

HOW TO COLLECT YOUR WATER SAMPLE

The Water Microbiology Laboratory tests potable water for the presence of Total Coliform and E. coli bacteria. *We do NOT perform any chemical tests.* Samples are accepted Mon - Thurs, 8 AM – 3 PM. Samples must be less than 30 hours old at time of testing. Cost of testing is \$25 per sample. We accept checks and credit cards only, no cash.

Samples MUST be collected in the sterile bottle provided by us, and every precaution taken to prevent accidental contamination or the test is meaningless. ***Correct collection of samples is the responsibility of the person collecting the sample.***

- Keep the sampling bottle closed and sealed until it is to be filled. Prior to use, bottles should be stored in a cool, dark, dry environment.
- Only samples from properly constructed water systems are valid. Water systems with leaky seals, allowing contamination by dust, insects, snakes, or small animals, surface drainage, or pump leakage are not suitable.
- Well samples should come from an outside faucet closest to the well. Inside faucets can be tested, if necessary, but extra care must be taken to avoid contamination.
- Water samples should not be collected from faucets which have leaky washers, vertical pipes, rubber hoses or other places which cannot be properly sterilized. Screens or other attachments on faucets must be removed before sterilization.
- Use a tap that is on a service line directly connected to the main, not one served from a cistern or storage tank. Open the tap fully and let water run for 3-4 minutes to clear the service line.
- If sampling from a mixing faucet (Hot and Cold), remove faucet attachments (aerators etc.), run Hot water for 2 minutes and Cold for 2-3 minutes.
- Disinfect the faucet inside and out with a 10% bleach solution. (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) OR pour 70% rubbing alcohol over the faucet and flame with a lighter to remove the alcohol.
- Allow water to run for an additional 3-5 minutes after treatment before collecting the sample. Reduce water flow to fill the bottle without splashing.
- Make sure your hands are clean and carefully remove the plastic seal and cap of the laboratory-supplied bottle. Do not lay the lid where it can be contaminated. Throw away the plastic seal from the bottle.
- Fill the bottle to the shoulder, above the 100 mL line and below the neck. Under-filled bottles will be rejected. Overfilled (less than ¼ inch of air space when inverted) will be rejected.
- Replace the cap securely after filling, and, using a permanent marker, label the side of the bottle with your name and the sampling site. Do not use paper labels or tape.
- Place the sample container in ice and transport to the lab. Use wet ice or ice packs and prevent contamination by sealing the test bottle in a plastic bag before icing. Do not freeze. If keeping overnight before delivery, refrigerate the sample.
- Fill out the requisition form with as much information as possible, including the DATE and TIME of collection, SAMPLE SITE and name of sampler with contact information.
- Bring the sample back to the Water Treatment Plant as soon as possible.

QUESTIONS? CALL THE LAB AT 806-775-2907