

Vermont Department of Health Laboratory
195 Colchester Avenue, P.O. Box 1125
Burlington, VT 05401-1125
(802) 863-7336 (800) 660-9997 (in-state only)

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLLECTION AND PACKAGING OF DRINKING WATER SAMPLES
KITS A, KITS AA, AND KITS NU**

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE COLLECTING SAMPLE

The kit should contain:

- One labeled sterile 100-milliliter bottle with sodium thiosulfate preservative. Kits can be stored at room temperature until needed
- One "**Water Sample Collection Information Form**" (Chem. 202)
- One cardboard outer container with mailing label
- One "**Guidelines for Mailing Water Bacteriology Kits**" (Admin 978)

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 or side 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 **DO NOT USE OUTDATED COLLECTION BOTTLES.** Expired kits and paperwork should be returned to the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory for free replacement.

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.

Instructions

Collection of Sample:

1. Select the faucet, typically used for drinking water in the home, and remove the faucet strainer using a clean paper towel. Leaking faucets which permit water to flow back over the outside should not be used.
2. Let cold water run for 3-5 minutes at full flow before collecting sample. NOTE: When sampling from a mixing faucet, run hot water for 2 minutes, then cold water for two to three minutes, and collect sample of cold water as indicated below.
3. **PRINT LAST NAME AND PHONE NUMBER ON THE SIDE LABEL OF THE BOTTLE.**
4. 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.**
5. Reduce the water flow and fill the bottle slightly above the 100ml (milliliter) line. This test requires 100 ml of water. Do not allow the bottle to overflow.
6. Replace the screw cap on the bottle and tighten firmly to prevent leakage.
7. Fill out the Water Sample Collection Information form completely.
8. All Kit A and AA samples are tested only for the **presence** of coliform bacteria including *Escherichia coli*, the indicator for fecal contamination. The Kit NU results will provide a count of coliform bacteria and *Escherichia coli* up to 200 coliform or *Escherichia coli* per 100 ml of water.

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 (i.e. kitchen sink, bathroom sink, physical address and town)
- Sampler name and day telephone number

***Homeowners:** Indicate whether the system has been chlorinated within the last two weeks.

***Public Water systems only:** Please indicate field result for Residual Chlorine. Note: The VDHL will accept the drinking water sample, as represented by the sampler, to be tested by Standard Method 9223. The sample will not be tested for chlorine residual at the Vermont Department of Health Laboratory.

9. Place the sample bottle and completed Water Sample Collection Form in the cardboard mailer and screw the cap on tightly. Try to keep the sample cool by keeping out of direct sunlight. **Do not freeze.**

Shipment of Specimen and Test Result Turnaround Time:

1. The sample can be shipped in the container provided at room temperature either by mail (*first class mail with delivery confirmation is suggested*) or hand delivered. **Testing must begin within 30 hours of collection.**
2. Samples must be received by 4 p.m. on regular workdays for testing to begin the same day. Results for samples received by 4 p.m. are available after 3 p.m. the following workday.
3. Test results for samples received Friday will not be routinely available until the following Monday.
4. Test results will be mailed the following business day.

The specimen will be rejected if the sample is greater than 30 hours old upon receipt at the VDHL.

Samples may be rejected if:

- * 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.