

# Infection Preventionist Lunch and Learn

February 10, 2026

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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
*of* HEALTH SERVICES

# Series Objectives

- Encourage learning, growth, and networking
- Provide non-regulatory education and information
- Discuss topics relevant to new infection preventionists (IPs)

# Water Management



**If these  
water pipes  
could talk...**



# Water Pathogens

- Pseudomonas
- Stenotrophomonas
- Acinetobacter
- Non-tuberculosis  
Mycobacteria
- *Legionella*



# Biofilm

- A group of bacteria and other microorganisms that cling to each other and form a slimy substance.
- Thrive in dark, moist, warm areas.



# Spread of Water Pathogens



Direct or indirect contact



Aspiration or inhalation of aerosols



Ingestion

# Water System Risks

Elements in water systems that can create risks include:

- Cooling towers.
- Hot water heaters.
- Infrequently used outlets.
- Plumbing dead legs.
- Decorative water features.

# Patient and Resident Risks

Factors that can put patients and residents at increased risk include:

- Being immunocompromised.
- Being of elderly age.
- Using invasive devices.
- Having wounds.

# *Legionella*

*Legionella* is bacteria that:

- Is commonly found in water.
- Thrives in water temperatures between 77–113°F.
- Can form biofilm and reproduce rapidly.
- Infects people when aerosolized droplets are breathed in.

# Importance of Mapping Water Systems

Mapping water systems can help identify risk points such as:

- Water temperature.
- Water stagnation.
- Water that is not disinfected.
- Areas where bacteria can spread easily.

# Control Measures

Control measures should be implemented to prevent ideal growth conditions for *Legionella* such as:

- Visually inspecting for debris and biofilm.
- Monitoring temperatures.
- Monitoring residual disinfectant levels.

# Roles of an IP

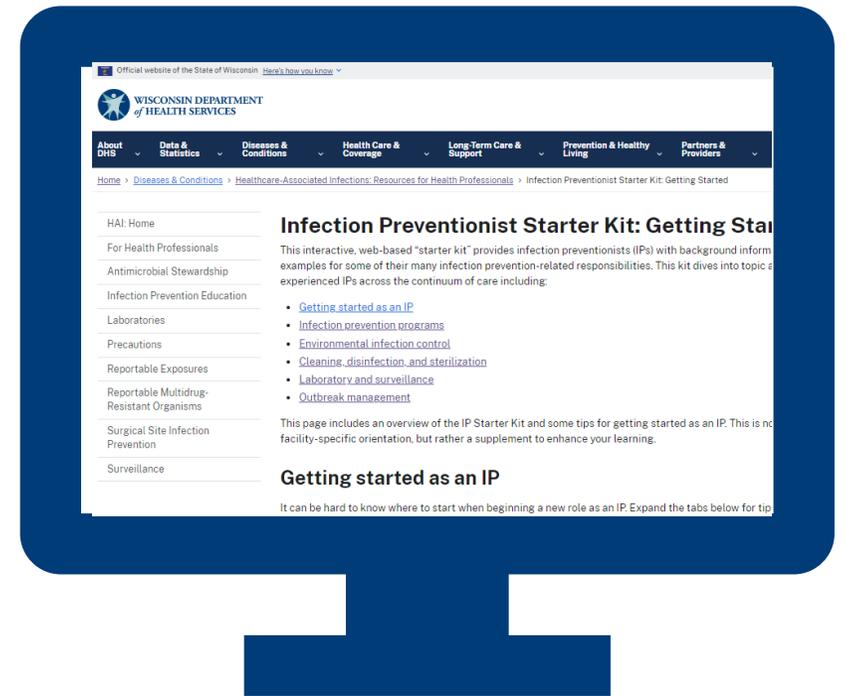
- Learn about your facility's water management plan, including flushing, controls, and remediation.
- Partner with facility maintenance and leadership teams to educate staff and execute the plan.
- Offer expertise related to controls, remediation, and testing results.

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# IP Starter Kit

- Interactive, web-based resource
- Background information, resources, and templates
- Covers topics applicable to IPs across care settings



# HAI Prevention Program Contact Information

 **Email:** [dhswhaipreventionprogram@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhswhaipreventionprogram@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

 **Phone:** 608-267-7711

 **Website:** [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hai/contacts.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hai/contacts.htm)

# Send your questions and topic suggestions.

Submit your ideas to Ashley O'Keefe at [ashley.okeefe@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:ashley.okeefe@dhs.wisconsin.gov).



# Upcoming Lunch and Learn Session

**Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026**

**Topic: Tuberculosis (TB)**