



Placer County Health and Human Services Department

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WATER SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

SAMPLE BOTTLES

Collect bacteriological samples only in sterile sample bottles provided by the Public Health Lab. Samples collected in any other container will not meet lab standards and cannot be processed.

There are two types of water sample containers available. Please consult with lab staff to determine which type meets your needs:

Does NOT Contain sodium thiosulfate	Contains sodium thiosulfate (neutralizes chlorine)
A Real Estate Transaction	Surface Water
A Report for Environmental Health	Chlorine Injection Systems
A Report for any other County agency	Samples not involving Environmental Health

CHOOSING THE FAUCET

Following the guidelines listed in Table I on page 3 will help you to provide a good representative sample of water quality and help you avoid having to retest.

COLLECTING THE SAMPLE

1. Collect samples only during favorable weather conditions. Do not sample during or immediately after a rain. Don't sample while a strong wind is blowing or when the air is unusually dusty.
2. Do not wipe the faucet with a rag or wash it off with water in an attempt to clean the faucet prior to collecting a sample.
3. Turn on the faucet and adjust it to provide a smooth flow that will permit the sample to be taken without splashing. Never open the faucet completely to flush the sample line because this may disturb sediment which is difficult to flush out.
4. Let the faucet flow long enough for water to arrive from the water main itself. This time may be several minutes depending on the distance from the main to the faucet and the rate of flow. In any case let the faucet flow at least one minute, according to your watch, before you collect the sample. By this procedure you will be more likely to obtain fresh water from the distribution main and avoid sampling the stagnant water that may have lain in the house plumbing or service line for a long period of time.

MORE PRECAUTIONS:

1. Remove the seal completely from the bottle.
2. Open the bottle only as long as necessary to collect the sample.
3. Do not lay the bottle cap down or put it in your pocket. Hold the bottle in one hand and the cap in the other. Keep the bottle cap right side up (threads down) and do not touch the inside of the cap.

Community Development and Resource Agency Building, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 180, Auburn, CA 95603 ☎ 530.745-2300 ●
www.placer.ca.gov ● fax 530.745-2370

Tahoe Administration Building, 775 North Lake Blvd, Suite 203, P.O. Box 1909, Tahoe City, CA 96145-1909 530.581.6240 ●
fax 530.581.6242

4. Keep your fingers out of the bottle and hold the bottle under the faucet so no part of the faucet will touch the inside of the bottle.
5. Do not rinse out the bottle. Do not wipe out the bottle. Do not blow your breath into the bottle or into the cap.
6. Fill the sample bottle to the top of the bottle. Do not underfill.
7. Be careful that splashing drops of water from the ground or elsewhere do not get into the bottle or onto the cap.
8. Cap the bottle immediately after filling and then turn off the faucet.

Please note that a cracked or leaking bottle will be REJECTED for testing due to the possibility of outside contamination.

SAMPLE DELIVERY TO THE LABORATORY

Sample bottles must be received in the lab by 4:00pm on the same day as collected.

- ❖ Try to deliver the sample to the lab immediately. Samples that cannot be delivered to the laboratory immediately should be refrigerated (not frozen) and delivered the same day as collected.

Label the sample bottle clearly and accurately. Include to following:

- Date & Time of sample collection
- Collector's name
- Sampling point (e.g. kitchen tap)
- Address.

Lab Address:

11475 C Ave.

Auburn CA 95603

Ph: (530) 889-7205

Hours: 8:00-4:00 Mon-Fri

Payment by Cash or Check ONLY.

Table I: Guidelines To Follow When Selecting Your Sample Faucet

Guideline	Reason	Comment
Avoid sampling from dead end main	The water may be old and stagnant	A distribution map is a helpful reference when selecting sample location
Select faucets that are in frequent use	May contain stagnant water and sediment which can provide a breeding ground for bacteria	Sediment material is difficult to flush out and the sample's quality can be compromised
Avoid a faucet that leaks around the stem or where water "curls back up onto the faucet mouth threads	Water may run down the outside of the faucet and contaminate the sample	Either condition can cause a false positive
Avoid any faucet that is dusty, dirty, or corroded	Possible contamination	Inspect the faucet before collecting the sample
Don't use a faucet that is close to the ground	Possible contamination	Splashing spray could get into the bottle
Don't use a faucet that is surrounded by shrubbery or tall grass	Possible contamination	Dust and bacteria on the vegetation are stirred up in getting to the faucet
Never collect a sample from a hose or any other temporary attachment	Possible contamination	Debris
Don't use a faucet wrapped with insulation	Possible contamination	Debris
Don't sample from faucets with aerators or screens (kitchen/bathroom)*	Possible contamination	Swing-type faucets are susceptible to contamination in the swing connection
Sample from the cold water faucet (not hot water)	Possible contamination	Be certain the hot water faucet is not leaking (if sampling swing-type faucet).