

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTING WATER SAMPLES

Please read prior to collection of a water sample. If these instructions are not followed closely, it may result in delay of the analysis or rejection of the water sample.

If you have questions regarding these instructions, please call (802) 338-4724 or (800) 660-9997. Thank you!

WATER SAMPLE COLLECTION

1. Inspect the contents of the kit. The kit will contain the required form (*Water Sample Collection Information Form*, CHEM 202) and containers depending on the test ordered:
 - a. 1 liter pre-cleaned plastic bottle (for Kit C, Kit IA, Kit ID, or Single Tests).
 - b. 500 milliliter glass bottle with bubble wrap (for Odor Test, Kit ID, or Alkalinity Test).
 - c. 125 milliliter pre-cleaned plastic bottle (for Kit AN, Kit N₃N₂, or a Single Test).
2. To eliminate contamination, keep the bottle closed until ready to use. Rinsing the pre-cleaned bottle is not necessary. Do not touch the inside of the cap or the mouth of the bottle.
3. Identify the best site to collect the water sample.
 - a. For regulated water systems: The water sample must be collected at the point of entry to the distribution.
 - i. If the system is served by surface water, then the water sample must be collected after any application of treatment.
 - ii. If the system is served by ground water, then the water sample must be collected at a location representative of each source after any application of treatment.
 - b. For homeowners: A flush sample should be collected from an indoor faucet in a clean area such as a kitchen sink used for drinking water.
4. Run cold water for 3-5 minutes to flush pipes before collecting a water sample. This step is for collection of a "flush" sample (as opposed to a "draw" sample used for lead and copper testing (see CHEM 408).
5. Fill the bottle with water:
 - a. For Odor or Alkalinity Tests: Fill the glass bottle completely to the top with no headspace or air bubbles.
 - b. For all other tests: Fill the bottle to the neck or within one inch from the top.
6. Tighten the bottle cap firmly to prevent leaks.
7. If multiple water samples are being submitted, identify the bottles with labels describing the faucet location.
8. Return glass bottles into the foam jackets provided with bubble wrap to prevent breakage during transit.
9. Complete the *Water Sample Collection Information Form* (CHEM 202). Be sure to include the 'Date' and 'Time' of water collection. Describe any water treatment (e.g. water softener) in the 'Sampler's Remarks' section. We suggest placing the form in a re-sealable plastic bag to keep it dry.

SHORT-TERM STORAGE AND SHIPPING

1. After filling the bottle, the water sample should be kept cold at less than 42° F (6° C), but not frozen. We recommend using a closed cooler with ice.
2. Cold water samples should be delivered to the laboratory **as soon as possible**. Certain tests (pH, Chlorine Residual, Odor, Turbidity, Conductivity) need to be received within 24 hours from the time of collection.
3. Water samples can be hand-delivered Monday through Friday from 7:45 am to 4:30 pm. If water samples are shipped, collect the water sample just prior to mail pick-up at your post office. We recommend 'next day delivery' service.
4. If analysis indicates that an oxidizer is present in the water sample, then the water sample may be rejected or the nitrite result may be qualified.
5. **Possible reasons for water sample rejection include:** Incomplete *Water Sample Collection Information Form* (CHEM 202), the use of a non-standard VDHL bottle, or if received more than 48 hours after the time of water collection. Test results may be qualified if the water sample has no evidence of cooling upon arrival at the laboratory. Also note: oxidizers such as chlorine interfere with nitrite testing; and, if an oxidizer is present, the sample may be rejected and the results may be qualified.

A full test report will be mailed to you upon completion of analysis & review, usually 14 to 21 days.