

Total Coliform Sample Collection Instructions

Before You Begin

- Obtain a proper sample container from our lab or use unopened bottled water containers.
 - Testing must begin within 30 hours of collection.
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Collection Procedure

1. Select a sampling site
Choose a clean faucet, preferably an outdoor spigot as close to the well as possible.
 2. Prepare the faucet
 - Remove all attachments (hoses, splitters, aerators/screens).
 - Turn on water and let run for at least 5 minutes.
 3. Disinfect the faucet
 - Use bleach or alcohol (use caution—these can cause injury).
 - Turn off water and disinfect the faucet threads thoroughly.
 - Allow contact for 2–3 minutes, then let sit an additional 3–5 minutes.
 4. Flush the system again
 - Turn water back on and run for at least 5 minutes.
 5. Prepare for sampling
 - Ensure hands are sterile or wear sterile gloves.
 - Adjust to a steady, moderate stream (avoid splashing).
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Collect the Sample (Option A or Option B)

Option A – Lab-Provided Container

- Carefully open the container—do not touch the inside or lid.
Do not breathe into or near the container.
 - Do not discard the tablet/powder inside the bottle.
 - Hold the container in the stream:
 - Do not let it touch the faucet
 - Do not collect water contacting the threads
 - Fill to the 100 mL fill line exactly.
If overfilled, pour off excess immediately.
 - Close tightly without touching the inside and secure the lock if applicable.
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Option B – If Lab Containers Are NOT Available

- Obtain two unopened bottled water containers (½ liter size recommended).
 - Ensure hands are sterile or wear sterile gloves.
 - Open each bottle carefully:
 - Do not touch the threads, inside of the cap or drink from the bottle
 - Pour out the water completely.
 - Rinse each bottle 3–4 times with the sample water.
 - Fill each bottle and cap securely.
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Documentation and Delivery

6. Label and Document

- Record date, time, and location on the container(s).

7. Transport

- Place sample(s) in a zip bag and return to the lab.
- Chilling is not required.

8. Chain of Custody

- Complete the provided Chain of Custody (COC) form.
- Submit it with your samples.

9. Shipping / Delivery Guidance

- If delivering in person: Collect samples Monday–Thursday
 - If shipping:
 - Collect Monday–Wednesday after lunch
 - Ship First Overnight
 - Samples received on Friday may incur additional cost due to weekend analysis.
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Pricing

- Please contact the lab for current pricing.
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