

Legionnaires' disease is a severe and potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the bacterium *Legionella pneumophila*. The bacteria thrive in warm water environments such as hot tubs, cooling towers, and large plumbing systems. When people inhale contaminated water droplets or vapour, they can become infected with Legionella.

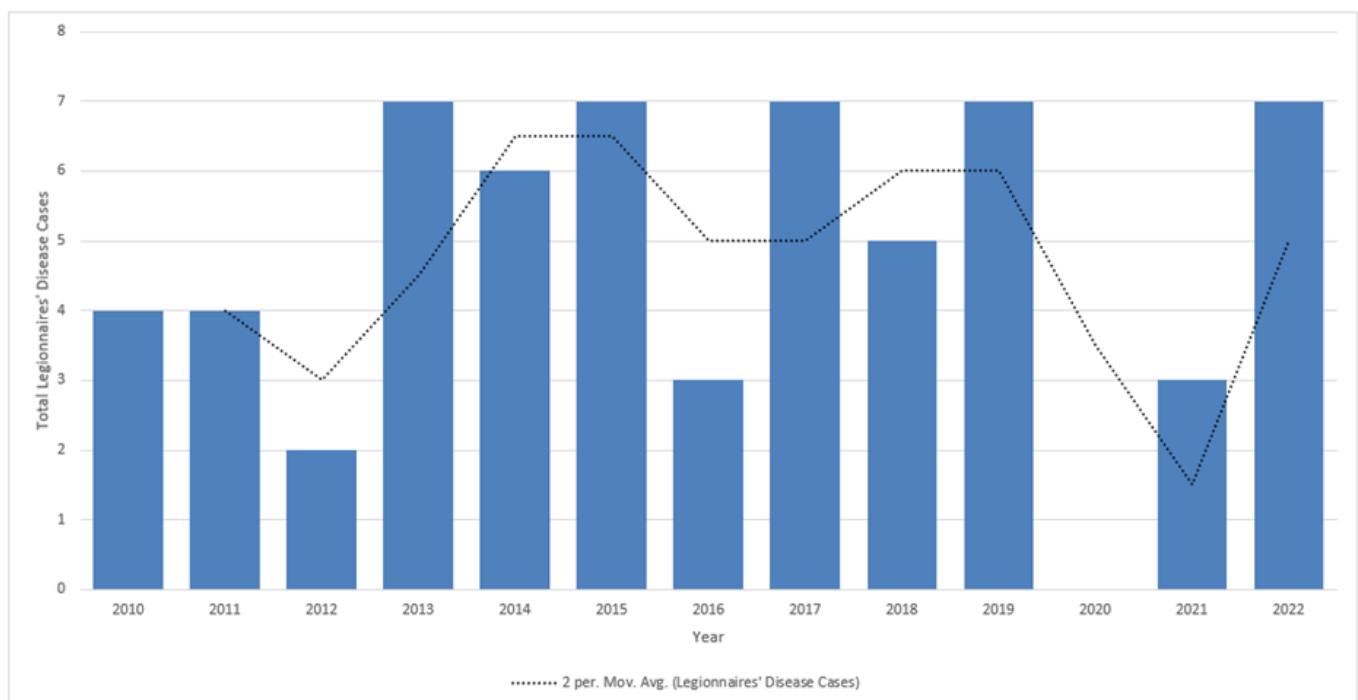
Symptoms of Legionnaires' disease often mimic those of pneumonia and can include high fever, chills, cough, muscle aches, and shortness of breath. It primarily affects individuals with weakened immune systems, the elderly, and those with underlying health conditions. Prompt diagnosis and treatment with antibiotics are crucial to prevent complications and serious outcomes.

Legionnaires' disease can sometimes occur in outbreaks, often linked to shared water systems in buildings or public spaces. Preventive measures include maintaining proper water hygiene in cooling systems, ensuring clean and well-maintained water sources, and following public health guidelines to minimise the risk of infection.

Public health surveillance and monitoring play an essential role in minimising the impact of this potentially dangerous bacterial infection.

Further information on Legionnaires' disease can be found on [NHS website](#)

### Total Legionnaire's Disease Cases in Northern Ireland, 2010-2022



Classification as per UKHSA Guidelines

Presumptive and confirmed cases

All figures exclude cases of non-pneumonic legionellosis (i.e. Pontiac fever)

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