

TOTAL COLIFORM BACTERIA INSTRUCTIONS

- * **Samples are accepted ONLY Monday through Wednesday, 7:30am-4:30pm.**
- * **THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS ON TOTAL COLIFORM BACTERIA TESTING.**

Please return these instructions to the Department of Water Resources Office when you drop off your sample so they can be reused.

The Bacterial sample report form must be completed in order for the sample to be tested. Samples accompanied by illegible, inaccurate or incomplete forms will be rejected.

THE SAMPLE MUST BE RETURNED THE SAME DAY IT IS TAKEN. Due to the procedures involved, you may jeopardize an accurate analysis by bringing in a sample that is more than 12 hours old.

THE BOTTLE HAS BEEN SANITIZED SO IT MUST REMAIN CLOSED UNTIL THE TIME OF COLLECTION.

RULES

1. We will reject samples that arrive with improper report forms. Please show your report form at the front desk to verify it is completed properly.
2. Samples are good only for 30 hours. The laboratory must have begun the testing within this 30 hour window in order to result in an accurate test. Therefore, the sample **must be returned within 12 hours** of the water being drawn. The fresher the better.
3. Samples must **ONLY** be collected in bottles supplied by the laboratory. There are **NO** exceptions.
4. If your results are positive for the total coliform bacteria, we will notify you approximately 24-48 hours after you have dropped the sample off.
5. There are many cases where a sample must be confirmed – this procedure can take an additional 96 hours. You will be notified if this procedure must happen to your sample.
6. If your results are negative, the results will be mailed.
7. **DO NOT CALL THE LABORATORY FOR YOUR RESULTS.** You must pay an additional \$2.00 to have the laboratory analyst call you. Payment must be in at the time of the drop off.
8. Emergency situations may require special instructions, please contact the laboratory. This does **NOT** include having your water analyzed to meet a selling/buying/refinancing deadline.

COLLECTION PROCEDURE

1. Selecting the Tap
 - a. Select the proper tap. A faucet, small valve or a petcock is preferable.
 - b. **DO NOT select a tap with an obvious leak around the faucet stem.**
 - c. **DO NOT select a tap with a swivel joint.**
 - d. Hoses or drinking fountains are **NOT** acceptable.
 - e. Aerated or screened nozzles may harbor bacteria. **The aerator screen must be removed before the sample is collected.**
 - f. Place all carbon filters, sediment filters and water softeners on bypass.
2. Collecting the Water
 - a. Sanitize the nozzle of the tap with a chlorine solution of bleach and water. Use a 5.25% sodium hypochlorite solution such as Clorox Bleach or any other household chlorine bleach. **DO NOT USE BLEACH WITH A SPECIAL SCENT.**
 - b. In a plastic bag or spray bottle, make a solution from 1 tablespoon bleach to ½ gallon of water. Stronger solutions can be made but they may cause some faucet discolorations.
 - c. Open the faucet and run the water for one minute then close the faucet.
 - d. Apply the sanitizing solution.
 - i. Spray Bottle – Saturate the tap opening with the solution making sure to get the outside as well as the inside. Wait at least 2 minutes before proceeding. Note: This solution can be stored up to 6 months.
 - ii. Plastic Bag – Place the bag over the nozzle so the top of the bag is above the opening. Alternately squeeze and release the bag to flush the solution in and out of the tap. Do this for 2 minutes. Note: A fresh solution must be used for each tap when using this method.
 - e. Flush the tap for 3-5 minutes to allow for adequate flushing of the piping.
 - f. Reduce the rate of flow to avoid splashing when filling the collection bottle.
 - g. Remove the cap from the sample bottle.
 - i. Only touch the bottom of the bottle.
 - ii. Remove the cap by holding the exterior **ONLY**. Take care not to touch the threads or any part of the rim or interior of the bottle or cap.
 - iii. The bottle must only be opened during the collection of the sample.
 - iv. Do not touch the rim or mouth of the bottle during collection.
 - v. **DO NOT OVERFLOW**
 - vi. **FILL THE BOTTLE TO THE TOP**
 - h. Immediately recap the sample bottle tightly.
 - i. If there is any question as to whether a sample or bottle has become contaminated during collection, the sample must be discarded and a new sample collected in a **NEW BOTTLE.**
3. Complete the bacterial sample report form and attach to the bottle.
4. Return the bottle and form to the Water Resources Office as soon as possible. **It must be returned within 12 hours.**