

FIHRP FOREST INDUSTRY HEALTH RESEARCH PROGRAM has published a report titled "*Legionella Bacteria in Pulp and Paper Mill Water Samples*". The report is available to FIHRP members on the Pulp and Paper Employee Relations Services website at www.paperforum.com or contact Scott MacLean by phone (604) 532-0642, by fax (604) 532-0639, or by e-mail at smaclean@paperforum.com. Non-members of FIHRP may be charged for the report.

Legionella Bacteria in Pulp and Paper Mill Water Samples

Eleven pulp and paper mills participated in a study to investigate the occurrence of *Legionella* bacteria in water from cooling towers and in process streams.

Mill personnel collected 63 water samples from October 2003 to May 2004. Samples were collected from a variety of locations where mists can be produced and workers may breathe the mist. Locations included cooling towers, pulp machine process streams, paper machine white water, hot or tempered water for washrooms or emergency showers and eyewashes, air conditioning system condensates, and fresh lake water. Samples were analyzed for *Legionella* bacteria and heterotrophic plate counts.

Legionella bacteria were not detected in any of the water samples. The results indicate that workers at B.C. pulp and paper mills are not at risk of exposure to airborne *Legionella pneumophila*, the bacteria that can produce a type of pneumonia called Legionnaires' disease.

Plate counts for bacteria were generally low indicating that biocide treatments and maintenance practices are keeping water systems clean.

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