

Number of UK Legionnaires' cases rises to 61

June 7 2012



A general view of the city of Edinburgh, with Edinburgh Castle in the background as the number of confirmed cases of Legionnaires' disease following a deadly outbreak rises Thursday June 7, 2012. Health officials in Scotland say there are now 51 confirmed cases of Legionnaires' disease in an outbreak that has left one man dead. Scottish Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon reported the latest number of cases in the Edinburgh-area outbreak to Scotland's Parliament on Thursday. (AP Photo/David Cheskin/PA Wire)

(AP) — Health officials on Thursday reported 61 confirmed and suspected cases of Legionnaires' disease in Scotland, an outbreak that has left one man dead.

Of the 61 cases, all in the Edinburgh area, 24 were confirmed, Scottish Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon told Scotland's Parliament. The rest were suspected cases.

The illness is contracted by breathing in small droplets of water

contaminated with the Legionella bacteria. The symptoms are similar to those of flu, including coughs, fever and chills.

The bacteria can end up in artificial water supply systems, including air conditioning units, water services and cooling towers.

Officials are trying to trace the source of the outbreak, which is centered in an industrial area of the city. The sole death so far was that of a 56-year-old man.

Sturgeon warned that the number of people affected could continue to rise over the next week.

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