To: Director

 **FACILITY NAME**

From: **HD NAME**

 Health Director

 **XX** County Health Department

Re: Site visit conducted **DATE**

Dear Director,

Thank you your assistance and cooperation with the ongoing public health investigation at **FACILITY NAME**. This investigation is in response to identification of **XXX** confirmed cases of Legionnaire’s Disease in residents or visitors to the facility. Although initial verbal recommendations were provided at the conclusion of the site visit on **XXX**, we have since consulted with the North Carolina Division of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Based on this consultation, we recommend additional measures as described below to protect patients of and visitors to your facility.

To assess if there is *Legionella* in the water, environmental sampling has been conducted. In the meantime to minimize the possible risk of infection from potable water, water restrictions should be initiated until further notice. These restrictions are recommended until remediation of the potable water system has occurred, and test results are negative for *Legionella*.

Water restrictions:

* Use bottled water for drinking, rinsing the mouth, brushing teeth, and shaving.
* No showering with or bathing in the potable water. Sponge-bathing is allowed, though care should be taken to avoid splashing. Potable water should not be used to clean open skin wounds.
* Use of the sink water should be avoided until told otherwise.
* Visitors to the facility should respect water restrictions while they are visiting.
* If the facility elects to install 0.2 micron filters at the point-of-use, water restrictions may be lifted upon consultation with **XX** County Health Department .If such filters are installed, they should be removed only after the water samples are negative for *Legionella*.

Consultation with an independent premises plumbing and engineering group with experience in the control of *Legionella* should be performed and a thorough assessment of the nursing home building water system should be conducted. The purpose of this assessment is to identify conditions that may allow *Legionella* to be present, survive, and colonize the water delivery system. The assessment should include the development of remediation plans where appropriate.

* The existing water system operation and maintenance plan should be reassessed and revised as needed to include monitoring and action to prevent the colonization of *Legionella* in water supply lines and plumbing fixtures. The plan should include monitoring of all *Legionella* control measures and development of appropriate action limits and response protocols to respond to potential control measure failures (i.e., suboptimal water temperatures, inadequate disinfection levels) in the premises plumbing system. Validation of the effectiveness of the system operational plan may be confirmed by negative cultures for Legionella from water samples or active surveillance for cases of Legionellosis and in consultation with **XX HEALTH DEPARTMENT**.
* All premises plumbing infrastructure should be inspected to ensure it is operating as designed prior to hyperchlorination or other system disinfection procedures and repaired or replaced as necessary.
* The premises plumbing system should be hyperchlorinated (or chemically disinfected by other means) and flushed in addition to other legionella control measures being proposed/implemented (e.g., Thermal shock [superheating to ~160F]). Hyperchlorination or other disinfection procedures should be developed with guidance from a professional engineer consultant and in consultation with the **XXHD**. The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Guideline 12-2000 provides guidance on water system disinfection when Legionella contamination is suspected.
* All showerheads should be replaced. All faucets and any other water outlet or device should be removed, cleaned and disinfected. Replace faucets and other water outlets and devices that cannot be easily cleaned and disinfected.
* Consult with state and local health environmental authorities to determine proper discharge of hyperchlorinated water to the environment.
* Following the completion of water delivery system modifications and disinfection, water samples for *Legionella* culture should be collected, as approved by the **XXHD**, 24 to 48 hours after the completion of system disinfection.
* Collection of positive *Legionella* samples should initiate and/or continue sampling of the entire water delivery system. Testing for *Legionella* should occur on a regular basis to ensure that steps taken to reduce contamination and protect against re-colonization are effective. The standard CDC recommendation is to collect and analyze samples every two weeks for three months, then every month for an additional three months. If at any time *Legionellae* are found, the water delivery system should be re-evaluated for conditions that may allow for *Legionella* to be present, survive and colonize. The goal is to completely eradicate *Legionella* from the potable water in patient care areas, as there is no known safe level of *Legionella*. Identified system issues should be remediated, chemical and/or thermal disinfection reconsidered and sampling continued until no *Legionella* are detected in collected samples.

Additional recommendations might be made as the investigation proceeds. We appreciate your cooperation and willingness to assist us in this investigation and commend you for your ongoing dedication to quality patient care. If you have further questions about these recommendations or any other aspect of this investigation, please contact the XXHD at (XXX)-XXX-XXXX.