



Technical Topics

Legionnaires' Suits Filed Against Firm ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Two Sheboygan, Wisconsin, residents who developed Legionnaires' disease filed federal suits against an Illinois company that manufactured a water cooling tower that was identified as the source of an outbreak of the illness in 1986.

The suits charge that Application Engineering Corp. of Wood Dale, Ill., failed to warn that the tower could be a breeding ground for Legionnaires' bacteria if not properly disinfected.

The suits, which were filed Friday, seek "reasonable" compensatory and punitive damages.

Health officials said 29 people became ill during an outbreak of the disease in August 1986. Three patients died. Investigators traced the bacteria to a water tower at the Muth Woodstock Co. in Sheboygan.

Application Engineering and its insurer, Liberty Mutual Insurance Co., of Boston, were named as defendants in both suits. Liberty Mutual officials could not be reached for comment.