.⁵

   ![Pie chart showing Legionella species found in building water.](chart2.png)

   - *L. pneumophila*: 94%
   - *L. anisa*: 5%
   - *L. pneumophila* together with *L. anisa* or *L. bozemani*: 1%

   *L. pneumophila* was found in 95% of building water samples studied.
3. **Legionella pneumophila** is the most clinically relevant species of *Legionella*.

*L. anisa*, the second most common *Legionella* species found in building water studies, has not been found to cause infections even when present in hospital water systems.⁶

4. Remediation actions taken when *Legionella pneumophila* is detected also affect all other *Legionella* species present in the water system.

Treatment systems to prevent or mitigate *Legionella* growth in building water systems address all *Legionella* species.