

# Guest who stayed at Luxor dies of Legionnaires' disease

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## [Disease kills one Luxor guest](#)

KSNV coverage of a breakout of Legionnaires' disease at the Luxor that kills one guest, Jan. 30, 2012.

Three guests at the Luxor have contracted Legionnaires' disease since last spring, including one who recently died as a result, the Southern Nevada Health District announced today.

The other two cases were not fatal, health district officials said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention contacted the health district about each case of the disease, which causes respiratory illness.

The first two cases occurred in spring 2011, prompting the health district to collect bulk water samples from the Luxor for an environmental assessment, officials said.

The water samples did not detect Legionella bacteria, indicating the resort's water did not pose an increased risk to guests for contracting the disease, officials said. Both patients fully recovered.

The CDC reported the third case, which was fatal, to the health district Jan. 6, officials said. The patient stayed at the Luxor in December and contracted the disease later that month, said Brian Labus, a senior epidemiologist at the health district.

The CDC has not released the patient's name or when he or she died, Labus said.

The health district began another environmental investigation after the death, that found Luxor water samples positive for Legionella bacteria, officials said.

Gordon Absher, vice president of public affairs for MGM Resorts International, said authorities immediately began remediation — super-heating and super-chlorinating water to kill the bacteria — when health district officials notified the resort last week.

Luxor completed remediation for a 400-room water loop, where the deceased guest had stayed, within a day, Absher said. A voluntary remediation for the rest of the hotel will be completed within 10 days, he said.

“We take this very seriously,” Absher said. “Health of our guests and our employees is of paramount importance to MGM Resorts.”

The Luxor also formed a monitoring plan to prevent another cluster from occurring, Labus said, calling the resort very cooperative in the process.

Chlorine and other water treatments typically kill Legionella bacteria, a common form found in water, but large buildings are at risk for the bacteria becoming established in the pipe system and growing, Labus said.

No other cases have been reported so far, authorities said.

Legionnaires' disease, a form of pneumonia, can cause high fever, chills, cough and occasional muscle aches and headaches, officials said. Symptoms typically occur two to 14 days after being exposed to the bacteria.

Health officials said most people exposed to the bacteria do not get sick, but people who are elderly, have chronic illnesses, a compromised immune system or respiratory disease are at higher risk.

Luxor guests possibly experiencing symptoms should contact their doctors, health officials said. MGM officials also created a website ([luxorfacts.com](http://luxorfacts.com)) for more information. Last year, health officials linked six cases of Legionnaires' disease to Aria, where all the patients had stayed as guests. All six people fully recovered.

Aria officials alerted guests who stayed there from June 21 to July 4 of their possible exposure to the bacteria. Water tests had detected elevated levels of the bacteria in several guest rooms.

"Legionnaires' is something we have to live with," Absher said. "It's in everyone's homes. It's here...We feel we are industry leaders in the way we go after this issue."

MGM Resorts has started installing secondary water treatment systems in all its hotels, Absher said. The first one is installed and operating at Aria, he said.

"It's yet another investment in how we protect guest safety," Absher said.