

# Northeast Texas Public Health District Regional Laboratory

Street Address: 815 NORTH BROADWAY (Rear Entrance), TYLER TEXAS 75702  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 209, Tyler, Texas 75710

TEL: 903-535-0090 FAX: 903-535-0097

## HOW TO COLLECT A SAMPLE

### FIRST – Get the required bacteriology kit from our laboratory.

- You must use a sample bottle provided by our laboratory.
- The sample bottle must not be expired. (Indicated on the NETPHD label)

### SECOND – Find the proper sampling location.

- Use an outside faucet which does not leak. (Avoid rubber hoses, fire hydrants and dirty areas and faucets with back flow preventers attached)
- Disinfect the faucet before collecting the sample. Flame the mouth of faucet with a propane torch or use a 10% bleach solution.
- Run the water for two to three minutes to clear the line.
- Adjust the flow to a slow, steady stream.

### Third – Sample Carefully.

- Remove and discard the protective seal from the bottle.
- Do not rinse the bottle. Do not discard the white powdery substance inside the bottle.
- Carefully remove the cap of the water bottle and fill to the 120 ml line located closest to the top of the bottle. **IMPORTANT** – Do Not touch the inside of the bottle or the inside of the lid. Do Not under fill the bottle or the sample will be rejected.
- Carefully close the bottle and put the sample in ice or on gel packs immediately after collection. (**DO NOT FREEZE SAMPLE**)

### Fourth – Complete the submission form provided and get it to the laboratory in a hurry.

- Fill out your portion of the form **completely**.
- Label the sample bottle to **match** the description of sample site on the form.
- The sample must arrive in the laboratory within **30 hours** from the time the sample was collected.

- Samples are accepted Monday – Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm, with the exception of observed holidays and the day prior to the holiday.
- As forms of payment, NETPHD Laboratory accepts: Cash or Check only.
- For additional information contact the NETPHD Laboratory at 903-535-0090.

# GETTING THE RESULTS

## FIRST – Know what to expect!

- Results will be mailed to you after completion of the tests
- The words which are the key to this report are:
- **Total Coliform Present (Found) / Absent (Not Found)**
- **Escherichia coli Present (Found) / Absent (Not Found)**
- A **positive** report indicating that coliform organisms have been found (Present) means the water may be unsafe.
- A **negative** report indicating that coliform organisms have not been found (Absent) means the water is considered bacteriologically safe to drink at the time of sampling. (Remember that other factors such as chemical composition may also affect the safety of the water)

## SECOND – What to do if sample reports say ... Coliform Organisms Present (Found)!

- If you are a private well owner, the lab will furnish a copy of a “water well treatment” sheet and you should contact your nearest Local Health Department for information about disinfecting your well.
- If you are a public water supply, you must submit repeat samples immediately and check your copy of the Drinking Water Standards. You may be in violation of State Law. If you have questions, contact the TCEQ Total Coliform Rule Program at 512-239-4691.

## THIRD – What to do if sample report says...Unsuitable for Analysis.

- Unsuitable for Analysis—This means that the lab was unable to conduct a valid test and no conclusive results were obtained. Public systems must resubmit the sample and private well owners may wish to investigate well disinfection before resubmitting a sample.
- Retrace the proper steps for sampling
- If you carefully follow the guidelines for proper sampling, you can avoid most reasons for an unsuitable sample.
- Any questions, contact the laboratory at 903-535-0090.