



COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BUREAU

Collecting Coliform Bacteriological Water Samples

(Para obtener este documento en español vaya a - <http://www.mtyhd.org/waterforms>)

Collect samples at outside cold-water faucets that are free of contaminating devices such as screens, aeration devices, hoses, point-of-use devices, or swiveled faucets and are before any household filtration systems or water softeners so it is representative of the water system. If you must use a tap that has a screen or an aeration device, remove these before taking your sample. The tap directly off the water system main or on the supply line into a house is recommended. Do not obtain samples from taps that leak around the valve stem and allow water to flow over the outside of the tap. This leakage could be a significant source of external contamination of the sample. Faucets must be high enough to put the bottle underneath without contacting the mouth of the container with the faucet.

Sampling after a disinfection process: If the system is normally an unchlorinated system, the sample should be taken after the disinfection process is complete and all chlorine has been flushed from the system to help make sure the water is still absent of coliform without chlorine. A chlorine residual test should be taken for confirmation and can be done in the field with an EPA approved test strip or DBD method.

Taking the sample:

1. If there is debris on the tap, scrub the outside and inside with a plastic-bristled brush to loosen any attached debris.
2. Swab or spray the tap with a disinfectant such as bleach and wait for one to two minutes.
3. Open the faucet and thoroughly flush the line for at least two to five minutes. The longer the water runs the better the chance of flushing out stagnant water which may have bacteria.
4. Reduce the flow until the water leaving the tap has a continuous, gentle flow without any turbulence or splashing.
5. **Sterile containers provided by your laboratory must be used. Label the sample with the System Name recognized by the County.** Do not rinse the bottle prior to taking the sample. The powder in the bottle is sodium thiosulfate that inactivates any chlorine-based disinfectant. Be sure this substance stays in the bottle.
6. Remove the cap from the sample bottle and keep it in your hand facing down. Do not touch the inside of the cap or the bottle's inner surface as these actions can contaminate the sample.
7. Carefully place the sample bottle under the running water. Fill the bottle to at least the fill-line; do not overfill the sample bottle or allow the water to splash.
8. Quickly replace the cap on the bottle and label the sample clearly. If samples cannot be delivered to the lab immediately, place samples in a cooler with cold packs. If ice is used, at no time should the sample container be immersed or submerged in the ice or melted ice water. The sample must be delivered to the laboratory within 24 hours from the time of collection.

The lab is located at:

1270 Natividad Rd.

Salinas, Ca. 93906

(831) 755-4516

(lower level back entrance to the building)

Alternatively, the sample can be submitted on the same day of collection to one of the following health department offices. (Please call ahead of time to see what days sample collections will be accepted)

Monterey County Environmental Health
1200 Aguajito Rd.
Monterey, CA.
(831) 647-7654

Drop off by 9:00 a.m.

Monterey County Environmental Health
200 Broadway St., Ste 70
King City, CA.
(831) 386-6899

Drop off by 9:00 a.m.