



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Scott Walker, Governor
Kitty Rhoades, Secretary

For Immediate Release
April 28, 2016

Contact: Julie Lund
(608) 266-1683

DHS Statement on *Elizabethkingia Anophelis* Outbreak
No new confirmed cases to report

MADISON – The Department of Health Services (DHS) released the following statement on the *Elizabethkingia anophelis* outbreak:

Our top priority is the health and safety of the people we serve. Since the onset of the *Elizabethkingia anophelis* outbreak, we have worked diligently to provide accurate, comprehensive information, and to prevent the spread of misleading information that can lead to unwarranted fear among the public. We are also strongly committed, legally and ethically, to protecting the privacy of those we serve.

Elizabethkingia anophelis is bacteria that can lead to infection, which may be life-threatening among people with compromised immune systems. We have identified 59 confirmed cases of the presence of the bacteria in Wisconsin, which is the largest known outbreak of this strain in the United States. Our Division of Public Health (DPH) has been working aggressively, with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), to locate the source of the outbreak. Governor Scott Walker recently approved the addition of nine (9) project positions so that DPH may continue to work aggressively to locate the source of the outbreak, but at this point, the source has not been identified.

Most of the people affected by this outbreak are over 65, and all have serious, underlying health conditions. None of the confirmed cases associated with this outbreak are children.

DHS maintains a [webpage](#) which includes the latest number of cases related to, or potentially related to, the *Elizabethkingia anophelis* outbreak currently under investigation in Wisconsin. This webpage was last updated Wednesday, April 27 with the latest number of:

Confirmed cases (59) - Cases in which lab results show the strain of *Elizabethkingia anophelis* is consistent with the strain causing the outbreak in Wisconsin. All confirmed cases are among adults with serious, underlying health conditions.

Possible cases (4) - Cases confirmed as *Elizabethkingia*, whose laboratory specimens are no longer available to test for the strain. These cases are also all adults with serious, underlying health conditions.

Cases under investigation (2) – Cases in which there has been a preliminary lab test which requires further analysis. Results of further testing by the Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene (WSLH) may include:

- *Elizabethkingia anophelis* – Strain is consistent with the current outbreak in Wisconsin.
- *Elizabethkingia anophelis* – Strain is not consistent with the outbreak in Wisconsin.
- *Elizabethkingia meningoseptica* – Strain that is known to affect infants, particularly premature infants. This strain is not related to the current outbreak in Wisconsin.
- Other *Elizabethkingia* species – Some have been known to cause colonization or infection among children or adults with compromised immune systems.

The WSLH received the samples from the two **cases under investigation** today, and has begun the testing process. This analysis will be complete by early next week.

We will continue to work in collaboration with our partners at CDC, WSLH, local health departments, and with health care facilities and clinicians, to determine the source of the *Elizabethkingia anophelis* outbreak and provide appropriate treatment guidance. DHS will continue to share accurate information related to this investigation as it is available.

For more information: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/elizabethkingia.htm>.

###