

How to Collect Water Samples for Schools and Child Care Facilities

Thank you for testing your drinking water for lead. A **first draw** sample tests the water that comes out of the tap after a period of inactivity. A **flush sample** collects water after the tap has been running for 30 seconds.



Prepare and Collect a First Draw Sample

- **Collect all first draw samples first, then go back and take all flush samples.**
- Test all taps you have received bottles and forms for. If a tap has a filter attached to it, leave the filter in place to take both the first draw and flush samples.
- **Before collecting the water sample, do not use any water** from the specific tap (for example, kitchen sink) that you will be testing **for 8 to 18 hours**.
Tip: collect the water first thing in the morning.
- Go to the tap first, find the form that matches the description of that tap, then find the bottle that matches the Lab ID # on the form.
- All first draw bottles will have a **green sticker** on them.
- Remove the cap making sure you do not touch the inside of the cap or mouth of the bottle.
- Before turning on the water, place the opened sample bottle below the tap.
- Slowly turn on cold water and bring it to a normal flow rate, similar to how you would fill a glass of water. **Catch all the water in the sample bottle** – do not let any water go down the drain.
- Fill the sample bottle to the line and screw the cap on tightly.
- Complete the highlighted sections on the Water Sample Collection Information Form.



Prepare and Collect Flush Sample

- Go back and collect all flush samples.
- Go to the tap first, find the form that matches the description of that tap, then find the bottle that matches the Lab ID # on the form.
- All flush bottles have a **red sticker** on them.
- Remove the cap making sure you do not touch the inside of the cap or mouth of the bottle.
- Run cold water at **low flow for 30 seconds**. Turn up to a normal flow rate to take the sample, similar to how you would fill a glass of water.
- Fill the sample bottle to the line and screw the cap on tightly.
- Complete the highlighted sections on the Water Sample Collection Information Form



Return Bottles and Forms to the Lab

- Put the bottles and forms in a box.
- Follow the “Return Shipping” instructions.



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 your 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 the test.
- Make sure to fill out the highlighted sections on the Water Sample Collection Information Form.
- Be sure the sample gets to the laboratory within one week from the time you filled the water sample bottle.

In which order should we take our samples?

To get accurate results, take first draw samples on all taps first, and then go back around and take flush samples. Start with taps that are closest to where the water comes into the building. If you have taps on multiple floors, start with the taps on the lower floors before moving up.

What do I need to do if I’m collecting follow-up samples?

BEFORE you collect the follow-up water samples, for 3 weeks, turn on the remediated taps to run water through the new fixtures or plumbing for a few minutes twice per day.

Please **do not** collect samples the first day after a weekend, holiday or vacation.

How do we test combination taps, like combination bottle fillers and water fountains or combination sinks and water fountains?

If you have a combination water fixture, take a first draw sample from each tap, but **only one flush sample** from either tap.

Questions?

If you have questions about collecting or returning samples, please call Endyne at 802-879-4333.

More information and instructional videos are available online:

- **Schools:** healthvermont.gov/leadtest-schools
- **Child Care Providers:** healthvermont.gov/leadtest-childcares