



Public Health
England

Health Protection Report

weekly report

Volume 8 Numbers 34 Published on: 5 September 2014

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News

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Chemical Hazards and Poisons Report issue 24

The PHE Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards has published *Chemical Hazards and Poisons Report 24* [1] comprising the following articles presented under four main thematic categories:

Incident response

- two articles describing the public health risk assessments undertaken following a large fire – reputedly the largest ever in the region – at a paper and plastics materials recycling and waste management centre in the West Midlands of England in June 2013;
- lessons learned following an atmospheric release, from a chemical plant in northern France in January 2013, of a very low odour-threshold chemical that presented no public health risk but generated significant public concern in southern England;
- “Sewers, culverts and other underground pipes – an under-recognised pathway for chemical exposures in acute incidents” [three case studies];
- “Acute risks from contaminated land”;
- “MSC Flaminia – public health assessment and contribution to the places of refuge assessment”.

Emergency preparedness and response

- “Collaborative working with local resilience forums to prevent an environmental major incident”;
- “Transition to new health arrangements: Public Health England’s exercise assurance programme”;
- two articles concerned with PHE’s role in implementation of the COMAH Regulations, including the development of off-site emergency plans;
- implementation of the EU Decision 1082/2013 on cross-border threats to health from biological, chemical and environmental events;
- “Alerting, Reporting and Surveillance System for Chemical Health Threats, Phase III (ASHTIII) – update report”;
- “European Chemical Emergency Network (ECHEMNET) – update report”;

- the development of tools to assist with evaluation of recovery strategies following CBRN events;
- assessment of the Government Decontamination Service framework for CBRN scenarios;
- “Impact of response actions on recovery – the importance of a consolidated approach to UK resilience”;
- “A quick tour of social media and emergency preparedness, resilience and response”.

Environmental and toxicological research

- “Estimating local mortality burdens associated with long-term exposure to particulate air pollution”;
- “The Environment and Health Atlas for England and Wales: a printed and online tool”;
- “Asbestos: review of toxicology and epidemiology and an approach for human health risk assessment of low level environmental exposures”;
- “Use of fumigants in the transport of goods by sea – health impact”;
- “Role of risk communication in non-infectious disease cluster investigations: a summary of the literature”.

Natural hazards, extreme events and climate change

- “The oak processionary caterpillar and public health: the Dutch approach”;
- “Improving the response to flooding: changes implemented in Gloucestershire since the summer 2007 floods”;
- “Effective flood resilience in health providers: flooding at a major NHS Blood and Transplant facility”.

Reference

1. *Chemical Hazards and Poisons Report* issue 24, 28 August 2014, ISSN 1745-3763. PHE webpages: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/chemical-hazards-and-poisons-reports>.



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Infection Reports

Respiratory

 **Laboratory reports of respiratory infections made to CIDSC from PHE and NHS laboratories in England and Wales: weeks 31-35/2014**

Respiratory

Laboratory reports of respiratory infections made to the CIDSC from PHE and NHS laboratories in England and Wales: weeks 31-35/2014

Data are recorded by week of report, but include only specimens taken in the last eight weeks (i.e. recent specimens)

Table 1. Reports of influenza infection made to PHE Colindale, by week of report

| Week | Week 31 | Week 32 | Week 33 | Week 34 | Week 35 | Total |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Week ending | 3/8/14 | 10/8/14 | 17/8/14 | 24/8/14 | 31/8/14 | |
| Influenza A | 2 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 8 | 37 |
| Isolation | – | 1 | – | – | 1 | 2 |
| DIF * | – | – | 1 | – | – | 1 |
| PCR | 2 | – | 6 | 11 | 1 | 20 |
| Other † | – | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 14 |
| Influenza B | – | 2 | – | 1 | 4 | 7 |
| Isolation | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| DIF * | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| PCR | – | 2 | – | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| Other † | – | – | – | – | 1 | 1 |

* DIF = Direct Immunofluorescence. † Other = "Antibody detection - single high titre" or "Method not specified".

Table 2. Respiratory viral detections by any method (culture, direct immunofluorescence, PCR, four-fold rise in paired sera, single high serology titre, genomic, electron microscopy, other method, other method unknown), by week of report

| Week | Week 31 | Week 32 | Week 33 | Week 34 | Week 35 | Total |
|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Week ending | 3/8/14 | 10/8/14 | 17/8/14 | 24/8/14 | 31/8/14 | |
| Adenovirus † | 35 | 19 | 27 | 30 | 19 | 130 |
| Coronavirus | – | – | 3 | – | – | 3 |
| Parainfluenza † | 32 | 17 | 34 | 23 | 15 | 121 |
| Rhinovirus | 107 | 68 | 91 | 74 | 52 | 392 |
| RSV | 8 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 34 |

* Respiratory samples only. † Includes parainfluenza types 1, 2, 3, 4 and untyped.

Table 3. Respiratory viral detections by age group: weeks 31-35/2014

| Age group (years) | <1 year | 1-4 years | 5-14 years | 15-44 years | 45-64 years | ≥65 years | Un-known | Total |
|-----------------------------|---------|-----------|------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Adenovirus † | 31 | 55 | 14 | 13 | 8 | 9 | – | 130 |
| Coronavirus | – | – | – | 1 | 2 | – | – | 3 |
| Influenza A | – | 3 | 3 | 10 | 6 | 15 | – | 37 |
| Influenza B | – | 1 | – | 1 | 5 | – | – | 7 |
| Parainfluenza † | 25 | 19 | 8 | 13 | 30 | 26 | – | 121 |
| Rhinovirus | 124 | 76 | 35 | 66 | 52 | 39 | – | 392 |
| Respiratory syncytial virus | 24 | 6 | – | 2 | 1 | 1 | – | 34 |

* Respiratory samples only.

† Includes parainfluenza types 1, 2, 3, 4 and untyped.

Table 4 Laboratory reports of infections associated with atypical pneumonia, by week of report

| Week | Week 31 | Week 32 | Week 33 | Week 34 | Week 35 | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| Week ending | 3/8/14 | 10/8/14 | 17/8/14 | 24/8/14 | 31/8/14 | |
| <i>Coxiella burnettii</i> | – | 1 | 1 | – | – | 2 |
| Respiratory <i>Chlamydia</i> sp.* | – | 1 | 2 | – | 1 | 4 |
| <i>Mycoplasma pneumoniae</i> | 7 | 7 | 11 | 7 | 8 | 40 |
| <i>Legionella</i> sp. | 15 | 7 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 46 |

*Includes *Chlamydia psittaci*, *Chlamydia pneumoniae*, and *Chlamydia* sp detected from blood, serum, and respiratory specimens.

Table 5a Reports of Legionnaires Disease cases in England and Wales, by week of report

| Week | Week 31 | Week 32 | Week 33 | Week 34 | Week 35 | Total |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| Week ending | 3/8/14 | 10/8/14 | 17/8/14 | 24/8/14 | 31/8/14 | |
| Nosocomial | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Community | 9 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 28 |
| Travel Abroad | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 13 |
| Travel UK | 1 | – | 2 | – | 2 | 5 |
| Total | 15 | 7 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 46 |
| Male | 7 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 33 |
| Female | 8 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 13 |

Forty six cases were reported with pneumonia: 33 males aged 24-94 years and 13 females aged 28-81 years. Twenty-eight cases had community-acquired infection. Four deaths were reported in males aged 86-93 years.

Eighteen cases were reported with travel association: Antigua (1), Australia/Hong Kong (1), India (1), Ireland/United Kingdom (1), Italy (2), Latvia/Lithuania (1), Slovakia (1), Spain (2), Thailand (2), Turkey (1), and United Kingdom (5).

Table 5b. Reports of Legionnaires Disease cases cases in England and Wales, by PHE Centre: weeks 31-35/2014

| Region/Country | Noso-comial | Community | Travel Abroad | Travel UK | Total |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| North of England | | | | | |
| North East | – | 1 | 1 | – | 2 |
| Cheshire & Merseyside | – | – | – | – | – |
| Greater Manchester | – | 3 | – | 1 | 4 |
| Cumbria & Lancashire | – | 1 | 2 | – | 3 |
| Yorkshire & the Humber | – | 5 | – | – | 5 |
| South of England | | | | | |
| Devon, Cornwall & Somerset | – | 1 | – | – | 1 |
| Avon, Gloucestershire & Wiltshire | – | 2 | – | 1 | 3 |
| Wessex | – | – | – | – | – |
| Thames Valley | – | 1 | – | – | 1 |
| Sussex, Surrey & Kent | – | – | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Midlands & East of England | | | | | |
| East Midlands | – | 4 | – | – | 4 |
| South Midlands & Hertfordshire | – | – | – | – | – |
| Anglia & Essex | – | – | 1 | – | 1 |
| West Midlands | – | 5 | 5 | – | 10 |
| London Integrated Region | | | | | |
| London | – | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| Public Health Wales | | | | | |
| Mid & West Wales | – | – | – | – | – |
| North Wales | – | – | – | – | – |
| South East Wales | – | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Miscellaneous | | | | | |
| Other | – | – | – | – | – |
| Not known | – | – | – | – | – |
| Total | – | 28 | 13 | 5 | 46 |