

THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH LABORATORY

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1-800-660-9997 (VT only) or 1-802-338-4724

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTION AND PACKAGING OF DRINKING WATER
SAMPLES HETEROTROPHIC PLATE COUNT (HPC) KIT**

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE COLLECTING SAMPLE

In order to comply with postal regulations, ensure the safety of laboratory personnel and those involved in the transport of the sample, and to maintain the integrity of the sample, the VT Department of Health Laboratory will accept for testing only those samples that are packaged according to the instructions below.

The kit should contain:

- One sterile 100-milliliter bottle with sodium thiosulfate preservative, labeled HPC. Kits can be stored at room temperature until needed.
- One "**Water Sample Collection Information Form**" (Chem 202)
- One cardboard outer container with mailing label

Please Note: Testing must begin within 24 hours of collection.

Please note the expiration date of the sample collection bottle, which is stamped on the label affixed to the cover of the cardboard mailing container and the cover of the inner sample collection bottle. **DO NOT USE OUTDATED COLLECTION BOTTLES.** Expired kits and paperwork should be returned to the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory for free replacement.

Instructions

Collection of Sample:

1. Select a clean faucet and remove the strainer using a clean paper towel. Leaking faucets, which permit water to flow back over the outside, should not be used. NOTE: Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division of the Department of Environmental Conservation may require specific sampling sites for bottle water facilities. Please contact Water Supply (1-800-828-1535) if you have questions.
2. Raw water, such as lakes, ponds or streams should not be tested by this method.
3. Let cold water run for 3-5 minutes at full flow before collecting sample. NOTE: In sampling from a mixing faucet, run hot water for 2 minutes, then cold water for two to three minutes, and collect sample as indicated below.
4. **PRINT DATE AND TIME OF COLLECTION ON THE PAPER LABEL ON TOP OF THE BOTTLE. PRINT LAST NAME AND PHONE NUMBER ON THE SIDE LABEL OF THE BOTTLE.**
5. Remove the cap, breaking the paper seal. If the seal is not intact prior to opening, please call the laboratory for a replacement bottle. **Do not touch the mouth of the bottle. Do not rinse the bottle as it contains a preservative.**
6. Reduce the water flow and fill the bottle to slightly above **the 100ml (milliliter) line.** Do not allow the bottle to overflow.
7. Replace the screw cap on the bottle and tighten firmly to prevent leakage.
8. Fill out the Water Sample Collection Information form completely.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE ACCURATE AND EFFICIENT PROCESSING OF THE SPECIMEN AND REPORTING OF TEST RESULTS. SAMPLES SUBMITTED WITH INCOMPLETE OR MISSING INFORMATION MAY BE REJECTED OR CAUSE A DELAY IN TEST RESULT REPORTING.

(Please note: Date and time of collection must be provided in order for the sample to be tested)**

- * Date of sample collection
- * Time of sample collection (note a.m. or p.m.)
- * Location of sample collection
- * Sampler name and day telephone number

9. Place the sample bottle and the completed Water Sample Collection Form in the cardboard mailer and screw the cap on tightly. Keep the sample cool and out of sunlight. **Do not freeze.**

Shipment of Specimen and Test Result Turnaround Time:

1. The sample can be shipped at room temperature either by overnight mail or hand delivered. Testing **must begin within 24 hours of collection.**
2. Samples must be received at the laboratory Monday through Thursday by 3pm.
3. Test results are available 48 hours after sample receipt.

The specimen may be rejected if:

- * Sample is greater than 24 hours old
- * Date and time of sample collection is missing on the specimen and form
- * Sampler name is missing on the form
- * Sample collection bottle has expired (see date on bottle label)
- * Sample volume is less than 100 ml.
- * Sample is submitted in a bottle other than the bottle supplied with the VDHL Kit.

If you have any comments or questions regarding these instructions, please call one of the telephone numbers listed on the front of this form. Thank you.