



Ventura County Public Health Laboratory
2240 E. Gonzales Rd., Suite 160
Oxnard, CA 93036
ELAP #1910

COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES OF WATER SAMPLES

PURPOSE:

In order to obtain an accurate report on bacteriological quality of water samples, the procedures outlined below must be followed. The test performed is an assessment of the water quality based on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) water quality standards. See test requisition form to see the type of testing available.

SAMPLE BOTTLE:

1. Samples should only be collected in collection bottles supplied or pre-approved by the laboratory. Samples collected in any other containers will be rejected and will not be tested.
2. Do not pre-rinse the bottle or discard the powder that may be visible in the bottle. The bottles contain sodium thiosulfate necessary to neutralize any chlorine residual that may be present in the water sample improving the performance of the test.
3. Store bottles in a clean place where they will not collect dirt or dust that may contaminate the bottle when it is opened to collect the sample.

SAMPLE COLLECTION:

Note: Sampling from water systems with multiple connections should be performed according to the distributions system's approved sampling plan.

1. PREPARATION
 - 1.1. Select a faucet from the cold water supply that will give a representative sample of the main water source. Avoid using a swinging or swivel-type faucet, as they are likely to be contaminated with surface bacteria.
 - 1.2. Remove any aerator, strainer or other device that would restrict the free flow of water from the tap. Adjust the water to provide a smooth flow and allow it to run for 2-3 minutes before collection. If tap cleanliness is questionable, apply a 10% bleach solution for 5 minutes, then rinse and allow the water to run an additional 2-3 minutes.
 - 1.3. If using a mixing-type faucet, run the hot water for 2 minutes, then the cold water for 2-3 minutes.
 - 1.4. Immediately prior to sampling, restrict the flow to permit filling the container without splashing.
2. COLLECTION
 - 2.1. Break, remove and appropriately discard the sealing band from the top of the collection bottle. Open the bottle carefully and keep open only as long as necessary. Do not allow fingers to contaminate the lip or the inside of the bottle.
 - 2.2. Place the bottle under the water flow, allow the bottle to fill up to the 100 mL line marked on the bottle (do not collect less than 100 mL).
 - 2.3. Replace the cap so the container is tightly closed and sealed. Shake or invert 10 times to dissolve the chlorine neutralizing powder.
 - 2.4. Label sample with sample location, date, and time collected.
 - 2.5. Turn off tap



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TIPS:

- Do not touch the inside of the bottle.
- Do not allow the bottle to contact the tap.
- Do not rise out the bottle.
- Do not wipe out the bottle.
- Do not breathe into the bottle.
- Do not overfill the bottle.
- Do not place bottle in floating water.

SUBMISSION:

1. The table below describes transportation and submission guidelines:

Water Source	Transportation Temperature	Holding Time
Any water source	25°C/ room temperature	1 hour
Drinking water	4°C/ on ice	6 hours recommended, no more than 24 hours
Surface, source, ocean, waste water	4°C/ on ice	6 hours recommended, no more than 24 hours
Water for heterotrophic plate counts	4°C/ on ice	6 hours recommended, no more than 24 hours

2. Complete the Water Quality Requisition Form.
3. Samples can be submitted to the laboratory Monday – Friday 8:00 am -4:00 pm. (All major holidays observed). Samples received or resulted outside normal business hours must be approved first.

REJECTION CRITERIA:

Samples improperly documented, collected, transported or otherwise mishandled will yield in misleading and inaccurate results. While we will make an effort to resolve errors and discrepancies prior to rejecting a sample, it is the responsibility of the sample collector to ensure the integrity of the sample submitted for testing. Common reasons for rejection of sample include:

- Transport exceeds holding time.
- Sample identification absent or illegible.
- Sample identification on container inconsistent with Water Quality Requisition Form.
- Sample inappropriate for test requested.
- Sample quantity insufficient for testing.

RESULTS:

1. Turnaround time is 2-4 days, depending upon the test performed.
2. Final reports are mailed and/or faxed to the submitter. A copy of ALL drinking water test results is required to be sent to the Ventura County Environmental Health Department or the State Department of Health Services Office of Drinking Water.