



Sampling the Drinking Water

Inorganic Test (Kit N₃N₂ or Kit AN) for Regulated Water Suppliers

Thank you for using our laboratory. Learn more and watch a video about testing drinking water at www.healthvermont.gov/water.



1. Prepare

- All samples must be collected after any water treatment is used.
- Do not touch inside the cap or mouth of the water sample bottle.
- Go to the point of entry to public distribution.
 - For systems served by ground water, samples must be representative of each source.
- Run cold water at **high flow for 3-5 minutes** to get rid of water that has been sitting in the pipes.
- Return water to **medium flow to collect the water sample**.



2. Collect

- Fill the sample bottle to the neck and screw the cap on tightly so it does not leak.
- Complete the **Water Sample Collection Information Form**, including the date and time you took the water sample.
- Include your **WSID Number**, if applicable.
- If you use any **water treatment** in the water, describe it on the form (for example: water softener).
- Label the sample bottle so it can be matched with its correct form (for example: Champlain, West District).



3. Return

- Put the tightly closed water sample bottle in the insulation sleeve with freezer packs, then in a box with:
 - Completed **Water Sample Collection Information Form**. We suggest putting the form inside a sealed plastic bag.
- To get the sample to the Health Department Laboratory within 48 hours, either:
 - **Bring it to:** 359 South Park Drive, Colchester, Vermont (Monday to Friday, 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)
 - **Mail it to:** PO Box 1125, Burlington, VT 05402-1125 (Do not send by mail on a Friday)

Over please.

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I make sure I send a sample that is acceptable for testing?

Sometimes we receive samples that need to be “qualified”, which means the sample doesn’t meet all the testing requirements. Here are a few [things you can do to submit an acceptable drinking water sample](#):

- Submit the sample in the water sample bottle provided by the laboratory.
- Don’t send a sample that has a strong chlorine smell – too much chlorine can interfere with some tests.
- Make sure to completely fill out the Water Sample Collection Information Form.
- Be sure the sample gets to the laboratory within 48 hours from the time you filled the water sample bottle.
- Use freezer packs and a cooler to keep the temperature of the water sample less than 42 degrees F (6° Celsius) – cold, but not freezing – until it reaches the laboratory.

If I decide to mail my sample to the lab, what are some of the ways I can do that?

Many people choose to bring their sample to the laboratory themselves. People who ship their samples do so in several ways. You can use any of the services below, but make sure to ship the sample [between Monday and Thursday](#) so the sample arrives before the weekend. [Do not ship on a Friday](#). Samples that arrive on a weekend may be rejected.

We suggest one of these options:

- United States Postal Service (USPS) – use express or overnight mail to send to:
PO Box 1125, Burlington, VT 05402-1125.
- United Parcel Service (UPS) or Federal Express (FedEx) – ship samples overnight to our physical address:
359 South Park Drive, Colchester, VT 05446

When can I expect my test results?

Test results will be mailed about 10–15 business days after the water sample was received.