

## How to Take A Water Sample

### Sample Containers:

Containers must be appropriate for the type and volume for analysis requested. Samples collected for microbiological tests must be clean & sterile (i.e. ziplock bags). Chemistry samples must be in specially cleaned containers with specific preservatives. If you require containers, the laboratory will provide these upon request.

### Sampling:

Always choose a sampling site that will be representative of the water to be tested. For example, if it is household drinking water, the kitchen tap is the best sampling site.

#### Household Tap

1. Keep the sample bottle closed until it is time to take the sample.
2. Remove any aerators or screens from the tap.
3. Let the water run for 2-3 minutes.
4. Restrict water flow to permit filling bottle without splashing.
5. Remove bottle cap, taking care to avoid soiling.
6. DO NOT touch the inside of the cap or neck of the bottle, and protect them from contamination.
7. NEVER RINSE the bottle
8. Hold the bottle near the base and fill; replace cap & tighten.
9. Keep the bottle out of sunlight and keep cool (DO NOT freeze)
10. Label the bottle with sample location, date, and time collected.
11. The sample must be delivered to the laboratory as soon as possible.

Note: All samples for coliform tests MUST be in the lab within 30 hours.

#### Rivers, Streams, Lakes or Reservoirs:

1. Select the sampling site(s) to be representative of the water supply.  
Choose a location that is deep enough to avoid bottom sediments and close to water intakes.
2. Remove bottle cap, taking care to avoid soiling.
3. DO NOT touch the inside of the cap or neck of the bottle, and protect them from contamination.
4. NEVER RINSE the bottle
5. Hold the bottle near the base, plunge the bottleneck downward below water surface.
6. Tip bottle upward INTO the water flow and AWAY from your hand. The water must flow into the bottle before it flows over your hand. If the water is still (as in a reservoir) move the bottle forward as it is tipped upward.
7. Replace the cap and tighten the lid
8. Keep the bottle out of sunlight and keep cool (but NOT frozen)
9. Label the bottle with sample location, date, and time collected.
10. The sample must be delivered to the laboratory as soon as possible.

Note: All samples for coliform analysis MUST be @ the laboratory within 30 hours to be considered valid by BC Ministry of Health.

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