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Dear Commercial Customer:

The “New York On PAUSE” order from Governor Cuomo due to COVID-19 has resulted in many large commercial buildings and businesses with little to no occupancy for several weeks, including schools, offices, hotels, medical facilities, restaurants, health clubs, etc. This inactivity can result in stagnant water that can allow chlorine to drop to undetectable levels. Chlorine is used in the Erie County Water Authority’s water treatment process in part to ensure that there is no regrowth of biofilms that could contain *Legionella* and other potentially harmful bacteria.

Property owners are responsible for the maintenance of their internal plumbing systems to ensure water quality does not degrade or becomes harmful to consume. As the New York On PAUSE order begins to lift some restrictions and certain businesses prepare to reopen, there are numerous precautionary measures that should be taken to ensure a smooth transition back to normal operations. The ECWA urges owners and managers of buildings and businesses that have been unoccupied to take the necessary action to ensure their water is safe when normal building operations resume.

Every building’s plumbing system is unique, so it will be important to consider the design of your plumbing system when considering what actions you should take. Please consider using the resources below from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** and the **American Water Works Association (AWWA)** to ensure your building’s water system is safe. Type the links in your browser exactly as they are displayed below to access each website:

CDC: bit.ly/ecwacdc

- AWWA: bit.ly/ecwaawwa

ECWA will continue to keep you well informed of any further developments. Please do your best to keep yourself, your employees, and customers safe and healthy and should you have any questions or need further information, please call ECWA’s Customer Service Department at (716) 849.8444 or email questionscomments@ecwa.org.

Sincerely,

Erie County Water Authority