

Instructions for Collecting Chemical Water Samples

The two water sampling techniques described below, can help to determine if there are chemical contaminants (i.e. lead) in drinking water. Using both techniques can help determine if there are contaminants coming from the plumbing in the home or from the source/ground water. Please read the descriptions and follow the directions below. Note that bacteriological water samples have their own instruction forms and differ from this method.

Please check the method used below:

First draw sample: collected where the most water is consumed (i.e. kitchen faucet) and is collected to sample water in the plumbing and groundwater. Do not run water in the house for four to six hours prior to collecting the sample. After this period, collect cold water immediately after turning the faucet on. This sample can be collected after a treatment device, including a water softener. Collect the sample using the instructions below.

Flush sample: collected to determine if the groundwater is contaminated. Choose a sampling point that is not treated, such as a yard hydrant or outside faucet at the wellhead or foundation. Run cold water, allowing ample time to flush the water lines. We suggest that the water run for at least five minutes. Collect the sample using the instructions below.

1. Open the container, being careful not to expose the lid to contamination from counter surfaces or splash during collection of the sample. If the container is not already expanded, carefully expand the container with your fingers by pulling on the back of the container; do not blow into or insert fingers into the container, as this will contaminate your sample.
2. In order to minimize contamination, DO NOT transfer the water from another container to the sample container. **Lightly rinse the container** using a small amount of the tap water to be sampled, empty, and then fill the container to within one-half inch from the top.
3. Reseal the container and enter the date and location of the sample point (i.e. kitchen faucet) on the sample form.
4. Return the container either by first class mail, delivery directly to the State Public Health Laboratory (SPHL), or by use of the courier service provided by the SPHL at your local public health agency (LPHA).

Missouri State Public Health Laboratory
101 N. Chestnut Street
P.O. Box 570
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570
Phone (573)751- 3334

If you wish to use the SPHL courier service offered at your LPHA, we suggest that you contact your LPHA before sampling to determine when the service is available. If samples are dropped off at the SPHL, drop off should be before 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. If you need additional contact information, please visit our website at <http://health.mo.gov/living/lpha/lphas.php>, or contact DHSS at (573) 751-6102 or toll free at (866) 628-9891. A list of all courier locations in Missouri: <http://health.mo.gov/lab/pdf/courierlocationsbycounty.pdf>

Please ensure that the sample is collected in the sample container provided to you, and returned as soon as possible. **SAMPLES SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE LABORATORY WITHIN 3 CALENDAR DAYS OF COLLECTION.**

One final note: ALWAYS affix the blue mailing label to the exterior of the box, regardless of whether the box is mailed or dropped off for carrier service pickup. The laboratory uses this label to determine which unit (i.e. chemistry unit, microbiology unit) the sample is delivered to. Samples delivered to the laboratory without the label may not be analyzed.

Please contact our office if you need further assistance.

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