



How to Collect a Sample for Bacteriological Analysis

Potable Supply

1. **DO Not** open the sample bottle until ready to fill and make sure to wear suitable gloves.
2. Select a sample tap from which to take the sample. Always sample from the cold-water tap. If possible, select a faucet that is:
 - a. Not leaking
 - b. Non-swivel, no-mixing facet.
 - c. **DO NOT** sample from drinking fountains and outside hydrants.
 - d. Avoid sample points located after water softeners, carbon filters or cisterns serving single homes, as these may harbor bacteria.
3. Remove any faucet attachments (aeration screens, hoses, etc.)
4. Remove screen from inside the faucet and **disinfect** the mouth of the faucet with rubbing alcohol or bleach.
5. Open the tap fully. Let the water run to waste for 2 minutes (Sufficient time to allow flushing of the service line).
6. Reduce the flow (to about the diameter of a pencil). **NOTE:** if water dribbles to the faucet edge and contacts the metal before entering the bottle, the sample may be contaminated. If this occurs, readjust the flow or locate a different sampling tap.
7. Open the container and collect the sample. The bottle contains sodium thiosulfate in a powder form which is to neutralize any chlorine in the water. Do not remove the powder from the container. Do not rinse the bottle before filling. Fill the container up to the line on the side of the bottle. Replace the cap on the container. Be sure to label you sample bottle appropriately and that this matches the information provided in the chain of custody.
8. Transport the sample to the lab using the shortest transit time possible. Take precautions to keep the Chain of Custody separate from the samples to avoid damage or contamination. Try to maintain sample at a temperature $< 10^{\circ}\text{C}$.
 - a. Procedure requires that the analysis of coliform bacteria begin within 30 hours of collection.
 - b. Sample must be submitted to the laboratory before 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday. Sample received after 4:30PM will not be processed until the next business day.
 - c. Since the laboratory will be closed during all major holidays, samples will not be accepted one day before any major holiday unless prior arrangements have been made. Any bacteria samples accepted with pre-approval from the lab manager during a holiday are subject to additional charges.

Sewage Screening Surface Sampling

1. Wear suitable gloves.
2. Using a measuring tape, measure an area of approximately 100cm² of the surface suspected to be contaminated with sewage.
3. Collect a swab sample by removing a sterile, rayon (non-cotton) swab from a sterile tube. If the surface to be tested is dry, moisten the swab by inserting it into the tube which contains a sponge soaked with sterile buffer.
4. Swab the selected surface by rolling the swab back and forth across the surface with several horizontal strokes, then several vertical strokes.
5. After sampling, return the swab to the sterile tube (with the sponge) and label the sample.
6. Complete a Chain of Custody form identifying the samples being tested and circle which analysis is being requested.
7. Transport the sample to the lab using the shortest transit time possible. Take precautions to keep the Chain of Custody separate from the samples to avoid damage or contamination.
 - a. Sample must be submitted to the laboratory before 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday. Sample received after 4:30PM will not be processed until the next business day.
 - b. Since the laboratory will be closed during all major holidays, samples will not be accepted one day before any major holiday unless prior arrangements have been made. Any bacteria samples accepted with pre-approval from the lab manager during a holiday are subject to additional charges.